Public Expressions of Religion among Yogyakarta's Salafi Muslimah

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Abstract
This study examines the manifestation of righteousness in public spaces among Salafi Muslim female students participating in Islamic study groups at four major universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through six months of participant observation and in-depth interviews with eight key informants. The research explores how Salafi Muslim women internalize, negotiate, and practice hadith teachings daily, particularly in public settings. The findings reveal that these study groups significantly shape individual and collective expressions of

piety. Participants exhibit varied approaches to negotiating religious teachings, with some finding clarity and structure, while others experience ambiguities, creating space for personal interpretation. This variation underscores the complex relationship between religious texts and individual agency, aligning with theoretical perspectives on spiritual practice. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of these groups in reinforcing social identities and facilitating engagement in public spaces. The research contributes to broader discussions on religious agency and public piety, providing insights into how Salafi Muslim women navigate the intersection of spiritual devotion and modern public life. Limitations include the focus on a specific group and reliance on self-reported data. Future studies should explore how piety is expressed across social and cultural contexts to deepen understanding of its role in public participation.

[Penelitian ini mengkaji manifestasi kesalehan di ruang publik pada mahasiswa Muslimah *Salafi* yang tergabung dalam kelompok pengajian di empat universitas besar di Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipan selama enam bulan dan wawancara mendalam dengan 8 informan kunci. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana perempuan Muslim *Salafi* menginternalisasi, menegosiasikan, dan mempraktikkan ajaran hadis dalam kehidupan sehari-hari, terutama di ruang publik. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kelompok pengajian ini berperan penting dalam membentuk ekspresi kesalehan baik secara individu maupun kolektif. Para partisipan menunjukkan variasi dalam cara mereka menegosiasikan ajaran agama, dengan sebagian menemukan kejelasan dan struktur, sementara yang lain mengalami ambiguitas, yang menciptakan ruang untuk interpretasi pribadi. Variasi ini menegaskan hubungan kompleks antara teks keagamaan dan agensi individu, sejalan dengan perspektif teoretis tentang praktik keagamaan. Selain itu, penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya kelompok pengajian dalam memperkuat identitas sosial dan memfasilitasi keterlibatan di ruang publik. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi pada diskusi yang lebih luas tentang agensi keagamaan dan kesalehan publik, serta memberikan wawasan tentang bagaimana perempuan Muslim *Salafi* menavigasi persimpangan antara pengabdian agama dan kehidupan publik modern. Keterbatasan penelitian ini mencakup fokus pada kelompok tertentu dan ketergantungan pada data yang dilaporkan sendiri. Penelitian selanjutnya sebaiknya mengeksplorasi bagaimana kesalehan diekspresikan di berbagai konteks sosial dan budaya untuk memperdalam pemahaman tentang peran kesalehan dalam partisipasi publik.]

Keywords: public piety; salafi muslimah; religious agency

Introduction

The intersection of religious piety and public space has become a pivotal topic in contemporary discourses, particularly in Muslim societies. In recent years, women's public expression of Islamic piety has attracted significant attention, given its implications for gender, religion, and modernity.[1] Understanding how Muslim women navigate their religious identity in the public sphere is critical for addressing broader questions about the role of religion in modern societies, especially in light of global debates surrounding secularism, feminism, and religious conservatism.[2] Exploring these dynamics becomes increasingly relevant in pluralistic societies where diverse expressions of religiosity interact with secular norms.

Within the academic discipline of religious studies and gender studies, women's public manifestation of Islamic piety offers a unique opportunity to examine the negotiation of agency, identity, and modernity in Muslim communities. Scholarly discussions on religious piety have often focused on the tensions between individual autonomy and collective religious norms.[3] The increasing visibility of Muslim women practicing piety in public spaces, particularly in urban settings, raises crucial questions about how religious identities are constructed and maintained in contexts influenced by local and global pressures.[4] These explorations contribute to understanding how Islamic piety

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[1] Maryyum Mehmood, "Mapping Muslim Moral Provinces: Framing Feminized Piety of Pakistani Diaspora," *Religions* 12, No. 5 (May 2021): 356, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12050356; Saba Mahmood, "Teoría Feminista Y el Agente Social Dócil: Algunas Reflexiones Sobre el Renacimiento Islámico en Egipto," *Papeles Del Ceic* 2019, No. 1 (March 2019): 202, https://doi.org/10.1387/pceic.20282.

[2] Mawardi Siregar, "Women And Coffee Shops: Negotiation of the Identity of Modernity and Piety in the Sharia Public Space," *International Journal of Social Science and Business* 7, No. 1 (June 2022): 115–23, https://doi.org/10.23887/ijssb.v7i1.44732.

[3] Mahmood, "Teoría Feminista Y el Agente Social Dócil: Algunas Reflexiones Sobre El Renacimiento Islámico en Egipto." Saba Fatima, "Striving For God's Attention: Gendered Spaces and Piety," *Hypatia* 31, No. 3 (January 2016): 605–19, https://doi.org/10.1111/hypa.12255.

[4] Momotaj Begum, "Female Leadership in Public Religious Space: An Alternative Group of Women in Tablighi Jamaat in Bangladesh," *Journal of International Development and Cooperation* 22, No. 1 (2016): 25–36; Itzea Goicolea Amiano, "¿Empoderamiento Y Sumisión A Dios? La Acción Pía en Las Nuevas Musulmanas del Siglo XXI," *Feminismo/S*, No. 28 (2016), https://doi.org/10.14198/fem.2016.28.08.

intersects with broader social structures, including class, gender, and power dynamics.

Despite the growing body of research on women's public display of Islamic piety, unresolved issues remain related to how this piety is negotiated in specific cultural and geographical contexts. For example, the *Salafi* movement, known for its conservative religious stance, presents a distinct framework within which women's piety is articulated, particularly in public spaces.[5] In Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority country, the *Salafi* movement's influence has been both significant and controversial. The group's emphasis on strict religious observance often raises questions about the role of women in public life and how they negotiate their spiritual and social identities.[6,7] Addressing these complexities is essential for understanding the broader dynamics of gender, religion, and modernity in contemporary Muslim societies.

Existing literature has explored how Muslim women's piety is manifested in various cultural contexts, highlighting diverse experiences and practices. In Spain, Muslim women have found empowerment through religious practices that are often perceived as conflicting with secular feminist ideals.[8] Similarly, scholars in Turkey have underscored the agency's relational aspects, challenging traditional feminist perspectives on piety.[9] These studies illustrate that piety is not a monolithic concept but is shaped by cultural, social, and political factors across different societies.[10] These findings underscore

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[5] Zainab Mesgartehrani, Abbas Varji Khazemi, And Zahra Bakhtiari, "Muslim Women and Agency: Changing Religious Patterns a Case Study of Turkish and Iranian Women," *İmgelem* 7, No. 13 (December 2023): 625–50, https://doi.org/10.53791/imgelem.1376203.

[6] Siregar, "Women and Coffee Shops: Negotiation of the Identity of Modernity and Piety in the Sharia Public Space."

[7] Puri Yuanita, "Pengelolah Pesantren Wali Sanga Ende (Akses 20 November 2022)" (Kupang: Tribunnews, 2022).

[8] Goicolea Amiano, "¿Empoderamiento Y Sumisión A Dios? La Acción Pía En Las Nuevas Musulmanas Del Siglo Xxi."

[9] Pınar Dokumacı, "Toward a Relational Approach? Common Models of Pious Women's Agency and Pious Feminist Autonomy in Turkey," *Hypatia* 35, No. 2 (April 2020): 243–61, https://doi.org/10.1017/Hyp.2020.4.

[10] Mahmood, "Teoría Feminista Y El Agente Social Dócil: Algunas Reflexiones Sobre El Renacimiento Islámico En Egipto." Salsabel Almanssori, "Public Pedagogy of

the necessity of contextualizing piety within specific social frameworks.

Research on women's participation in public religious activities has revealed that public spaces are often male-dominated, limiting women's roles in spiritual life. Fatima (2016) noted that women face restrictions in major Islamic religious sites such as Masjid al-Haram and Masjid an-Nabawi, highlighting the marginalization of women in these sacred spaces.[11] In contrast, Begum (2016) documented how women in the Jamaah Tabligh movement in Bangladesh have created separate religious spaces, enabling them to lead and organize religious activities independently.[12] These findings indicate that women's engagement with public religious practices can vary significantly depending on the local and institutional contexts.[13]

Studies have explored the intersection of Islamic piety and modernity in the Indonesian context, focusing on how Muslim women balance religious obligations with contemporary societal norms. The practice of wearing the niqab, for example, has been interpreted not only as a spiritual act but also as a form of protest against mainstream Islamic practices and secular modernity.[14] Similarly, the rise of middle-class Muslim women in piety-centered events such as the Putri Muslimah festival reflects the convergence of Islamic values with modern public life.[15] These studies contribute to a nuanced understanding of how Muslim women in Indonesia navigate their religious identities within the public sphere, particularly about social class and modernity.

Hijabi Girlhood," *Girlhood Studies* 16, No. 3 (December 2023): 18–34, https://doi.org/10.3167/ghs.2023.160304.

[11] Fatima, "Striving for God's Attention: Gendered Spaces and Piety."

[12] Begum, "Female Leadership in Public Religious Space: An Alternative Group of Women in Tablighi Jamaat in Bangladesh."

[13] Syarifah Isnaini, "Social Media and Public Participation of Tablighi Jamaat's Women," *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi (Indonesian Journal of Communications Studies)* 6, No. 1 (2022): 89–109, https://doi.org/10.25139/Jsk.V6i1.3591.

[14] Maghfur Ahmad, Siti Mumun Muniroh, and Shinta Nurani, "Niqab, Protest Movement, and the Salafization of Indonesian Islam," *QIJIS (Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies)* 9, no. 2 (December 31, 2021): 423, https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v9i2.8195.

[15] Abd. Aziz Faiz Et Al., "Middle-Class Muslims Piety Festival In Indonesia Islamic Contemporary," *Ibda`: Jurnal Kajian Islam dan Budaya* 21, No. 2 (2023): 169–86, https://doi.org/10.24090/ibda.v21i2.6859.

While substantial research has addressed the expression of piety among Muslim women globally, there is a notable gap in understanding how these dynamics play out within the specific context of *Salafi* Muslim women in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Most existing studies focus on regions such as Egypt, Turkey, or the Middle East, leaving the Indonesian context underexplored. [16]Additionally, limited attention has been paid to how *Salafi* women negotiate public piety in an environment heavily influenced by local Islamic traditions and modern societal pressures.[17] This research gap calls for an investigation into how *Salafi* Muslim women articulate their religious identity and piety in public spaces, particularly in the face of social and political challenges in Indonesia.

This study aims to fill the gap above by examining how Muslim women in *Salafi* study groups in Yogyakarta practice and express piety in the public sphere. The research will focus on how these women navigate their religious identities, balancing the expectations of conservative Islamic teachings with the realities of modern public life. By analyzing the interactions between piety, public space, and modernity, this study seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on women's agency in Islam and the evolving role of religious piety in shaping public identities in Indonesia. The findings will enhance our understanding of how religion, gender, and public life intersect in Muslim-majority societies, offering valuable insights for scholars of Islamic studies, gender studies, and social anthropology.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore the manifestation of piety in public spaces among *Salafi* Muslim female students participating in study groups in Yogyakarta. The research sites involve four significant universities in Yogyakarta: three public and one private. The identities of the universities and informants were anonymized. The selection of

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[16] Fitria Sari Yunianti, "A Discursive Analysis of Hijab Removal: Identity and Piety," *Ijish (International Journal of Islamic Studies And Humanities)* 5, No. 1 (October 2022): 1–12, https://doi.org/10.26555/ijish.V5i1.5925.
[17] Mesgartehrani, Khazemi, And Bakhtiari, "Muslim Women and Agency: Changing Religious Patterns a Case Study of Turkish and Iranian Women."

universities was based on the high involvement of female students in *Salafi* study group communities.[18]

Data were collected through participant observation and in-depth interviews with eight key informants, active members, and organizers of the study groups. This study analyzes the reception, internalization, and negotiation of hadith teachings among *Salafi* Muslim women daily, particularly in public spaces. The observation was conducted over six months, during which the researcher participated in the study groups to understand social interactions, the application of hadith teachings, and communication patterns within the community. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to identify how *Salafi* study groups influence religious practices and social interactions of *Salafi* Muslim women in public spaces, as well as to explain the role of study groups in shaping the religious and social identities of Muslim women in public settings.

Below is a table of informant codes and universities used in the study:

Table 1. Table of informant codes and universities

Informant	University
M1	U1
M2	U1
M3	U2
M4	U2
M5	U3
M6	U3
M7	U4
M8	U4

Each interview lasted 60-90 minutes and was recorded and then transcribed for descriptive and analytical analysis. Thematic coding was used to identify key themes that emerged from the interviews and

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[18] Chris Chaplin, "Salafi Activism and the Promotion of a Modern Muslim Identity," *South East Asia Research* 26, No. 1 (March 2018): 3–20, https://doi.org/10.1177/0967828x17752414; Chris Chaplin, "Communal Salafi Learning and Islamic Selfhood: Examining Religious Boundaries Through Ethnographic Encounters in Indonesia," *Ethnography* 21, No. 1 (August 2020): 113–32, https://doi.org/10.1177/1466138118795988.

observations, focusing on how hadith teachings influence social interactions and the piety of Muslim women in public spaces. Study materials such as textbooks and audio recordings were also collected to support the analysis. The analysis examined the relationship between religious teachings and the agency of *Salafi* Muslim women in the discursive context of Islam, drawing on the theories of Talal Asad and Saba Mahmood.[19]

Data triangulation was done by comparing the observations, interviews, and documentation results. The validity of the research was strengthened through member checking and peer debriefing. Additionally, critical reflection was employed to reduce researcher bias, and ethical compliance was maintained by obtaining written consent from the informants and ensuring anonymity. The findings from this study are expected to contribute to the global discourse on the reception and negotiation of hadith teachings among *Salafi* Muslim women while also comparing these findings with previous studies on the agency of Muslim women in conservative Islamic groups. Moreover, this research aims to enrich discussions on the role of study groups in shaping Muslim women's religious and social identities in public spaces.

Results

The results of this study explore the manifestation of piety in public spaces among *Salafi* Muslim women students who participate in study groups in Yogyakarta. By analyzing their interactions with hadith-based lessons from religious study groups, the study sheds light on how these women internalize, adapt, and negotiate their religious practices in their everyday social environments. Through interviews with participants, this section reveals the dynamic process through which their piety extends beyond private worship, influencing their behavior and identity in the broader public sphere.

Agency and Piety of Muslim Women in Public Spaces

This study found that *Salafi* Muslim women who attend religious studies in Yogyakarta show a process of reception, internalization, and negotiation of the hadiths they receive daily in

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[19] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford, Ca: Stanford University Press, 2003); Mahmood, "Teoría Feminista Y El Agente Social Dócil: Algunas Reflexiones Sobre El Renacimiento Islámico En Egipto."

public spaces. These religious studies shape their understanding of spiritual practices and guide their social behavior and interactions with society. It is reflected in the statement of a religious study participant, M1, who said, *"This religious study has greatly influenced the way I pray and perform salah, both obligatory and sunnah. After attending this study, I feel I have become better at interacting with others in public spaces"* (M1, 2024, U1).

M1's statement indicates that *Salafi* religious studies play a significant role in shaping the religious and social behavior of *Salafi* Muslim women. They experience a clear impact on their daily religious practices and their social interactions. The piety internalized through these religious studies does not stop at the personal level but extends into public spaces. M1 mentioned that after attending the study, she became better at interacting with others in public spaces, indicating improved social ethics driven by religious understanding.

A similar sentiment is shared by M3, another participant from a different university, who said, *"I noticed significant changes in how I conduct myself socially after joining this religious study group. I feel more responsible for my actions in public, especially regarding how I interact with non-Muslims. My behavior in public has improved because of the religious teachings"* (M3, 2024, U2). This response supports M1's statement, showing a consistent trend among *Salafi* Muslim women in how their understanding of religion shapes their public interactions.

M1 and M3 statements indicate that *Salafi* religious studies play a significant role in shaping the religious and social behavior of *Salafi* Muslim women. They experience a clear impact on their daily religious practices and their social interactions. The piety internalized through these religious studies does not stop at the personal level but extends into public spaces. M1 mentioned that after attending the study, she became better at interacting with others in public spaces, indicating improved social ethics driven by religious understanding.

These findings align with Talal Asad's theory of "Islam as a discursive tradition," where fundamental texts such as hadiths are studied theoretically, internalized, and practiced in everyday life. This discursive tradition allows *Salafi* Muslim women to receive the teachings delivered in religious study and apply them in different contexts, including public spaces. M1's statement reflects how religious

discourse in the study shapes behavior that is considered proper in daily life according to the discursive tradition described by Asad (2017).[20]

Thus, this research enriches the study of living hadiths among *Salafi* women in Indonesia by emphasizing how these teachings are not passively received but internalized and negotiated in daily life, especially in public spaces. The results show that *Salafi* Muslim women can adapt to their social context while maintaining the piety they gain from religious studies.

Contrast in the Aspect of Negotiating Teachings in Everyday Life

The research findings indicate that *Salafi* Muslim women in Yogyakarta engage with and negotiate the hadith teachings they receive through *Salafi* study groups in various ways in their daily lives, particularly in public spaces. This negotiation process involves adjustments to religious practices, social interactions, and social participation. One of the interview results shows that some *Salafi* Muslim women adopt a more structured and consistent approach to applying the teachings they receive. In contrast, others may face ambiguity when practicing these teachings.

One informant, M2, emphasized that the *Salafi* teachings received in study groups are prominent and structured, making it easier for them to implement them in daily life. She stated, *"I feel that the teachings received through these study groups are clear and structured enough, so there is no ambiguity in carrying them out daily, whether in worship or social interactions"* (M2, 2024, U1). This view underscores that, for some *Salafi* Muslim women, a solid structure of teachings helps them avoid doubt or conflict in their daily practices.

In another interview, M5 stressed that certain public situations challenge the consistent application of the teachings they receive. *"Sometimes, in the context of public spaces, I find it difficult to consistently apply the teachings, especially when there is different social pressure"* (M5, 2024, U2). They indicate that not all *Salafi* Muslim women share the same experience in practicing these teachings in public spaces.

Adding a contrasting perspective, informant M6 expressed similar challenges in reconciling public life with religious expectations.

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[20] Talal Asad, "L'idée D'une Anthropologie De L'islam," *Archives De Sciences Sociales Des Religions* 17, No. 2 (2017): 117–37, https://doi.org/10.4000/Assr.29724.

She noted, *"In some situations, the teachings are clear, but the public environment does not always align with them, making it difficult to maintain consistency without feeling conflicted or pressured by outside influences"* (M6, 2024, U3). This further illustrates the range of experiences among *Salafi* Muslim women in their efforts to balance religious adherence with social demands.

In the context of Talal Asad's theory of "Islam as a discursive tradition," these findings can manifest how texts and practices interact dynamically in the lives of *Salafi* Muslim women. Asad emphasizes that Islam as a discursive tradition involves a close relationship between fundamental texts and the practices carried out by Muslims. In this case, the structured teachings from *Salafi* study groups provide a clear framework for *Salafi* Muslim women to navigate their daily lives in worship and social interactions. Thus, the negotiation of teachings by *Salafi* Muslim women can be seen as a process in which they strive to consistently practice and internalize these teachings according to their understanding of religious texts.[21]

However, these findings also reveal that not all *Salafi* Muslim women share the same experiences. Some may experience ambiguity or uncertainty in applying the teachings they receive, indicating that this negotiation process is not always straightforward and may involve various forms of adaptation and reinterpretation, especially when faced with the demands of daily life in dynamic and complex public spaces.

Therefore, while there is commonality in the reception of teachings, differences in negotiation suggest there is room for *Salafi* Muslim women to interpret and adjust the teachings they receive according to their life contexts, highlighting the complexity of their Islamic practice in public spaces.

The Influence on Muslim Women's Identity in Public Spaces

This research found that *Salafi* Muslim women attending *Salafi Majelis Taklim* (Islamic study groups) develop a self-identity closely tied to piety and their roles in public spaces. Their identity is influenced by the teachings they receive and how they internalize and negotiate the understanding of hadith in their daily lives. M3, one of the participants, stated that her identity as a Muslim woman in public spaces is something natural and not significantly different from other Muslim

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[21] Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*.

women outside the *Salafi* community. She emphasized that the *Salafi* study group strengthens solidarity and brotherhood among them rather than creating stark differences. *"My identity as a Muslim woman in public spaces is something I consider natural and not that different from others. I feel that this study group strengthens the solidarity and brotherhood among us"* (M3, 2024, U1).

Another informant, M8, added that there is a strong sense of solidarity within the *Salafi* study group, which reinforces the sense of community in public spaces. *"We feel closer to one another, and this study group helps us face challenges as Muslim women in public spaces while maintaining piety"* (M7, 2024, U4).

M6, another participant, reflected similar sentiments. She mentioned how the study group provided her with a platform to engage with other women facing similar struggles. *"In the Salafi study group, I find a sense of unity and shared understanding. It helps me navigate the demands of public life without compromising my beliefs. We build each other up, which is empowering"* (M6, 2024, U3).

The statements from M3, M7, and M6 reflect how *Salafi* Muslim women perceive their identity in public life. They tend to view their identity as part of a broader community rather than something distinct or overly prominent. This perspective suggests that the study groups they attend serve as platforms for deepening religious knowledge and strengthening collective identity and solidarity among fellow Muslim women.

From the perspective of Talal Asad's concept of "Islam as a discursive tradition," the identity constructed by *Salafi* Muslim women can be understood as a result of their interaction with religious texts and practices within the study groups. Asad argues that Islamic discursive tradition is always closely tied to foundational texts of the past, such as the Qur'an and hadith, which guide and shape religious practices in daily life.[22] The natural identity mentioned by M3 demonstrates that receiving and internalizing hadith in the *Salafi* study groups plays a significant role in shaping their actions and identity in public spaces.

These findings align with a study by Mahmood (2005), which emphasizes that pious practices, like those performed by *Salafi* women, are an essential source of agency in shaping their self-identity as Muslim women. Mahmood argues that piety cannot be separated from

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[22] Asad.

agency. In this context, the identity formed by *Salafi* women through study groups not only reinforces piety but also creates a space for them to participate in public life in a way that aligns with their religious values.[23]

However, these findings can also be contrasted with more critical views on the role of Islamic study groups in shaping women's identities in public spaces. For instance, a study conducted by Fuad in 2020 on PKS women suggests that study groups are not always ideological and can create complexities in identity that do not always align with formal teachings.[24] While M3 sees her identity as natural and not different, other research shows that women's identities within study groups may be ambiguous and inconsistent with the teachings they receive, especially in negotiating identity in public spaces.

Thus, this research adds nuance to the understanding of how *Salafi* Muslim women receive and negotiate the hadith teachings they receive and how this influences their identity in public spaces. This study also highlights the importance of a discursive approach in understanding the relationship between texts, practices, and identity in contemporary Islamic contexts.

Discussion

This study explores the manifestation of piety in public spaces among Muslimah *Salafi* study groups in Yogyakarta, contributing to the broader discussion of how religious identity influences public participation. The research aligns with earlier studies highlighting piety as a form of agency in Muslim women's daily lives, reflecting their internalization of religious teachings.[25] Prior literature has emphasized that this agency shapes social behavior, particularly in public interactions, often guided by religious values.[26] Additionally, *Salafi*

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[23] S Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

[24] Ai Fatimah Nur Fuad, "Da'Wa and Politics: Lived Experiences of the Female Islamists in Indonesia," *Contemporary Islam* 14, No. 1 (April 2020): 19–47, https://doi.org/10.1007/S11562-019-00442-X.

[25] Mahmood, "Teoría Feminista Y el Agente Social Dócil: Algunas Reflexiones Sobre El Renacimiento Islámico en Egipto."

[26] Amina Jamal, "Piety, Transgression, and the Feminist Debate on Muslim Women: Resituating the Victim-Subject of Honor-Related Violence from a Transnational

teachings play a significant role in forming the religious identity of their followers, thereby influencing how they negotiate their presence in the public sphere.[27] This research thus aims to understand further the role of *Salafi* study groups in shaping Muslim women's public engagement while maintaining their piety.

The primary results reveal that Muslimah *Salafi* in Yogyakarta internalizes and negotiates Hadith teachings in public life, reflecting a dynamic adaptation to their surroundings. This internalization is manifested through active engagement in social spaces while adhering to *Salafi*'s ethical guidelines.[28] Interestingly, some Muslim women demonstrate flexibility in adapting to the demands of public spaces without compromising their religious principles.[29] Additionally, the study highlights the importance of study groups as platforms for reinforcing collective religious identity and creating social solidarity among Muslim women.[30] This flexibility and collective identity formation reflect how piety shapes their public participation beyond traditional expectations.

These findings are consistent with prior research that positions piety as a distinct form of agency in the public sphere.[31] They also support Asad's view of religion as a discursive tradition that shapes identity and participation in the public domain.[32,33] Furthermore, this study builds on previous scholarship by revealing how Muslimah *Salafi* negotiates religious teachings in diverse public contexts, demonstrating

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Lens," *International Journal of Child, Youth And Family Studies* 12, No. 1 (March 2021): 49–72, https://doi.org/10.18357/Ijcyfs121202120083.

[27] Begum, "Female Leadership in Public Religious Space: An Alternative Group of Women in Tablighi Jamaat in Bangladesh."

[28] Dokumacı, "Toward a Relational Approach? Common Models of Pious Women's Agency and Pious Feminist Autonomy in Turkey."

[29] Yunianti, "A Discursive Analysis of Hijab Removal: Identity and Piety."

[30] Siregar, "Women and Coffee Shops: Negotiation of the Identity of Modernity and Piety in the Sharia Public Space."

[31] Mahmood, "Teoría Feminista Y El Agente Social Dócil: Algunas Reflexiones Sobre El Renacimiento Islámico En Egipto."

[32] Asad, "L'idée D'une Anthropologie De L'islam."

[33] Mengia Hong Tschalaer, "Muslim Women's Rights Activists' Visibility: Stretching the Gendered Boundaries of the Public Space in the City of Lucknow," *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal*, No. 11 (June 2015), https://doi.org/10.4000/samaj.3928.

broader variations than initially reported.[34] While prior research focused on religious adherence in more homogeneous settings, the findings here highlight these women's adaptability to more complex public environments.[35] This adaptability suggests an evolving interpretation of piety in response to contemporary public demands.

The findings complement studies on religious women's negotiation of social contexts. For example, similar to Turkish women navigating public life, Muslimah *Salafi* faces challenges in aligning their religious identity with societal expectations.[36] This negotiation process is not merely passive compliance but an active engagement with their surroundings, highlighting the agency embedded in their piety.[37][38] Such engagement echoes findings on the role of piety in challenging patriarchal norms as women exercise influence in private and public religious spaces.[39] This reinforces the argument that piety is a multifaceted tool for individual and collective empowerment in the public sphere.

The results also indicate that integrating religious teachings into public life is complex and context-dependent. Muslimah *Salafi* in Yogyakarta do not rigidly follow *Salafi* doctrines but rather adapt these teachings to meet the demands of their social environments.[40] This adaptation is reflected in their ritual practices and how they navigate

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[34] Mehmood, "Mapping Muslim Moral Provinces: Framing Feminized Piety of Pakistani Diaspora."

[35] Faiz Et Al., "Mapping Muslim Moral Provinces: Framing Feminized Piety of Pakistani Diaspora."

[36] Dokumacı, "Toward a Relational Approach? Common Models of Pious Women's Agency and Pious Feminist Autonomy in Turkey."

[37] Mesgartehrani, Khazemi, And Bakhtiari, "Muslim Women and Agency: Changing Religious Patterns a Case Study of Turkish and Iranian Women."

[38] Karen Vintges, "Muslim Women in the Western Media: Foucault, Agency, Governmentality and Ethics," *European Journal of Women's Studies* 19, No. 3 (July 2012): 283–98, https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506812443476.

[39] Yuyun Sunesti, Noorhaidi Hasan, And Muhammad Najib Azca, "The Sunnah Lake of Muslimah: Salafi Women, the Manhaj and Online Media," *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews* 6, No. 3 (February 2019): 67–71, https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2018.6310.

[40] Ana C Antunes, "The Hijab Project: Troubling Conceptions of Agency and Piety Through Community-Engaged Art Making," *Social Sciences*, 2022, https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11020039.

public interactions, suggesting a dynamic interpretation of piety.[41,42] However, it is essential to interpret these findings with caution, as the level of adaptability may vary based on individual and contextual factors.[43] Future research should explore how these negotiations differ across public spaces and social contexts, particularly in more diverse urban settings.

Another notable aspect of these findings is how Muslimah *Salafi* challenges stereotypes of passive religiosity. Rather than merely following religious norms, they actively manage their piety to align with societal demands while retaining religious integrity.[44,45] This suggests that their engagement with public spaces is not a simple expression of religious devotion but a strategic adaptation of their religious identity.[46] Such adaptations allow them to maintain their religiosity while participating fully in the public sphere, contradicting traditional assumptions about women in conservative religious movements.[47] This underscores the importance of recognizing piety as an evolving and active form of social participation.

In conclusion, the findings have important implications for studying piety and agency among Muslim women. *Salafi* study groups provide religious education and platforms for forming collective identities and social ethics, reinforcing their public engagement.[48] Thus, the expression of piety in public spaces can be seen as a form of creative adaptation to modern social challenges, maintaining religious values

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[41] Fatima, "Striving for God's Attention: Gendered Spaces And Piety."

[42] Sufyan Abid Dogra, "Living a Piety-Led Life Beyond Muharram: Becoming or Being a South Asian Shia Muslim in the UK," *Contemporary Islam* 13, No. 3 (October 8, 2019): 307–24, https://doi.org/10.1007/S11562-019-00437-8.

[43] Muhammad Ansor, "Post-islamism and the Remaking of Islamic Public Sphere in Post-reform Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 23, No. 3 (December 2016): 471–515, https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v23i3.2412.

[44] Goicolea Amiano, "¿Empoderamiento Y Sumisión A Dios? La Acción Pía En Las Nuevas Musulmanas Del Siglo Xxi."

[45] Mahmood, "Teoría Feminista Y El Agente Social Dócil: Algunas Reflexiones Sobre El Renacimiento Islámico En Egipto."

[46] Almanssori, "Public Pedagogy of Hijabi Girlhood."

[47] Ahmad, Muniroh, and Nurani, "Niqab, Protest Movement, and the Salafization of Indonesian Islam."

[48] Yunianti, "A Discursive Analysis of Hijab Removal: Identity and Piety."

while navigating diverse social contexts.[49] These findings contribute to the broader discourse on religious agency, demonstrating how piety can serve as a personal and collective resource for navigating public life. Future research should explore the diverse expressions of piety and its impact on social participation in different cultural and social contexts.

Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the manifestation of piety in public spaces among *Salafi* Muslim women students who participate in study groups in Yogyakarta. The research findings highlight three key areas: the agency and piety of Muslim women in public spaces, the negotiation of religious teachings in daily life, and the impact of these teachings on forming identity in public settings. The study reveals that *Salafi* study groups foster personal and collective expressions of piety that influence social interactions and public behavior, aligning with existing theories on religious agency. Notably, the negotiation of religious teachings varies among participants, with some experiencing clarity and structure while others encounter ambiguities that allow room for interpretation. These findings underscore the role of religious practice in shaping public engagement and identity formation, demonstrating that piety can be a resource for navigating modern social challenges. However, the study's focus on a specific group limits the generalizability of the results, and reliance on self-reported data may not capture the full diversity of piety expressions. Future research should examine how piety is expressed across cultural contexts to understand its impact on public participation and identity formation. Overall, the study contributes to the discourse on religious agency by showing how piety operates as a dynamic force in personal and public life, with the potential for further exploration in diverse socio-political environments.

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