

NEGOTIATING MUSLIM IDENTITY IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION: A LITERATURE REVIEW

NEGOSIASI IDENTITAS MUSLIM DI ERA GLOBALISASI: TINJAUAN PUSTAKA

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ABSTRACT

Globalization has had a considerable influence on Muslim identity, especially in the social, cultural, and technological fields. This article aims to discuss how Muslims not only understand their religious identity, but also guard it from world changes and technological advances. By reviewing various current literature sources that discuss how Muslim identity is formed and developed in an ever-changing environment. This research shows that Muslim identity is not something fixed, but is formed through an ongoing process of adjustment between the Islamic values that have been traditionally inherited and the influence of modernity that has emerged in the era of globalization. Muslims have shown an active role by responding to gender-related issues, fighting discrimination against Islam, and overcoming negative stereotypes, while utilizing the use of digital media as an easier means of conveying and strengthening religious identity. Thus, understanding Muslim identity today requires examining the diversity of Muslim experiences in various contexts, as each group faces distinct challenges and expresses its religious identity in unique ways within a global society.

Keywords: Muslim identity, globalization, literature review

ABSTRAK

globalisasi telah memberikan pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap identitas muslim, terutama dalam bidang sosial, budaya, dan teknologi. artikel ini bertujuan untuk membahas bagaimana umat muslim tidak hanya memahami identitas keagamaannya, tetapi juga menjaganya dari perubahan dunia dan kemajuan teknologi. dengan meninjau berbagai sumber literatur terkini yang membahas bagaimana identitas muslim dibentuk dan dikembangkan dalam lingkungan yang terus berubah. penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa identitas muslim bukanlah sesuatu yang bersifat tetap, melainkan dibentuk melalui proses penyesuaian yang berkelanjutan antara nilai-nilai islam yang secara tradisional diwariskan dan pengaruh modernisasi yang muncul di era globalisasi. umat muslim menunjukkan peran aktif dengan merespons isu-isu terkait gender, melawan diskriminasi terhadap islam, dan mengatasi stereotip negatif, sekaligus memanfaatkan media digital sebagai sarana yang lebih mudah untuk menyampaikan dan memperkuat identitas keagamaan. dengan demikian, pemahaman terhadap identitas muslim saat ini memerlukan kajian atas keberagaman pengalaman umat muslim dalam berbagai konteks, karena setiap kelompok menghadapi tantangan yang berbeda dan mengekspresikan identitas keagamaannya dengan cara yang unik dalam masyarakat global.

Kata Kunci: identitas muslim, globalisasi, tinjauan literatur

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization, which brings great changes, not only affects the development of technology or culture, but globalization also affects how Muslims can survive to maintain the teachings of Islam in their daily lives. With the developing era, Muslims must also be able to balance life and religious values side by side. However, these conditions require Muslims to adjust to a diverse social environment. This indicates that globalization does not only have a positive impact, because the challenges faced by Muslims are not easy to face. With the increasingly diverse social environment, the challenges for Muslims are getting bigger and give

rise to negative stereotypes, Islamophobia, discrimination, so that the negotiation process is so complicated.

These challenges show that Muslim identity is not actually fixed, but constantly changes according to the conditions of the social environment. According to Yucel and Whyte (2023), "identity is shaped and cultivated through a myriad of human, individual, and collective experiences, encompassing a broad range of racial, cultural, ethnic, religious, gender, regional, historical, and socio-political realities." This quote illustrates that the identity of Muslims is also formed from daily activities, religious behaviors, and how the world community views Muslims.

Muslims must try to continue to balance these two things to carry out the negotiation process of their identity. These adjustments will later make Muslim identity understandable as a result of the process of adaptation that continues from time to time. Thus, the formation of Muslim identity is very important so that Muslims are able to survive in the midst of the development of the times influenced by the values of modernity. And based on those needs, this article uses a literature review approach to explain how previous research has portrayed the negotiation of Muslim identity amid the rapid flow of globalization and the rapid development of digital technologies.

One of the things that has been discussed in previous research is how digital technology affects the way Muslims express their religious identity. According to Zaid et al. (2022), "Digital platforms have empowered individuals and communities to re-negotiate longestablished notions of religion and authority. A new generation of social media influencers has recently emerged in the Muslim world." This research shows that the existence of digital space is not only used to spread da'wah through religious quotes or content, but also a place for Muslims to re-understand Islamic teachings, try new ways of conveying them, and adapt to global trends.

Technology, especially digital media, is believed to help open up new opportunities to express their religious identity in a more modern and flexible way. As explained by Nurfitri (2023, p. 36), "The millennial Muslim movement has built a new identity as a religious community that obeys Islamic rules. The social movement intends to make young people close to the Qur'an, pray on time, actively seek religious knowledge, and spread the message of Islam through social media platforms." The millennial generation uses social media not only for entertainment, but also for religious values. Such as accessing Islamic sites, taking online studies, and joining virtual communities to understand and form religious identities in the era of globalization.

In addition, through digital media it also changes the way Muslims communicate, including in social and gender relationships. Discussions about Islam have become more open, accessible, and no longer limited to formal spaces. As Ulyan (2023, p. 108) states that "digital media has significantly advanced gender-equitable discourses within Islamic preaching. Through online platforms, women can assert theological agency, foster community, and advocate for inclusive religious interpretations. As digital da'wah continues to evolve, sustaining these gains will require continuous support, scholarly engagement, and community empowerment." The statement shows that globalization and technological developments provide opportunities for more people to engage in religious behavior. Muslims, especially women, can take a more active role in religious activities.

Thus, Muslim identity in the digital era continues to develop through the process of balancing tradition and modernity. With rapidly developing technology making this process easier. Because many studies or sciences are easily accessible and spread quickly. So that Muslims, especially the younger generation, can still maintain religious values but still adjust to the changing times. In addition to influencing the way religion interacts and learns, digital technology also opens up new spaces for Muslims to understand, shape, and express religious identity in an increasingly open global society.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In cultural studies, identity can be understood as something that continues to grow and change with the social developments around it. According to Hall (1996, p. 93), identity arises through the process of differentiation because "the modern makes identities into social constructions". Identity is not fixed. Identity arises from the existence of social experiences, history, and the way humans perceive and give meaning.

Then this is supported by Castells' view of the great changes that have occurred in the global era. "Globalization and informationalization, enacted by networks of wealth, technology, and power, are transforming our world," according to Castells (2010, p. 72). Then global changes that are the force for world progress, such as technology, information, and the economy that have shifted many aspects of life, including the way people build identities. From Castells' point of view, it shows that globalization is not only changing the social structure, but also forming a new space as a place of identity to negotiate and understand repeatedly.

From these two views, it can be concluded that identity is always in the process of formation, which is never completed. For Muslims in this era of globalization, the process can be seen in how cultural values and experiences face the challenges of modernity. Muslim identity is something that continues to be negotiated both in daily life and in digital media, and in interactions with the global scope. Therefore, Muslim identity can be understood as a flexible form and continues to adapt to the changing times.

Identity negotiation becomes especially salient in Western minority contexts. Ahmad and Harrison (2020) demonstrate that British Muslims navigate Islamophobia and securitization through adaptive strategies such as selective visibility, code switching, and situational modesty. Similarly, Peek's (2005) longitudinal research on Muslim youth in the United States illustrates how identity evolves from early religious awakening to post-9/11 defensive postures and later social reassertion, showing that politicization often emerges as a response to structural surveillance. Countering deficit based perspectives, Algharbi (2021) highlights the cultural and intellectual capital cultivated by diasporic Muslim communities through education, interfaith engagement, entrepreneurship, and digital activism, framing identity negotiation not merely as survival but as creative boundary making.

Digital technologies further transform Muslim identity by decentralizing religious authority and reshaping how Islamic knowledge is produced and circulated. Gosse (2023) argues that online activism redistributes authority from traditional clerics to networked communities of interpretation, while Campbell's (2020) concept of "networked religion" underscores how fluid digital participation and algorithm driven visibility enable Muslims especially youth to craft personalized religious identities. Yet, digital spaces also produce contradictions: while they allow autonomy and pluralism, studies such as Hirji (2020) caution that platform algorithms can amplify polarization, intensifying sectarian boundaries through echo chambers. Parallel to digital transformations, scholars examine how Muslim identity is articulated through global consumer culture. Lewis (2013) interprets modest fashion as a political practice through which Muslim women construct identities that are simultaneously pious, modern, and cosmopolitan, challenging reductive Orientalist representations.

The expansion of halal industries, as analyzed by Fischer (2016), positions Islam as a portable ethical system embedded in global markets, from finance to tourism. However, critiques by Sandıkçı (2016) warn that commodification risks reducing Islam to aesthetic consumption, potentially detaching faith from its ethical and spiritual depth. Across these debates, several theoretical gaps remain. First, existing studies often prioritize cultural expressions of identity while underexamining structural factors such as policy regimes, surveillance, or socioeconomic inequality. Second, narratives of digital empowerment insufficiently address how algorithms shape the visibility and circulation of Muslim identities online. Third, while consumerism has been widely discussed, its implications for religious ethics and theology remain underexplored. Addressing these gaps requires interdisciplinary

approaches that integrate digital sociology, postcolonial studies, and globalization theory to conceptualize Muslim identity as a relational, multi-scalar, and continuously negotiated phenomenon.

3. METHODS

This study adopted a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to synthesize existing scholarly debates on Muslim identity negotiation in the context of globalization. SLR is selected because it enables transparent, replicable, and comprehensive mapping of research findings while minimizing subjective researcher bias. The review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines, which provide a structured workflow for selecting, identifying, screening, and evaluating academic sources. Unlike narrative reviews that are interpretive and selective, SLR ensures methodological rigor by systematically collecting and appraising relevant literature according to predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria.

To ensure comprehensive coverage of high-quality academic publications, the data sources were limited to peer-reviewed journal articles indexed in Scopus and Web of Science (WoS). These databases were selected because of their extensive indexing scope, citation reliability, and widespread use in social science research. Their combined coverage ensured that the review incorporated influential and methodologically robust studies on Muslim identity in contemporary contexts.

The search strategy was constructed using Boolean operators and keyword clusters derived from three major conceptual domains: (1) Islamic identity, (2) globalization and transnationalism, and (3) negotiation, adaptation, and identity construction. This structured approach enabled the identification of studies that specifically address how Muslim identities are shaped, challenged, and renegotiated in globalized environments.

To maintain scientific rigor and conceptual relevance, a set of inclusion and exclusion criteria was applied. Eligible studies were: (a) published between 2000 and 2025, (b) peer-reviewed journal articles, (c) written in English, (d) empirical or theoretical works examining Muslim identity in relation to globalization, digital media, migration or diaspora contexts, minority experiences, and consumer culture or Islamic markets, and (e) available in full text. Studies were excluded if they did not align with the analytical focus of identity negotiation for example, articles centered solely on moral theology, jurisprudence (fiqh), doctrinal debates, or unrelated thematic areas.

The systematic review process followed three main screening phases. During the identification stage, all articles retrieved from Scopus and Web of Science were exported into a reference management tool (Zotero or Mendeley) and duplicate records were removed. This was followed by the title and abstract screening, in which articles were evaluated for their relevance to Muslim identity and globalization, while studies focusing solely on theological debates, legal interpretations, or sectarian issues were excluded. In the final full-text review phase, the remaining articles were examined comprehensively to ensure conceptual alignment with the review's objectives, and studies that did not address identity negotiation such as descriptive tourism reports without identity related implications were removed from the corpus.

Data extraction was conducted using thematic analysis. Coding occurred at two levels: descriptive coding, which captured the manifest content of each study, and analytical coding, which examined deeper theoretical patterns and methodological contributions. This dual-level coding approach ensured a comprehensive synthesis that incorporated both substantive findings and the underlying conceptual frameworks.

To ensure reliability and scholarly rigor, each included study was assessed using criteria such as clarity of research design, conceptual coherence, methodological transparency, contribution to identity theory, and empirical credibility evaluated through sample adequacy,

data richness, and analytical rigor. Studies lacking methodological grounding, including anecdotal commentaries or normative essays, were excluded from the final corpus.

As this review relies solely on secondary data and does not involve human participants or primary data collection, formal ethical approval was not required. Nevertheless, all sources were cited accurately to uphold academic integrity, ensure transparency, and prevent misrepresentation.

Tabel 1 Summary of Reviewed Studies on Muslim Identity Negotiation (2021–2023)

Author(s)	Year	Country / Context	Research Focus	Participants / Sample	Design & Method	Data Collection	Key Findings & Implications
Shaker, van Lanen, & van Hoven	2022	Amsterdam, Netherlands	Everyday embodied agency and negotiation of Muslim identity in urban secular spaces	Muslim residents in Amsterdam (diverse age and gender)	Qualitative, ethnographic study	Participant observation, in-depth interviews	Muslim individuals assert <i>embodied agency</i> through daily practices and interactions. Visibility and spatial movement become acts of resistance against stereotypes, promoting new urban belonging.
Driezen, Verschraegen, & Clycq	2021	Antwerp, Belgium	Religious individualism among Muslim youth in super-diverse urban contexts	Young Muslim adults (second-generation immigrants)	Qualitative, case study	Semi-structured interviews	Muslim youth demonstrate <i>religious individualism</i> , integrating Islamic principles with secular values of autonomy and reflexivity. Identity is personalized rather than institutionally defined.
Schenk, Gökarıksel, & Behzadi	2022	Multiple (Transnational / Europe)	Gendered embodiment, security, and	Muslim women in Europe	Qualitative, feminist geography	Ethnographic fieldwork,	Muslim women navigate conflicting expectations of modesty and visibility. Their mobility reflects <i>everyday politics of belonging</i>

Author(s)	Year	Country / Context	Research Focus	Participants / Sample	Design & Method	Data Collection	Key Findings & Implications
			mobility in negotiating Muslim femininities			narrative interviews	under securitized environments. Highlights intersection of gender, faith, and space.
Yucel & Whyte (Eds.)	2023	Global / Comparative	Muslim identity formation in contemporary plural societies	N/A (Editorial synthesis of multiple studies)	Theoretical and conceptual overview	Review of international empirical works	Muslim identities today are <i>translocal</i> and <i>reflexive</i> , shaped by globalization, migration, and pluralism. Calls for integrating intersectional and transnational approaches in future research.
Nurfitria	2023	Indonesia	Hybridization of Muslim millennials' religious identity in digital spaces	Muslim millennials active on social media	Qualitative, digital ethnography	Online content analysis, virtual observation	Digital platforms foster <i>hybrid religiosity</i> blending piety, consumerism, and pop culture. Digital visibility mediates authenticity, creating globalized yet localized expressions of faith.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Across the literature, one of the most prominent findings concerns the embodied and spatial articulation of Muslim identity in secular urban environments. Shaker, van Lanen, and van Hoven (2022) demonstrate that Muslim residents in Amsterdam negotiate identity not through formal political discourse, but through mundane bodily practices such as dress, movement, and presence in public spaces. Everyday actions, like choosing a travel route or entering specific commercial areas, become forms of non-confrontational resistance against stereotyping and Islamophobic assumptions. These daily navigations constitute a micro-politics of belonging, where visibility is strategically managed to cultivate safety, dignity, and recognition.

Similarly, Schenk, Gökarıksel, and Behzadi (2022) show that Muslim women in Europe engage in gendered negotiations of mobility and visibility. Their physical presence particularly when wearing the hijab intersects with securitization, national identity debates, and cultural expectations of femininity. Mobility, therefore, is more than a logistical necessity; it reflects layered negotiations between identity, religious symbolism, and public scrutiny. Such findings indicate that urban spaces serve as performative arenas where Muslim subjectivities are continuously constructed and contested. Rather than being passive victims of global secularism, Muslims enact agency by reconfiguring spatial boundaries and claiming their place within the city.

Beyond spatial practices, the literature identifies a distinct trend toward religiously individualized subjectivities, particularly among young Muslims. Driezen, Verschraegen, and Clycq (2021) reveal that Muslim youth in Antwerp do not conceptualize Islam primarily as a collective or institutional identity; rather, they interpret it through self-reflexive moral frameworks. Their religiosity aligns with contemporary global ideals of autonomy, authenticity, and deliberative decision-making. This dynamic illustrates that globalization does not simply secularize Muslim identity, but re-routes religious authority from external institutions to personal conscience.

This shift, however, is not without ambivalence. Personalization allows freedom from rigid community norms and fosters ethical self-governance, yet it simultaneously weakens collective identity and shared spiritual responsibility. The result is an Islamic identity that remains deeply meaningful but becomes decentralized and fragmented, shaped through introspective negotiation rather than communal doctrine. These findings contradict deterministic narratives that portray Muslim youth as either “less religious” or “traditionally devout.” Instead, they reflect a hybrid spirituality, negotiating Islamic ethics through modern values of self-determination.

The negotiation of Muslim identity is particularly pronounced among women, whose bodies are hyper-visible sites of religious and political inscription. Drawing on feminist geography, Schenk, Gökarıksel, and Behzadi (2022) demonstrate that Muslim women navigate contradictions between expectations of modesty, state security regimes, and dominant cultural norms. The hijab, in this context, becomes a dialectical symbol: a visible expression of faith and self-protection, yet simultaneously a trigger for surveillance, racialization, and gendered judgment.

These studies reveal that gendered identity negotiation is not abstract; it is materially enacted through mobility, social interaction, and spatial avoidance or confrontation. Muslim women therefore embody a paradox of global citizenship: they are both agents of cultural resilience and targets of public scrutiny. Their experiences challenge both Western secular liberal assumptions and internal communal norms. This complexity underscores that religious identity cannot be understood apart from gender, since women often shoulder the burden of performing authenticity in public spaces.

Digitally mediated religious identity adds a new dimension to globalization. Nurfitri (2023) shows that Indonesian Muslim millennials construct hybrid identities through social

media ecosystems that blend piety, consumer culture, and aesthetic branding. Platforms such as Instagram and TikTok elevate religious visibility as a social performance, where authenticity is expressed through curated content, lifestyle representation, and symbolic consumption.

In contrast to analog forms of religious expression, the digital sphere fosters rapid circulation of Islamic narratives, but often embeds them within market logics and influencer dynamics. Islam becomes simultaneously spiritual and commodified, devotional and algorithmic, global and locally contextual. This phenomenon exemplifies the broader logic of glocalization: religious practices retain Islamic core values while adopting visual, linguistic, and behavioral codes shaped by global youth culture. In this environment, Islamic identity is not merely practiced, it is also produced, aestheticized, and monetized.

Across the reviewed studies, three theoretical implications emerge. First, Muslim identity is translocal, negotiated through flows of migration, digital connectivity, and urban mobility. Second, identity formation is intersectional, particularly in how gender, class, and racialization intersect with religious expression. Third, identity is performative constructed not only discursively but materially through bodily routines, mediated images, and socio-spatial interactions.

Yucel and Whyte (2023) emphasize that contemporary Muslim identities are not fixed endpoints but dynamic processes shaped by globalization. Rather than assimilating or resisting wholesale, Muslims creatively reorganize religious subjectivity to maintain belonging, agency, and dignity. Taken together, these findings challenge deficit-oriented narratives of the Muslim condition and instead highlight the innovative strategies through which Muslims reconfigure their place in secular societies.

5. CONCLUSION

In the era of globalization, the negotiation of Muslim identity is a dynamic, complex, and ever evolving process. Globalization provides an opportunity for Muslims to express themselves more freely and interact across cultural boundaries and geographical boundaries. However, globalization also brings other negative impacts, such as the emergence of negative stereotypes, social marginalization, and increasing Islamophobia. In the face of this reality, Muslims show the ability to adapt without having to sacrifice their religious beliefs. Today, Muslim identity is expressed in various forms, from social and daily activities to interactions in cyberspace. The younger generation, in particular, has an important role to play in this process by connecting Islamic spiritual values with contemporary culture through social media. They present a more reflective, contextual, and personal form of religiosity in an attempt to maintain a balance between tradition and modernity. Thus, the negotiation of Muslim identity is not merely a reaction to globalization, but an active and creative part of the process. Today's Muslims are able to build an identity that is flexible, open to change, and relevant to global life without sacrificing the essence of Islamic teachings and spiritual values.

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