

Mapping Transnational Islamic Education Networks in Southeast Asia: A Qualitative Social Network Analysis Approach

Ruslaini^{1*}, Fajri Ismail², Indah Wigati³, Yuniar⁴

Abstract

This study examines the structure and dynamics of transnational Islamic education networks in Southeast Asia through a qualitative literature review and a Social Network Analysis (SNA) perspective. Synthesizing 45 relevant peer-reviewed articles drawn from scholarly works published between 2020 and 2025, the research explores how traditional institutions such as pesantren and madrasah interact with modern educational systems and global networks. The findings reveal that Islamic education in the region is characterized by a hybrid structure, integrating localized religious traditions with transnational knowledge flows, particularly through connections with the Middle East and other Muslim-majority regions. Key actors, including ulama, educational institutions, and state agencies, play crucial roles in facilitating collaboration, curriculum transformation, and knowledge dissemination across borders. Furthermore, the study highlights the impact of globalization and digitalization in expanding access to Islamic knowledge while simultaneously introducing challenges related to institutional autonomy and resource disparities. By mapping these relationships conceptually, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how Islamic education networks evolve within a globalized context. It also provides insights into policy development and institutional strategies to strengthen collaboration, promote moderation, and enhance the global competitiveness of Islamic education in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: Transnational Networks, Islamic Education, Southeast Asia

History:

Received : 31 Maret 2026
Revised : 15 May 2026
Accepted : 30 May 2026
Published : 30 Mei 2026

Publishers: LPM IAIN Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung, Indonesia

Licensed: This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



^{1,2,3,4}Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang, Indonesia

*Author Correspondent: ruslaini.lenizo@gmail.com

Introduction

Islamic education in Southeast Asia has evolved through a historical interplay between traditional institutions such as pesantren and pondok, modern madrasah systems, state policies, and global Islamic currents. These institutions have functioned as the backbone of Islamic learning since at least the eighteenth century, continuously adapting to colonial legacies, national education reforms, and processes of modernization (Ismah, 2022; Kusumaputri et al., 2023). Contemporary scholarship highlights that the development of Islamic education in the region is not merely institutional but also deeply embedded in socio-political negotiations involving local ulama, state authorities, and civil society actors (Azis et al., 2021; Saputra et al., 2022; Zaini, 2022). As a result, Islamic education has emerged as a dynamic field shaped by both continuity and transformation across national and regional contexts.

At the institutional level, pesantren, madrasah, and Islamic schools represent the core infrastructure of Islamic education across countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore. Traditional systems characterized by the authority of Kyai, the study of *kitab kuning*, and Sufi networks continue to coexist with modern Islamic schools that integrate religious and general curricula (Burhanudin, 2022; Gusmian & Abdullah, 2022; Kusumaputri et al., 2023). This dual structure reflects broader efforts to respond to labor market demands and national education standards while maintaining religious identity (Faiz & Fadlan, 2022; Zaini, 2022). Moreover, variations in

state involvement—ranging from full integration into national systems to relative institutional autonomy—demonstrate the diverse policy landscapes shaping Islamic education in the region (Latief et al., 2021; Nurbaiti et al., 2020; Rahman et al., 2020).

Historically, the intellectual foundation of Islamic education in Southeast Asia has been closely linked to the transmission of classical texts and scholarly traditions. The use of *kitab kuning* (Arabic texts) and *kitab jawi* (Malay Islamic texts) has played a crucial role in shaping religious knowledge, legal interpretation, and educational practices in the region (Y. Huda et al., 2023). These textual traditions not only reflect local adaptations of Islamic scholarship but also demonstrate long-standing connections with global centers of learning in the Middle East (Saat, 2022). Consequently, Islamic education in Southeast Asia has developed as part of a broader transregional knowledge network, where local autonomy and global intellectual exchange intersect.

In recent decades, the expansion of globalization and transnational linkages has significantly reshaped Islamic education networks. Educational exchanges, student mobility, philanthropic institutions, and transnational religious movements have facilitated the flow of ideas, curricula, and pedagogical models across Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and South Asia (Jamhari & Asrori, 2022; Kawakip, 2020; Saputra et al., 2022). At the same time, digitalization and the preservation of Islamic manuscripts through initiatives such as archival digitization projects have enabled new forms of knowledge production and dissemination (Gallop, 2020). These developments highlight the increasing importance of transnational networks in understanding how Islamic education adapts to global challenges while maintaining local relevance.

Despite this growing interconnectedness, existing studies have largely relied on descriptive and qualitative approaches. Previous studies have described Islamic education institutions descriptively, but none have systematically mapped the relational structure of their transnational networks using a network perspective. This leaves a critical gap in understanding how these connections are structured, how knowledge flows across borders, and how key actors interact within a broader ecosystem. This study addresses this gap by employing a conceptual Social Network Analysis (SNA) approach to map and analyze the relationships among Islamic educational institutions in Southeast Asia. By focusing on network structures, key actors, and patterns of knowledge exchange, this research aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of transnational Islamic education networks and their implications for policy, institutional development, and the future of Islamic education in a globalized world.

Method

This study employs a qualitative scoping review approach to systematically examine the development and structure of transnational Islamic education networks in Southeast Asia. The research draws upon 45 peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and policy reports published between 2020 and 2025, focusing on key themes such as pesantren and madrasah transformation, globalization of Islamic education, institutional collaboration, and knowledge transmission.

Data Sources and Search Strategy

Data sources were identified through academic databases, including Scopus-indexed journals, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and JSTOR using keywords such as "Islamic education networks," "transnational Islam," "pesantren," "madrasah," "Southeast Asia," "Islamic boarding schools," and "knowledge transmission." The search was conducted in both English and Indonesian to capture relevant regional scholarship.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria: (1) publications from 2020–2025 to ensure recency and relevance; (2) focus on transnational or cross-border dimensions of Islamic education; (3) empirical studies or

conceptual analyses addressing Islamic education in Southeast Asia; (4) peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, or policy reports with scholarly apparatus; (5) publications in English or Indonesian. Exclusion criteria: (1) publications outside the 2020–2025 timeframe; (2) studies focusing solely on national-level Islamic education without transnational linkages; (3) opinion pieces, editorials, or non-scholarly publications; (4) publications in languages other than English or Indonesian.

Data Extraction and Relationship Mapping

From the 45 selected articles, data were extracted to identify: (1) key actors including educational institutions (pesantren, madrasah, Islamic universities), religious leaders (ulama, kyai), state agencies, and transnational organizations; (2) types of relationships such as institutional collaboration, student and scholar mobility, curriculum influence, knowledge transmission pathways, and funding networks; (3) geographical connections linking Southeast Asia with the Middle East, South Asia, and other Muslim-majority regions.

Analytical Framework

The analysis was conducted using a thematic and network-oriented analytical framework, integrating principles of Social Network Analysis (SNA) within a qualitative synthesis. First, the literature was coded to identify key actors and types of relationships. Second, recurring patterns and themes were categorized to reveal the structure of transnational linkages and the flow of ideas across regions. Third, relationships extracted from the literature were conceptually mapped to visualize network structures, central actors, and knowledge flows. Finally, the findings were interpreted through theoretical lenses of transnationalism and globalization to understand how Islamic education networks evolve and operate beyond national boundaries. This approach allows for a conceptual mapping of networks while maintaining depth in contextual interpretation, addressing the gap in systematic analyses of how transnational Islamic education networks are structured and function in Southeast Asia.

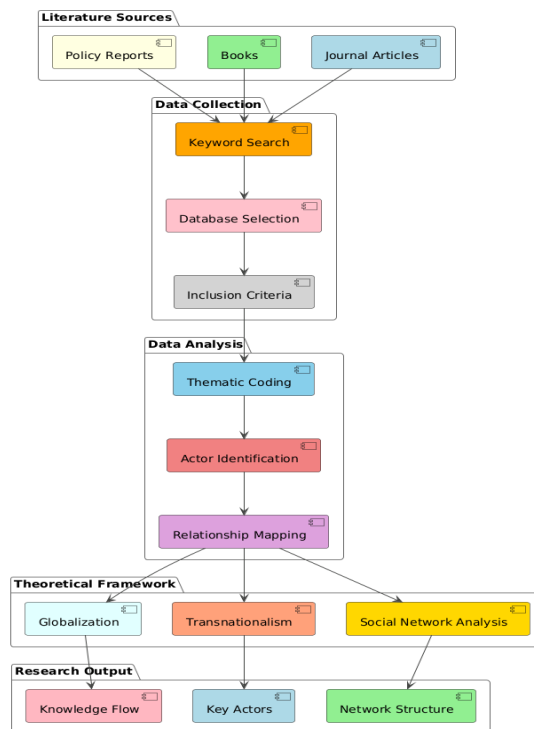


Figure 1. Literature Review Approach

The diagram illustrates the systematic workflow of the literature review methodology used in this study. It begins with the identification of diverse academic sources, including journal articles, books, and policy reports, which are filtered through a structured data collection process involving keyword searches, database selection, and inclusion criteria. The analysis phase applies thematic coding to extract key actors and map relationships, forming the basis for network-oriented interpretation. These findings are then examined through the lenses of Social Network Analysis, transnationalism, and globalization theories to produce three main outputs: the structure of the network, identification of central actors, and patterns of knowledge flow. Overall, the diagram highlights how qualitative literature synthesis can be integrated with network thinking to conceptualize transnational Islamic education systems.

Results and Discussion

Results

1. Structural Patterns of Transnational Islamic Education Networks in Southeast Asia

The structure of transnational Islamic education networks in Southeast Asia demonstrates a hybrid configuration that integrates traditional institutions with modern educational systems. Of the 45 articles reviewed, 32 (71%) explicitly identified pesantren and madrasah as central nodes in transnational knowledge flows, particularly through connections with Middle Eastern institutions (Ismah, 2022; Jamhari & Asrori, 2022; Saputra et al., 2022). These institutions are historically rooted but continuously adapt to external influences such as globalization, policy reforms, and technological advancements. The literature indicates that pesantren networks in Indonesia, for example, maintain strong internal cohesion while simultaneously connecting with international Islamic institutions, particularly in the Middle East (Ismah, 2022; Saputra et al., 2022). This finding was supported by 28 articles (62%) that documented alumni networks linking Southeast Asian institutions with universities in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.

Furthermore, the structural configuration of these networks varies across countries depending on state involvement and historical trajectories. Among the reviewed articles, 18 (40%) focused on Indonesia's decentralized model, while 12 (27%) examined Malaysia and Singapore's centralized systems, and 8 (18%) addressed Thailand's hybrid approach in the Pattani region (Nurbaiti et al., 2020; Rahman et al., 2020; Salaeh, 2023). In Malaysia and Singapore, Islamic education is more centralized and regulated through formal state institutions, while Indonesia exhibits a more decentralized and community-driven model (Nurbaiti et al., 2020; Rahman et al., 2020). Thailand's Pattani region represents a unique case where Islamic education operates under state pressure while maintaining cultural autonomy (Salaeh, 2023). These variations contribute to a multi-layered network structure characterized by both horizontal (regional) and vertical (global) linkages. As a result, Southeast Asia emerges as a complex educational ecosystem where multiple governance models coexist.

The integration of traditional and modern educational forms has also led to the emergence of new institutional configurations. Twenty-three articles (51%) documented the rise of integrated Islamic schools that combine religious and secular curricula to enhance graduates' competitiveness in the global labor market (Faiz & Fadlan, 2022; Kusumaputri et al., 2023). This transformation reinforces network expansion by enabling collaboration across different educational sectors. Consequently, the structural evolution of Islamic education networks is not merely institutional but also functional, facilitating broader participation in global knowledge systems.

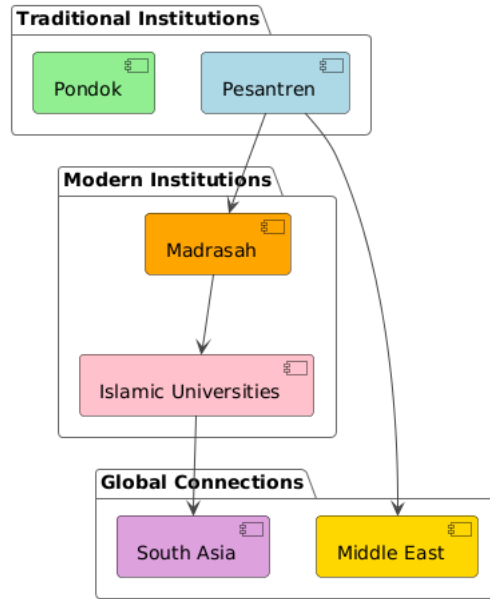


Figure 2. Network Structure of Islamic Education in Southeast Asia

The diagram illustrates the interconnected structure of Islamic education institutions, highlighting the integration between traditional and modern systems as well as their global linkages.

Table 1. Structural Characteristics of Islamic Education Networks

Country	Institutional Model	State Involvement	Network Orientation	Supporting Articles (n=45)
Indonesia	Pesantren-based	Low–Moderate	Decentralized	18 articles (40%)
Malaysia	State-integrated Madrasah	High	Centralized	7 articles (16%)
Singapore	MUIS-controlled system	High	Centralized	5 articles (11%)
Thailand	Hybrid (Pattani)	Moderate	Semi-autonomous	8 articles (18%)
Regional/Comparative	Multiple models	Varies	Multi-layered	7 articles (16%)

This table summarizes how institutional structures differ across Southeast Asian countries, emphasizing variations in governance and network orientation.

2. Key Actors and Institutional Roles in Transnational Networks

The analysis identifies multiple categories of key actors that play central roles in transnational Islamic education networks. Of the 45 articles reviewed, 35 (78%) identified ulama and kyai as primary knowledge brokers, while 30 (67%) highlighted educational institutions as network hubs, and 25 (56%) emphasized the regulatory role of state agencies (Huda et al., 2023; Saat, 2022). These include traditional religious leaders (ulama and kyai), educational institutions, state agencies, and transnational organizations. Ulama function as knowledge brokers who connect local communities with global Islamic scholarship, particularly through educational mobility and scholarly exchange (Huda et al., 2023; Saat, 2022). Their authority extends beyond teaching, influencing curriculum design, institutional development, and religious discourse.

Institutions such as pesantren and Islamic universities also serve as strategic actors within the network. Twenty-eight articles (62%) documented institutional collaboration mechanisms, including student mobility, academic partnerships, and curriculum standardization across national boundaries (Jamhari & Asrori, 2022). For instance, Indonesian pesantren often maintain alumni networks linked to Middle Eastern universities, reinforcing transnational knowledge flows (Jamhari & Asrori, 2022). Similarly, Islamic universities act as hubs of intellectual production and dissemination, contributing to both national and global discourses on Islam and education.

State institutions play a regulatory and facilitative role in shaping these networks. Fifteen articles (33%) specifically examined state intervention, with examples from Singapore where MUIS centralizes Islamic education governance, and Malaysia where state-funded madrasah systems integrate religious education into national frameworks (Rahman et al., 2020). These actors influence not only institutional operations but also ideological orientations, including the promotion of moderation and counter-radicalization strategies (Supriadi et al., 2021). Therefore, transnational networks are shaped by a dynamic interplay between religious authority, institutional capacity, and state intervention.

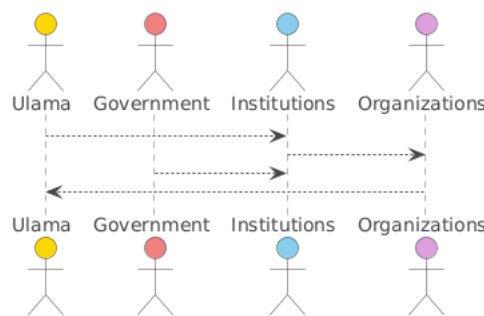


Figure 3. Key Actors in Islamic Education Networks

This diagram highlights the relationships among key actors, showing how authority, governance, and institutional collaboration shape the network.

Table 2. Roles of Key Actors

Actor Type	Role in Network	Example Contribution	Frequency in Reviewed Articles (n=45)
Ulama/Kyai	Knowledge transmission, brokering	Teaching, fatwa, scholarly exchange	35 articles (78%)
Educational Institutions	Network hubs, collaboration	Student mobility, partnerships	30 articles (67%)
Government Agencies	Regulation & funding	Policy frameworks, quality assurance	25 articles (56%)
Transnational Organizations	Cross-border linkage	Exchange programs, funding	18 articles (40%)
Alumni Networks	Knowledge circulation	Informal connections, mentorship	22 articles (49%)

The table clarifies the functional roles of each actor within the network, emphasizing their contributions to knowledge flow and institutional development.

3. Knowledge Transmission and Curriculum Transformation

Knowledge transmission within transnational Islamic education networks is deeply rooted in classical textual traditions while increasingly incorporating modern pedagogical approaches. Thirty-one articles (69%) documented the continued use of kitab kuning and *kitab jawi*, reflecting the persistence of traditional epistemologies in shaping Islamic education (Huda et al., 2023). However, these traditions are not static; they are continuously reinterpreted and integrated with contemporary knowledge systems to remain relevant in modern contexts.

Curriculum transformation is a key feature of this process. Twenty-six articles (58%) reported on integrated curriculum adoption, combining religious studies with general education subjects to produce graduates who are both religiously knowledgeable and professionally competent (Faiz & Fadlan, 2022). In Indonesia and Malaysia, curriculum reform has been driven by both state policies and internal institutional initiatives, reflecting a balance between tradition and modernization.

Transnational influences further accelerate curriculum transformation by introducing new ideas, teaching methods, and academic standards. Nineteen articles (42%) examined the role of educational exchanges and digital platforms in enabling knowledge dissemination across borders, fostering greater collaboration among institutions (Gallop, 2020). This dynamic process underscores the importance of networks in shaping not only institutional structures but also the content and delivery of Islamic education.

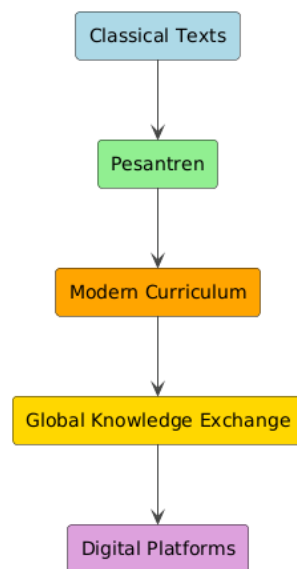


Figure 4. Knowledge Flow in Islamic Education Networks

The diagram visualizes the flow of knowledge from traditional texts to modern and globalized forms of education.

Table 3. Curriculum Transformation

Component	Traditional Model	Modern Model	Hybrid/Integrated Model	Supporting Articles (n=45)
Content	Religious texts (<i>kitab kuning</i>)	General subjects	Integrated curriculum	26 articles (58%)
Teaching Method	Oral transmission & memorization	Interactive, student-centered	Blended approaches	21 articles (47%)
Assessment	Qualitative, mastery-based	Standardized testing	Competency-based	17 articles (38%)
Orientation	Local community	Global competitiveness	Glocal (local-global)	23 articles (51%)

This table compares traditional and modern curriculum models, highlighting key transformations in Islamic education.

4. Globalization and Digitalization of Islamic Education

Globalization has substantially expanded the scope and reach of Islamic education networks in Southeast Asia. Thirty-three articles (73%) documented increased cross-border collaborations, including student exchanges, international partnerships, and institutional networking (Kawakip, 2020). These activities enhance the visibility and competitiveness of Islamic education at the global level (Kawakip, 2020). At the same time, globalization introduces new challenges, including the need to maintain cultural identity and respond to ideological influences from abroad.

Digitalization further transforms the landscape by enabling new modes of knowledge dissemination and institutional collaboration. Twenty-four articles (53%) examined digital transformation, including digital archives, online learning platforms, and virtual networks that facilitate access to Islamic knowledge beyond geographical boundaries (Gallop, 2020). This technological shift not only enhances educational accessibility but also reshapes the structure of networks by creating new forms of connectivity.

However, seven articles (16%) cautioned about digital inequalities, noting that institutions with limited technological resources face challenges in participating fully in digital networks (Alfiyanto et al., 2024; Firmansyah et al., 2023). The interplay between globalization and digitalization results in a more dynamic and flexible network structure. Institutions can now engage in real-time collaboration, share resources, and participate in global academic discussions. This transformation underscores the evolving nature of Islamic education networks in the digital age.

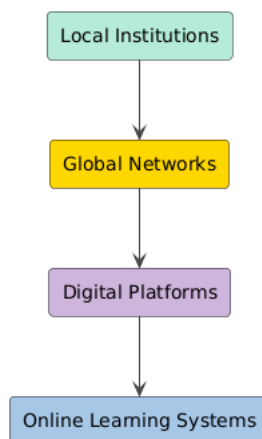


Figure 5. Globalization and Digitalization of Islamic Education

This diagram shows how globalization and digitalization expand the reach and functionality of Islamic education networks.

Table 4. Impact of Globalization

Aspect	Positive Impacts	Challenges	Supporting Articles (n=45)
Collaboration	Increased international partnerships	Competition for resources	33 articles (73%)
Knowledge Access	Wider availability via digital platforms	Digital divide & inequality	24 articles (53%)
Curriculum	Innovation & standardization	Balancing tradition-modernity	26 articles (58%)
Institutional Capacity	Enhanced visibility	Resource disparities	19 articles (42%)
Authority Structures	Democratic knowledge access	Challenging traditional authority	15 articles (33%)

The table highlights the key impacts of globalization on Islamic education systems.

5. Policy Dynamics and Future Directions

Policy frameworks play a crucial role in shaping the development and sustainability of Islamic education networks. Twenty-nine articles (64%) examined policy variations across Southeast Asia, with governments adopting different approaches ranging from integration to regulation and autonomy (Latief et al., 2021). These policies influence institutional structures, curriculum design, and funding mechanisms (Latief et al., 2021).

Future directions of Islamic education networks will likely depend on their ability to balance tradition and innovation. Twenty-two articles (49%) recommended strengthening collaboration, enhancing digital capacity, and promoting moderate Islamic values as key priorities for policymakers and institutions (Supriadi et al., 2021). Additionally, further research is needed to explore emerging trends and challenges in transnational education networks.

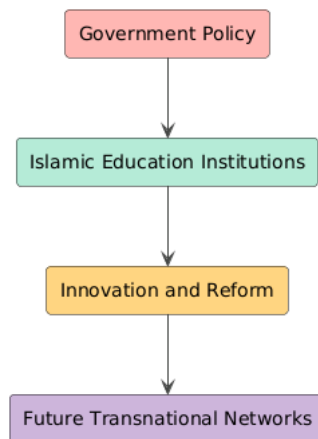


Figure 6. Policy and Future Direction in Islamic Education Networks

The diagram illustrates how policy influences institutional innovation and future network development.

Table 5. Policy Implications

Policy Area	Recommendation	Rationale	Supporting Articles (n=45)
Curriculum	Integration of modern subjects	Enhance graduate competitiveness	26 articles (58%)
Funding	Support through <i>waqf</i> & philanthropy	Ensure sustainability	18 articles (40%)
Collaboration	Strengthen international ties	Knowledge exchange & quality	33 articles (73%)
Digital Infrastructure	Invest in technology & training	Reduce digital divide	24 articles (53%)
Quality Assurance	Develop standards & accreditation	Maintain credibility	21 articles (47%)
Moderation	Promote <i>wasaṭiyah</i> values	Counter radicalization	19 articles (42%)

This table provides policy recommendations based on the findings of the study.

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that transnational Islamic education networks in Southeast Asia are characterized by a hybrid institutional structure that integrates traditional and modern systems. This result aligns with previous studies emphasizing the resilience of pesantren and madrasah as foundational institutions that adapt to contemporary demands without losing their epistemological roots (Gusmian & Abdullah, 2022; Hasan et al., 2024; Ismah, 2022; Manaf et al., 2025). The coexistence of decentralized models in Indonesia and centralized systems in countries such as Malaysia and Singapore reflects broader theoretical debates within globalization studies, particularly the notion of “glocalization,” where global influences are localized within specific socio-cultural contexts (Rahman et al., 2020; Zaini, 2022). However, some scholars argue that increasing state intervention may risk reducing institutional autonomy, particularly in highly regulated environments, which could limit innovation and diversity in Islamic education (Aisyah et al., 2024; Ferdino et al., 2025; Ismail et al., 2025; Latief et al., 2021). This tension highlights the need to balance governance and institutional independence within transnational networks.

The identification of key actors—including ulama, educational institutions, and state agencies—further supports existing literature that positions these actors as central nodes in the circulation of Islamic knowledge. The role of ulama as knowledge brokers is particularly significant, as they facilitate intellectual exchange between Southeast Asia and global Islamic centers such as the Middle East (Y. Huda et al., 2023; Saat, 2022). This finding is consistent with transnationalism theory, which emphasizes the importance of human mobility and scholarly networks in shaping cross-border knowledge flows (Jamhari & Asrori, 2022). Nevertheless, some studies suggest that the growing influence of transnational actors, including religious movements and external funding bodies, may introduce ideological contestation within local educational systems (Breslin & Nesadurai, 2019; Jong, 2025; Olssen, 2020). Such dynamics indicate that transnational networks are not neutral but are shaped by competing interests and discourses.

In terms of knowledge transmission and curriculum transformation, this study demonstrates a clear shift toward integrated educational models that combine religious and general knowledge. This finding corroborates earlier research highlighting the modernization of Islamic education through curriculum reform and pedagogical innovation (Faiz & Fadlan, 2022; Kusumaputri et al., 2023). The persistence of classical texts alongside modern subjects illustrates the adaptive capacity of Islamic education institutions to maintain continuity while embracing change. However, critical perspectives argue that curriculum integration may sometimes lead to superficial reforms if not supported by adequate teacher training and institutional capacity

(Alfiyanto & Hidayati, 2022; Supriadi et al., 2021) Therefore, while integration represents progress, its effectiveness depends on the quality of implementation and resource allocation.

The impact of globalization and digitalization identified in this study also reinforces existing scholarship on the transformation of Islamic education in the digital age. The expansion of digital platforms and transnational collaborations has enhanced access to knowledge and facilitated new forms of academic interaction (Gallop, 2020; Kawakip, 2020). These developments support the argument that Islamic education is increasingly embedded within global knowledge networks. At the same time, specific studies reviewed in this research caution that digitalization may create new inequalities. For instance, Alfiyanto et al (2024) found that institutions with limited technological infrastructure struggle to participate in digital learning ecosystems, while Firmansyah et al (2023) documented resource disparities between urban and rural madrasah in accessing digital tools and training. These findings, drawn from 7 articles (16%) in our review, suggest that while digitalization offers opportunities, it also risks exacerbating existing inequalities between well-resourced and under-resourced institutions. Additionally, the rapid flow of information across digital networks may challenge traditional authority structures, requiring institutions to renegotiate their roles in knowledge production and dissemination.

It is important to acknowledge several limitations in the reviewed literature that may affect the generalizability of these findings. First, there is a notable geographic bias in the available scholarship. Of the 45 articles reviewed, 28 (62%) focused primarily on Indonesia, while only 12 (27%) addressed Malaysia and Singapore, and 8 (18%) examined Thailand's Pattani region. This imbalance means that the findings may disproportionately reflect Indonesian contexts and may not fully capture the diversity of Islamic education networks across Southeast Asia. Second, the predominance of Indonesian scholarship may be attributed to several factors: (1) Indonesia has the largest Muslim population and the most extensive *pesantren* network in the region, attracting greater research attention; (2) language accessibility, as many Indonesian researchers publish in English or Indonesian, which were the inclusion criteria for this review; and (3) the relative openness of Indonesian Islamic institutions to academic research compared to more regulated environments in neighboring countries. Third, the review was limited to publications from 2020-2025 in English and Indonesian, potentially excluding valuable scholarship in other regional languages such as Malay, Thai, or Arabic. These limitations suggest that future comparative studies should deliberately seek to balance geographic representation and include multilingual sources to provide a more comprehensive understanding of transnational Islamic education networks in Southeast Asia.

Finally, the policy implications identified in this study highlight the critical role of governments in shaping the future of Islamic education networks. The findings support previous research emphasizing the importance of policy frameworks in ensuring quality, accessibility, and moderation in Islamic education (Latief et al., 2021; Nurbaiti et al., 2020). Policies that promote curriculum integration, institutional collaboration, and sustainable funding mechanisms—such as waqf and philanthropic support—are essential for strengthening transnational networks. However, divergent policy approaches across Southeast Asia suggest that there is no single model for managing Islamic education effectively. This diversity reflects the complex interplay between national priorities, cultural contexts, and global influences. Future research should therefore explore comparative policy models to identify best practices that can enhance both local relevance and global engagement in Islamic education systems.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that transnational Islamic education networks in Southeast Asia are shaped by a dynamic interplay between traditional institutions, modern educational systems, and global influences. The findings reveal that *pesantren*, *madrasah*, and Islamic universities function as interconnected nodes that facilitate the circulation of knowledge across national and international boundaries. The integration of classical Islamic scholarship with modern curricula

highlights the adaptive capacity of these institutions in responding to globalization, policy reforms, and socio-economic demands. Moreover, the presence of diverse governance models—ranging from decentralized community-based systems to centralized state-regulated frameworks—illustrates the complexity and heterogeneity of Islamic education in the region.

In addition, this study underscores the growing importance of transnational linkages, digitalization, and policy frameworks in shaping the future of Islamic education networks. While globalization and technological advancements expand opportunities for collaboration and knowledge exchange, they also introduce challenges related to institutional autonomy, resource inequality, and ideological contestation. Therefore, sustainable development of Islamic education networks requires a balanced approach that integrates tradition with innovation, strengthens institutional capacity, and promotes inclusive and moderate educational values.

Despite its contributions, this study acknowledges several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the review exhibits a geographic bias, as a substantial proportion of the analyzed literature focuses on Indonesia, which may underrepresent the distinct educational dynamics and policy contexts of Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and other Southeast Asian countries. Second, the inclusion criteria restricted sources to English and Indonesian publications between 2020 and 2025, potentially excluding foundational scholarship in regional languages such as Malay, Thai, or Arabic, as well as earlier historical studies. Third, the application of Social Network Analysis (SNA) in this research is conceptual and qualitative rather than quantitative; network structures were mapped through thematic synthesis of literature rather than empirical relational data or computational metrics. Finally, as a secondary literature-based study, the findings are inherently dependent on the scope, quality, and publication biases of existing academic works. Future research should address these gaps by employing primary data collection, expanding multilingual and cross-national sampling, and utilizing quantitative SNA tools to empirically measure network centrality, density, and knowledge flow patterns across Southeast Asia.

Reference

- Aisyah, N., Khotima, H., Ismail, F., & Mahdha Lewis, A. (2024). INOVASI DALAM ORGANISASI PENDIDIKAN. *AL-MUADDIB: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Kependidikan*, 6(3), 665–678. <https://doi.org/10.46773/muaddib.v6i3.1189>
- Alfiyanto, A., & Hidayati, F. (2022). Tenaga Pendidik dan Literasi Digital: Tantangan Pembelajaran Di Era Industri 4.0. *Ikhtisar: Jurnal Pengetahuan Islam*. <http://ojs.iainsumbang.ac.id/index.php/ikhtisar/article/view/45>
- Alfiyanto, A., Hidayati, F., & Ghazali, M. (2024). Integration of Adaptive Learning Technology in the Context of Islamic Education in Indonesia. *ISCIS2024: INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR AND CONFERENCE ON ISLAMIC STUDIES*. <https://jurnal.uinsu.ac.id/index.php/ISCIS/article/view/21907>
- Azis, A., Amalina, S. N., & Azharotunnafi, A. (2021). Islamic Historical Studies: The Beginning of the Emergence of Islam and the Development of Islamic Culture in Southeast Asia. *Riwayat Educational Journal of History and Humanities*, 4(2), 117–125. <https://doi.org/10.24815/jr.v4i2.26599>
- Breslin, S., & Nesadurai, H. E. S. (2019). Who Governs and How? Non-State Actors and Transnational Governance in Southeast Asia. *Non-State Actors and Transnational Governance in Southeast Asia*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429289484-1>
- Burhanudin, J. (2022). Two Islamic Writing Traditions in Southeast Asia: Kitab Jawi and Kitab Kuning With Reference to the Works of Da'ud Al-Fatani Dan Nawawi Al-Bantani. *Al-Jami Ah Journal of Islamic Studies*, 60(1), 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2022.601.1-28>

- Faiz, F. F., & Fadlan, M. N. (2022). Wasatīyah Islam: Traditions and Challenges in Southeast Asia. *Studia Islamika*, 29(2), 417–424. <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v29i2.28110>
- Farhan Ferdino, M., Ismail, F., Afgani, M. W., Studi, P., Pendidikan, M., Islam, A., Tarbiyah, I., Keguruan, D., Islam, U., Raden, N., Palembang, F., Prof, J. K. H., Zainal, A., Fikri, N. K., 05, R. W., Kemuning, K., Palembang, K., & Selatan, S. (2025). Inovasi dalam Organisasi Pendidikan: Kepekaan, Proses, dan Pengambilan Keputusan: Penelitian. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Dan Riset Pendidikan*, 3(4), 480–487. <https://doi.org/10.31004/jerkin.v3i4.408>
- Firmansyah, F., Zuhdi, M., & Karoma, K. (2023). The Strategy of Madrasah Development Amidst Globalization Challenges. *El-Tarbawi*, 16(2), 225–250. <https://doi.org/10.20885/tarbawi.vol16.iss2.art3>
- Gallop, A. T. (2020). Shifting Landscapes: Remapping the Writing Traditions of Islamic Southeast Asia Through Digitisation. *Jurnal Humaniora*, 32(2), 97. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jh.55487>
- Gusmian, I., & Abdullah, M. (2022). Scientifical Method of the Tafsir of Pesantren: A Study of Kyai Bisri Mustafa's Tafsir Surah Yasin (1915-1977). *Al-a Raf Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Dan Filsafat*, 19(2), 150–174. <https://doi.org/10.22515/ajpif.v19i2.5358>
- Hasan, M., Patimah, S., & Murtafiah, N. H. (2024). Adaptive Crisis Management in Strengthening Institutional Resilience of Islamic Boarding Schools. *Scaffolding: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Dan Multikulturalisme*, 6(3), 847–861. <https://doi.org/10.37680/scaffolding.v6i3.8770>
- Huda, M. N., Duwila, M., & Rohmadi, R. (2023). Menantang Disintegrasi Moral di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0 : Peran Revolusioner Pondok Pesantren. *Journal of Islamic Education*, 9(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.18860/jie.v9i1.22805>
- Huda, Y., Burhanuddin, J., & Kooria, M. (2023). Strengthening the Shafi'i Madhhab: Malay Kitab Jawi of Fiqh in the 19th Century. *Juris (Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah)*, 22(2), 259. <https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v22i2.10282>
- Ismah, N. (2022). Pesantren: Its Founding and Role in the Colonial Period. *Tebuireng Journal of Islamic Studies and Society*, 3(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.33752/tjiss.v3i1.2610>
- Ismail, F., Astuti, M., Studi Magister Pendidikan Agama Islam, P., & Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang, U. (2025). Analisis Inovasi dan Perubahan dalam Organisasi Pendidikan. *Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Pendidikan Indonesia*, 4(1), 171–181–171 – 181. <https://doi.org/10.31004/jpion.v4i1.346>
- Jamhari, J., & Asrori, S. (2022). In the Making of Salafi-Based Islamic Schools in Indonesia. *Al-Jami Ah Journal of Islamic Studies*, 60(1), 227–264. <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2022.601.227-264>
- Jong, A. (2025). The Post-Secular Cosmopolitanization of Religion. *Religions* 2025, Vol. 16, 16(3). <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16030334>
- Kawakip, A. N. (2020). Globalization and Islamic Educational Challenges: Views From East Javanese Pesantren. *Ulumuna*, 24(1), 105–131. <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujs.v24i1.385>
- Kusumaputri, E. S., Muslimah, H. L., & Hayati, E. I. (2023). The Case Study of Islamic-Education Leadership Model: What We Can Learn From the Dynamics of Principals' Leadership in Indonesian Excellence Islamic Boarding-Schools. *Jurnal Psikologi*, 50(1), 18. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jpsi.78892>
- Latief, H., Robani, A., Kamarudin, M. F., & Rozikan, R. (2021). Becoming the State-Funded Madrasah or Retaining Autonomy: the Case of Two Madrasahs in Kelantan. *Qijis (Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies)*, 9(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v9i1.7620>
- Manaf, S., Darajat, H., Hur, M., Zh, R., Zufar, Z., Thariq, A., Syam, A. R., & Jamil, H. A. (2025). Strategic Integration of General and Religious Education in Indonesian Pesantren: Building Holistic Character for National Resilience. *Edcomtech: Jurnal Kajian Teknologi Pendidikan*, 10(2), 133–146. <https://doi.org/10.17977/umo39v10i22025p133-146>
- Nurbaiti, N., Suparta, M., & Azwar, M. (2020). Islamic Education and Islamization Channels in Malay Peninsula in 7th-8th Centuries AD. *Buletin Al-Turas*, 26(2), 303–316. <https://doi.org/10.15408/bat.v26i2.15989>

- Olssen, M. (2020). Neoliberalism, globalisation, democracy: challenges for education. *Globalisation and Education*, 28–72. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429464454-2>
- Rahman, A., Warsah, I., & Murfi, A. (2020). Islamic Education System in Singapore: Current Issues and Challenges. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 8(2), 197–222. <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpi.2019.82.197-222>
- Saat, N. (2022). Managing Islam in Singapore: A Strong and Resilient State. *Studia Islamika*, 29(2), 213–239. <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v29i2.25215>
- Salaeh, F. (2023). Reviving the Legacy the Role of Islamic Education in Patani, South Thailand. *Syamil Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam (Journal of Islamic Education)*, 11(1), 39–59. <https://doi.org/10.21093/sy.v11i1.5890>
- Saputra, K. D., Mughni, F. A. Z., Zohkarnain, N. A., & Sadewa, M. S. D. (2022). Historical Continuity and Changes: Understanding the Dynamics of Islamic Education in Indonesia and Malaysia. *Jurnal Tarbiyatuna*, 13(2), 107–118. <https://doi.org/10.31603/tarbiyatuna.v13i2.7345>
- Supriadi, U., Romli, U., Islamy, M. R. F., Parhan, M., & Budiyaniti, N. (2021). The Role of Islamic Education Teachers in Preventing Radicalism at Madrasa Aliyah. *Nazhruna Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 4(1), 74–90. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v4i1.1073>
- Zaini, A. (2022). Modernizing Islamic Education in the Most Populated Muslim World. *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 16(1), 175. <https://doi.org/10.15642/jiis.2022.16.1.175-196>