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Absent from the Editorial Table: Women's Exclusion from Production and the Patriarchal Reading of Hadith on Rumaysho.com and NU Online

M. Alvin Nur Choironi[1] and Ahmad Fudhaili[2]

[1] Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta Islamic State University, Indonesia; Email: alvin.nur@uinjkt.ac.id

[2] Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta Islamic State University, Indonesia; Email: ahmad.fudhaili@uinjkt.ac.id

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Abstract: This article argues that the exclusion of women from a digital platform's editorial structure is not merely a problem of representational equity but an epistemic variable that conditions the meaning produced from sacred texts. Through a comparative critical discourse analysis employing Teun A. van Dijk's framework, the study examines hadith-based discourse on female leadership, mobility and the maḥram requirement, and the figure of fitnah across two major Indonesian Islamic platforms: Rumaysho.com, a Salafi platform with no women among its contributors, and NU Online, a traditionalist platform whose contributors include women. The analysis demonstrates that both platforms draw on canonically identical hadith yet produce opposed normative claims. On Rumaysho.com, the categorical absence of women from production removes the internal corrective through which restrictive generalizations, unregistered consequences, and asymmetric moral burdens might otherwise be challenged, allowing the patriarchal reading to stabilize unchecked. On NU Online, the participation of women in production furnishes the standpoint from which such deficiencies become visible and the readings are tempered. The study concludes that editorial gender inclusion is a necessary structural condition for the epistemic adequacy of digital religious discourse, not an optional supplement to it.

Keywords: *critical discourse analysis; digital islam; gender; hadith; patriarchal*

Abstrak: Artikel ini mengkaji apakah ketiadaan perempuan dalam struktur editorial platform digital membentuk karakter patriarkal penafsiran hadis tentang perempuan. Dengan menempatkan akses editorial sebagai variabel epistemik, bukan sekadar persoalan representasi, penelitian ini menjelaskan mekanisme struktural yang menghubungkan komposisi produsen wacana dengan makna keagamaan yang dihasilkan. Melalui pendekatan analisis wacana kritis Teun A. van Dijk dalam desain komparatif, penelitian menganalisis wacana berbasis hadis tentang kepemimpinan perempuan, mobilitas dan ketentuan maḥram, serta konsep fitnah pada Rumaysho.com dan NU Online. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dua platform yang sama-sama menerima kesahihan sebuah hadis dapat menghasilkan klaim normatif yang berlawanan. Pada Rumaysho.com, absennya perempuan dari proses produksi meniadakan koreksi internal terhadap generalisasi restriktif,

konsekuensi sosial yang tidak tercatat, dan distribusi beban moral yang asimetris. Sebaliknya, kehadiran perempuan dalam produksi wacana NU Online menghadirkan pembacaan yang lebih kontekstual dan partisipatoris. Penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa akses perempuan terhadap produksi teks keagamaan bukan sekadar tuntutan keadilan, melainkan syarat struktural bagi kecukupan epistemik diskursus hadis digital.

Kata Kunci: *analisis wacana kritis; gender; hadis; islam digital; patriarkal*

1. Introduction

The transfer of religious instruction to digital platforms has been widely interpreted as a democratization of religious authority, in which the interpretive monopoly once held by traditionally trained scholars is dispersed among a broader range of actors.[1] Yet the question of who, precisely, benefits from this dispersal has received insufficient attention. When examined through the lens of gender, the optimistic narrative requires substantial qualification, for the capacity to produce authoritative religious discourse online remains conditioned by scholarly credentials, institutional networks, and—as this article contends—gendered access to the apparatus of textual production.

Consider a single illustrative puzzle. Two of Indonesia's most frequented Islamic websites, NU Online and Rumaysho.com, both publish expositions of the hadith of Abū Bakrah, transmitted in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī, concerning the leadership of women. The transmission of the report is not in dispute; both platforms accept it as sound. Yet the first concludes that women may exercise leadership provided they are competent, while the second concludes that the leadership of a woman portends ruin. The same canonical text yields two irreconcilable norms. The conventional explanation attributes this divergence to differences of interpretive method or ideological orientation. This article proposes a further and largely overlooked variable: the structure of editorial access, and specifically the presence or absence of women within the production process itself.

The two expositions referred to here are publicly accessible on the platforms themselves and may be consulted directly by the reader.[2] The divergence they exhibit is not an artifact of selective reading but is evident on the face of the published articles, which expound the same canonical report to opposite normative effect.

[1] John W. Anderson, "The Internet and Islam's New Interpreters," in *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere*, ed. Dale F. Eickelman and John W. Anderson, 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 45–60; Gary R. Bunt, *Hashtag Islam: How Cyber-Islamic Environments Are Transforming Religious Authority* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 40–55.

[2] "Tentang Kami," Rumaysho.com, accessed June 2026, https://rumaysho.com/tentang-kami; "Tentang NU Online," NU Online, accessed June 2026, https://nu.or.id/tentang.

The dominant framing of women's relationship to digital religious media has treated their underrepresentation as a problem of equity—a deficiency to be remedied by inclusion.[3] This article reframes the matter as an epistemic problem. Drawing on van Dijk's proposition[4] that access to discourse is itself a form of social power, it argues that the exclusion of women from a platform's editorial structure is not merely a representational shortcoming but a structural condition that shapes the meaning produced from sacred texts. Where women are absent from production, the discourse concerning them is composed in their absence, and no internal mechanism exists by which a reading prejudicial to their interests may be challenged or corrected.

The literature on digital Islam in Indonesia has documented the Arabization of online religious content,[5] the construction of gender in hadith memes,[6] and the framing of patriarchal morality on Salafi social media.[7] These studies have established that digital platforms reproduce patriarchal norms through the selective deployment of sacred texts. What they have not established is the structural mechanism that links the composition of a platform's editorial apparatus to the interpretive character of its output. This is the gap the present study addresses.

To specify the gap with greater precision: prior studies have demonstrated that digital platforms reproduce patriarchal norms, but they have done so while treating the platform as an undifferentiated producer of content, leaving four structural aspects unexamined. First, they have not analyzed the editorial structure of the platforms, that is, the composition of the body that exercises control over what is published. Second, they have not examined the role of editors and content curators as distinct from named authors, nor the gendered distribution of these roles. Third, they have not investigated the process by which sacred texts are selected for exposition. Fourth, they have not connected the platform's institutional ideology to specific interpretive outcomes. In each case the existing literature has documented the output—the patriarchal reading—without tracing it to the structure of the apparatus that produces it.[8]

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[3] Eva F. Nisa, "Creative and Lucrative Daʿwa: The Visual Culture of Instagram amongst Female Muslim Youth in Indonesia," *Asiascape: Digital Asia* 5, no. 1–2 (2018): 68–99; Carla Jones, "Circulating Modesty: The Gendered Afterlives of Networked Images," in *Piety, Celebrity, Sociality: A Forum on Islam and Social Media in Southeast Asia*, ed. Martin Slama and Carla Jones (New York: American Ethnologist, 2017).

[4] Teun A. van Dijk, "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis," *Discourse & Society* 4, no. 2 (1993): 249–283, https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926593004002006.

[5] Mirza Nursyabani, "From Saudi to Social Media: Arabization of Islam via Salafi Instagram Accounts in Indonesia," *Afkaruna: Indonesian Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Studies* 20, no. 2 (2024): 337–356, https://doi.org/10.18196/afkaruna.v20i2.23730.

[6] Nikmatullah, Rohmaniyah, Amrulloh, and Qudsy, "Gender Reconstruction in Indonesian Muslim Families in Hadith Memes," *Italian Sociological Review* 14, no. 2 (2024): 421–437, https://doi.org/10.13136/isr.v14i2.733.

[7] Nur Maulidya Wardatur Rohmah, Mukhammad Zamzami, and Ida Rochmawati, "Constructing Digital Patriarchy: Framing the Hadith of Dayyuth and Gendered Morality in Online Islamic Discourse," *Journal of Ushuluddin and Islamic Thought* 3, no. 1 (2025): 1–36, https://doi.org/10.15642/juit.2025.3.1.1-36.

[8] Nursyabani, "From Saudi to Social Media," 337–356; Nikmatullah et al., "Gender Reconstruction in Indonesian Muslim Families in Hadith Memes," 421–437.

To isolate this mechanism, the study adopts a comparative design. Rumaysho.com serves as the primary case: an influential Salafi platform authored almost entirely by a single male scholar, with no women among its contributors. NU Online serves as the contrast case: a traditionalist platform whose contributors include women, and whose articles on hadith concerning women are in several instances authored by women. The comparison permits the analysis to observe what happens to the reading of identical hadith when women are present in production versus when they are absent.

Because the comparison rests upon the categories "Salafi" and "traditionalist," these terms require definition. By Salafism is meant the reformist current that rejects the authority of the established schools of law, appealing instead to the Qur'ān and the Sunna as construed by the pious forebears (*al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*) and, in its contemporary form, by the religious establishment of the Arabian Peninsula.[9] By traditionalism is meant the current, embodied in Indonesia by Nahdlatul Ulama, that affirms adherence to one of the four Sunni schools of law and accepts the mediation of the established scholarly tradition.[10] The assignment of these labels to the two platforms rests on converging grounds. Rumaysho.com is categorized as Salafi on the basis of its principal author's scholarly formation in Saudi Arabia, its near-exclusive reliance on Peninsular authorities such as Ibn Bāz and al-Albānī, and its textualist editorial orientation.[11] NU Online is categorized as traditionalist on the basis of its institutional affiliation as the official portal of Nahdlatul Ulama and its *madhhab*-based method.[12]

The research question is therefore as follows: does the absence of women from a platform's editorial structure shape the patriarchal character of its hadith interpretation on women, independent of the raw textual material, which both platforms share? The study's central argument is that editorial gender exclusion functions as a necessary structural condition for the stabilization of an uncorrected patriarchal reading. The contribution is twofold: theoretically, it advances the study of digital religion by reconceiving women's editorial absence as an epistemic rather than a merely representational variable; methodologically, it demonstrates the analytical value of treating editorial structure as a unit of discourse analysis alongside the published text.

[9] Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Anatomy of the Salafi Movement," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 29, no. 3 (2006): 207–239, https://doi.org/10.1080/10576100500497004; Roel Meijer, "Introduction," in *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, ed. Roel Meijer (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 1–32.

[10] Robin Bush, *Nahdlatul Ulama and the Struggle for Power within Islam and Politics in Indonesia* (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2009), 19–34.

[11] "Tentang Kami," Rumaysho.com, accessed June 2026, https://rumaysho.com/tentang-kami; Nursyabani, "From Saudi to Social Media," 337–356.

[12] "Tentang NU Online," NU Online, accessed June 2026, https://nu.or.id/tentang; Pieternella van Doorn-Harder, *Women Shaping Islam: Reading the Qur'an in Indonesia* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 90–110.

2. Method

This study is qualitative and comparative, employing the critical discourse analysis (CDA) developed by Teun A. van Dijk[13] as its principal analytical framework. Van Dijk conceives of discourse as a site at which power is exercised and ideology reproduced, and he identifies several operations through which texts encode relations of dominance: selection, which governs the admission and suppression of information; reproduction, which concerns the manner in which sources are replicated or silenced; summarization, which compresses complex matters into tractable propositions; and local transformation, which manipulates the surface of the text through ordering, addition, and omission.

Van Dijk's framework is particularly suited to the present inquiry because it incorporates a theory of discursive access. Control over the production of authoritative texts—the capacity to write, edit, and publish—constitutes a form of social power, and the systematic exclusion of a social category from this productive apparatus shapes the discourse composed about that category. This proposition transforms editorial structure from a contextual detail into an analytical object, and it grounds the study's treatment of women's editorial absence as an epistemic variable.

The corpus comprises hadith-based articles addressing women in the public sphere, drawn from Rumaysho.com and NU Online. Rumaysho was selected as the primary case for three reasons: it ranks among the most visited Salafi platforms in Indonesia; it is authored and administered almost entirely by a single male scholar, presenting an unusually pure instance of editorial gender exclusion; and it maintains a consistent program of hadith exposition. NU Online was selected as the contrast case because it shares the status of a highly trafficked Indonesian Islamic platform with a sustained hadith program, yet differs on the variable of interest: women are present among its contributors.

A methodological caveat must be stated at the outset. Because Rumaysho is both editorially all-male and Salafi in orientation, the variables of gender exclusion and ideological affiliation co-vary within the design. The study does not claim to isolate editorial gender exclusion as the sole cause of the patriarchal reading. Its claim is more circumscribed: that the absence of women from production is a necessary structural condition for the stabilization of an uncorrected patriarchal reading, a condition whose operation is rendered visible through the contrast with NU Online. The editorial structure of each platform was established through the platforms' own statements of authorship and editorial composition, supplemented by the secondary literature on each platform's institutional setting.[14]

[13] Van Dijk, "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis," 249–283.

[14] Arrazy Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan: Genealogi Ajaran Salafi*, 2nd ed. (Jakarta: Maktabah Darus-Sunnah, 2018), 55–72; van Doorn-Harder, *Women Shaping Islam*, 90–110.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Digital Authority, Gender, and the Structure of Production

The transformation of religious authority under digital conditions has been theorized along two broad lines. The first, associated with Eickelman and Anderson,[15] holds that new media generate an emergent Muslim public sphere in which interpretation is wrested from traditional scholarly custodians. The second, developed most fully by Bunt,[16] holds that the internet reconstitutes authority, producing configurations in which visibility, popularity, and algorithmic amplification substitute for classical markers of scholarly standing. Both lines have illuminated the Indonesian case in particular.[17]

What neither line has adequately theorized is the gendered structure of the production that the digital transformation enables. The literature on digital Islam in Indonesia has documented the reproduction of patriarchal norms in considerable detail: Nursyabani (2024) has traced the Arabization of Indonesian Islam through Salafi Instagram accounts; Nikmatullah et al. (2024) have analyzed the reconstruction of gender in hadith memes; Rohmah et al. (2025) have shown how a Salafi account frames the hadith of *dayyuth* to consolidate a patriarchal moral order. These studies converge upon the finding that digital platforms reproduce patriarchal norms. They treat the producers of these norms, however, as an undifferentiated category, attending to what is produced rather than to the structure of the apparatus that produces it.

The present study departs from this literature in locating its analytical object not in the published text alone but in the relation between the text and the editorial structure that generates it. This shift is enabled by van Dijk's theory of discursive access, which directs attention from the content of discourse to the conditions of its production, and specifically to the distribution of the power to produce. The contribution of the study lies in bringing this theoretical resource to bear upon a question the existing literature has posed but not resolved: not whether digital platforms reproduce patriarchy, which is established, but through what structural mechanism the composition of a platform's production apparatus conditions the patriarchal character of its output.

3.2. Editorial Structure: Two Apparatuses of Production

Rumaysho.com is, in its editorial composition, an almost singular instance. The platform is authored and administered very largely by one individual, Muḥammad Abduh Tuasikal, a scholar who

[15] Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson, "Redefining Muslim Publics," in *New Media in the Muslim World*, 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 1–18.

[16] Gary R. Bunt, *Hashtag Islam*, 40–55.

[17] Heidi A. Campbell and Ruth Tsuria, *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in Digital Media*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2021), 1–20; Muhammad Mundzir, "Gender Construction in Manhaj Salaf's Account: A Study of Hadith Content on the Existence of Women in Public Sphere," *DINIKA: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 2 (2021): 235–262, https://doi.org/10.22515/dinika.v6i2.4073.

received his religious formation in Saudi Arabia and whose intellectual lineage lies with the purist Salafi establishment.[18] The contributors who supplement his output are likewise male. No woman appears among the platform's authors or editors. The interpretive method is textualist: it privileges the literal sense of the prophetic report, seldom incorporates the *asbāb al-wurūd* or occasions of utterance, and refers almost exclusively to the fatwas of Peninsular authorities such as Ibn Bāz and al-Albānī.

NU Online, the portal of the central board of Nahdlatul Ulama, presents a markedly different editorial structure. Its contributors are drawn substantially from graduates of Indonesian hadith institutions, and they include women; in several of the articles on hadith concerning women, the author is herself a woman. The platform's method is contextualist, attending to the occasions of utterance and according interpretive weight to the historical circumstances of transmission. The institutional setting is significant: Nahdlatul Ulama sustains active women's organizations—Muslimat, Fatayat, and the women's student association—that have for decades furnished women with religious formation and a recognized standing within the public life of the organization.[19]

The contrast in editorial structure is the decisive datum for this study. It is not merely that the two platforms differ in method and orientation; they differ in the composition of the apparatus through which religious knowledge is produced. On one platform, women are wholly absent from production; on the other, they participate as authors of the very discourse that concerns them. Two clarifications about the notion of an editorial apparatus are in order. First, the apparatus is not reducible to the named author of a given article; it comprises all persons who participate in the selection of topics, drafting, revision, vetting of citations, and decision to publish. Second, the relevant property of this group is the presence or absence of women as a structural feature, not the gender of any individual member in isolation.

3.3. The Uncorrected Generalization

Where women are absent from production, a particular pronouncement passes uncorrected into a universal norm. The point is best seen in Rumaysho's treatment of the hadith of Abū Bakrah, recorded in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī, on the leadership of women. The analytically significant feature is not the substance of the ruling but the discursive operation that produces it: the platform generalizes statements of the classical exegetes—al-Shawkānī, Ibn Kathīr, al-Ṭabarī—that concern authority within the household into a prohibition upon political leadership at large, and omits the occasion of utterance that the commentators themselves recorded.[20] What matters here is that this

[18] Hasyim, *Teologi Muslim Puritan*, 55–72.

[19] Van Doorn-Harder, *Women Shaping Islam*, 90–110.

[20] Abū al-Fidā' Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-ʿAzīm* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 2000), 1:492; Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAynī, *ʿUmdat al-Qārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, n.d.), 24:220.

generalization meets no internal resistance. In an apparatus composed entirely of men, there is no participant positioned to ask whether the extrapolation serves the text or merely the conclusion.

NU Online reads the same report contextually. Its contributors reconstruct the occasion of utterance, juxtapose the report with the Qurʾānic narrative of the Queen of Sheba, whose political acumen the scripture commends, and adduce the deliberative assembly of Nahdlatul Ulama that affirmed the permissibility of female leadership conditioned upon competence.[21] The reading does not impeach the transmission of the hadith; it restores the report to its historical occasion and declines to extrapolate a universal interdiction from a particular pronouncement.

The significance of the contrast lies not in the existence of two readings—interpretive divergence is unremarkable—but in what the comparison reveals about the conditions of their production. On NU Online, the contextual reading is produced within an apparatus in which women participate, and in which a reading that would foreclose women's leadership is subject to challenge from within. On Rumaysho, the restrictive reading is produced within an apparatus from which women are absent, and no internal corrective operates upon it. The reading stabilizes not merely because the method is textualist but because there is no one within the production process positioned to contest its consequences for women.

The rhetorical construction of the Rumaysho articles exemplifies the operation van Dijk terms local transformation. The exposition proceeds by accumulation: a series of proofs is marshaled in sequence, each lending the appearance of corroboration to the others, until the conclusion presents itself as the cumulative weight of the tradition rather than as the product of a particular selection. The concealment is the more effective precisely because it does not falsify; every proof adduced is authentic, and the manipulation lies not in fabrication but in selection and arrangement.

3.4. The Unregistered Consequence

Where women are absent from production, a ruling's practical consequence for women may simply fail to register. Rumaysho's reading of the *maḥram* report, transmitted by Muslim from Abū Hurayrah, illustrates the failure. The platform treats the requirement of male accompaniment as a perpetual obligation indifferent to circumstance, citing Ibn Bāz to that effect.[22] The analytically significant feature is not the ruling itself but what the discourse does not contain: any reckoning with what the ruling costs the women to whom it applies. A woman who would work, study, or travel without a male relative is rendered a transgressor, yet the weight of this consequence is nowhere registered in the exposition.

NU Online approaches the report through analysis of its operative legal rationale, contending, after al-Shāfiʿī and a number of the early authorities, that the rationale underlying the prohibition is

[21] Saḥal Mahḱūẓ, *Nuānsa Fiqih Sosial* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 1994), 180–185.

[22] ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Bāz, *Majmūʿ Fatāwā wa-Maqālāt Mutanawwiʿah* (Riyadh: Dār al-Qāsim, 2000), 17:340–342.

the security of the traveler rather than the gender of her companion.[23] Where security is otherwise assured, the underlying rationale is satisfied and the literal stipulation may be reconsidered. This reading enlarges the scope of women's permissible participation in public life.

Here the structural significance of editorial composition becomes especially salient, for the stakes of the divergence bear directly upon women's material circumstances. A substantial proportion of Indonesian households are headed by women,[24] for whom a norm requiring male accompaniment as a condition of leaving the home is not an abstraction but an impediment to economic survival. A discourse produced without the participation of women is structurally unlikely to register this consequence, for the experience that would render it salient is absent from the production process. On NU Online, by contrast, the presence of women among the contributors furnishes precisely the standpoint from which such consequences become visible.

3.5. The Unchallenged Asymmetry

Where women are absent from production, an asymmetric distribution of moral responsibility passes unchallenged. Rumaysho's handling of the *fitnah* report, transmitted by Usāmah ibn Zayd and recorded by Muslim, is the clearest instance—the term *fitnah* denoting temptation rather than calumny.[25] The platform figures woman as an intrinsic source of peril, concluding in one article that a woman ought not to publish her photograph online; a parallel study of the *dayyuth* hadith on Salafi Instagram documents the identical move.[26] The burden so assigned—women must conceal and restrict themselves to safeguard men—encounters no internal challenge. The standpoint from which its injustice would be evident is structurally absent.

NU Online, attending to the fuller body of complementary reports, concludes that both men and women may equally constitute sources of temptation, and construes the report concerning the first *fitnah* of the Children of Israel as a historically circumscribed admonition rather than an ontological pronouncement upon the nature of woman. Responsibility, upon this reading, cannot be assigned exclusively to women.

It is instructive to set the two readings of *fitnah* against the reciprocity principle developed within Indonesian Islamic scholarship itself. The Mubādalah framework holds that an injunction addressed in its literal form to one gender is to be read as bearing reciprocally upon both.[27] Applied to the reports concerning temptation, the principle yields precisely the reading NU Online adopts: that the susceptibility to temptation, and the responsibility for guarding against it, are shared rather than assigned asymmetrically to women. That an indigenous interpretive tradition arrives at the

[23] Wahbah al-Zuḥaylī, *al-Fiqh al-Islāmī wa-Adillatuhu* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1985), 3:635–638.

[24] Badan Pusat Statistik, *Statistik Gender Tematik 2020* (Jakarta: Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020), 45.

[25] Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n.d.), vol. 13, s.v. "f-t-n."

[26] Rohmah, Zamzami, and Rochmawati, "Constructing Digital Patriarchy," 1–36.

[27] Faqihuddin Abdul Kodir, *Qirā'ah Mubādalah: Tafsir Progresif untuk Keadilan Gender dalam Islam* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2019), 200–210.

reciprocal reading indicates that the participatory reading is not an importation of external feminist commitments but a possibility internal to the Islamic scholarly tradition.

3.6. Access as an Epistemic Condition

The three themes exhibit a consistent pattern. In each, the two platforms share an identical and canonically sound report; in each, they construct opposed normative claims; and in each, the restrictive reading is produced on the platform from which women are absent, the participatory reading on the platform on which they are present. The regularity of the pattern invites a structural rather than a merely interpretive explanation.

Van Dijk's theory of discursive access supplies that explanation. Access to the production of authoritative discourse is a form of social power, and the systematic exclusion of a category of persons from production shapes the discourse composed about them. On Rumaysho, women are excluded not only from the readership's deference but from the apparatus of production itself; the discourse concerning women is composed entirely in their absence. The consequence is not merely that women are unrepresented but that no internal corrective operates upon readings prejudicial to their interests. The patriarchal reading stabilizes because there is no one within the production process positioned to contest it.

This is the sense in which editorial gender exclusion is an epistemic rather than a merely representational variable. The matter is not exhausted by the observation that women ought, in fairness, to be included. The deeper point is that their absence conditions the knowledge the discourse is capable of producing. A discourse concerning women composed entirely by men is deficient in the stronger sense that it is structurally incapable of registering those features of women's situation accessible only from the standpoint of women.[28] The contrast with NU Online demonstrates the point: there, the participation of women in production furnishes the standpoint from which the consequences of restrictive readings become visible, and the readings are correspondingly tempered.

A possible objection must be addressed. It might be urged that the scholarly competence of Rumaysho's principal author qualifies him to pronounce upon matters concerning women regardless of his gender, and that the demand for women's participation confuses scholarly authority with social location. The objection has force. Scholarly competence in the hadith sciences is indeed a necessary condition of authoritative pronouncement upon hadith. But it is not, the present analysis suggests, a sufficient condition of an adequate discourse concerning women, for such a discourse requires in addition the registration of those features of women's situation accessible only from the standpoint of women. Competence and standpoint are distinct goods; the possession of the one does not supply

[28] Sandra Harding, "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What Is 'Strong Objectivity'?" in *Feminist Epistemologies*, ed. Linda Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter (New York: Routledge, 1993), 49–82.

the other. The argument imputes no bad faith to Rumaysho's author. The claim is structural rather than psychological: a production apparatus that includes women possesses an internal capacity to register the consequences of its readings for women that does not depend upon the goodwill of any individual participant.

4. Conclusion

This article has argued that the exclusion of women from a digital platform's editorial structure is not merely a problem of representational equity but an epistemic variable that conditions the meaning produced from sacred texts. Through a comparative critical discourse analysis of three hadith themes across Rumaysho.com and NU Online, it has shown that identical, canonically sound reports are rendered into opposed normative claims, and that the restrictive reading consistently issues from the platform on which women are absent from production. Van Dijk's theory of discursive access furnishes the mechanism: where women are excluded from the apparatus of production, the discourse concerning them is composed in their absence, and no internal corrective operates upon readings prejudicial to their interests.

The study's claim is deliberately circumscribed. Because editorial gender exclusion and Salafi orientation co-vary on Rumaysho, the analysis does not isolate the former as the sole cause of the patriarchal reading. It establishes, rather, that women's absence from production is a necessary structural condition for the stabilization of an uncorrected patriarchal reading—a condition whose operation the contrast with NU Online renders visible. The practical implication follows directly: the inclusion of women in the production of digital religious discourse is a condition of that discourse's epistemic adequacy, not an optional refinement of it.

Two avenues for further inquiry suggest themselves. The first is a design capable of disentangling editorial composition from ideological orientation—for instance, a comparison of two platforms of like ideological orientation differing only in the presence of women among their contributors. The second concerns reception: how the audiences of these platforms receive, negotiate, or resist the readings produced for them, and whether the emergence of platforms produced by women portends a reconfiguration of the discursive field. Both would extend the central proposition of this study: that in the digital production of religious knowledge, who is present at the editorial table is not incidental to the knowledge produced.

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