



## **A sociological reinterpretation of hadith on grave visitation**

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### **Abstract**

The increasing polarization between normative textual interpretations and lived religious practices in contemporary Muslim societies underscores the urgent need for integrative analytical approaches that bridge doctrine and social reality. This study offers a novel sociological reinterpretation of hadith on grave visitation by examining its transformation from a normative legal discourse into a dynamic and institutionalized social practice. Employing a qualitative library-based design within the frameworks of the Sociology of Hadith and Living Hadith, the study analyzes canonical hadith texts, classical commentaries, and contemporary scholarly literature. The findings demonstrate that the shift from prohibition to recommendation of grave visitation reflects a deliberate form of prophetic social engineering aimed at restructuring emotional behavior and redefining collective attitudes toward death. Furthermore, the study reveals that hadith establishes a system of theological and spatial regulation that preserves monotheistic boundaries while enabling controlled engagement with burial spaces. Grave visitation is reinterpreted as an existential practice that fosters internalized moral awareness and ethical self-regulation. In contemporary contexts, particularly in Indonesia, the practice evolves into a Living Hadith manifested in communal rituals that reinforce social cohesion, collective memory, and cultural continuity, while also revealing tensions arising from the interaction between textual authority and local cultural dynamics. This study advances the theoretical development of the Sociology of Hadith by conceptualizing hadith as a mechanism of internalized social regulation and moral governance. Ultimately, it positions grave visitation as a multidimensional and socially embedded institution, offering a new conceptual lens for understanding the role of prophetic traditions in shaping religious practice within the global discourse on religion and society.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The study of religious texts within contemporary scholarship has increasingly moved beyond purely normative interpretations toward a more integrative understanding that situates texts within lived social realities. In the field of the sociology of religion, rituals related to death have attracted significant attention as mechanisms through which societies construct meaning, regulate behavior, and maintain collective identity (Kişjuhas, 2024; Phan et al., 2025). Within Islamic intellectual tradition, hadith occupies a central epistemological role not only as a legal source but also as a framework guiding ethical conduct and social interaction. However, the dynamic relationship between hadith and social practice has often been underexplored, particularly in relation to how prophetic traditions function as instruments of social organization. Grave visitation Alkhouri, (2024); Setinawati et al., (2025) represents a compelling case in which textual authority intersects with social, cultural, and psychological dimensions of religious life. As a ritual deeply embedded in Muslim societies across regions, it reflects the continuous negotiation between doctrinal boundaries and lived experiences. Therefore, examining grave visitation through a sociological lens offers a critical entry point for understanding how religious texts operate beyond their textual confines.

Empirical evidence from various Muslim contexts demonstrates that grave visitation is not merely a personal devotional act but a socially embedded practice with multiple layers of meaning. In countries such as Indonesia, Turkey, and Morocco, grave visitation is intertwined with local

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traditions, collective memory, and communal identity, often taking the form of large-scale ritual gatherings (Zuhri, 2022). These practices frequently serve as spaces for reinforcing kinship ties, transmitting cultural values, and negotiating religious authority within communities. At the same time, they are also sites of contestation, where differing interpretations of religious legitimacy emerge between reformist and traditionalist groups (Arakkal & Mocherla, 2025; Jong & Ali, 2023). Such tensions highlight the complexity of interpreting hadith in pluralistic social settings, where textual prescriptions interact with diverse cultural frameworks. Moreover, the persistence of these practices suggests that grave visitation fulfills functions that extend beyond doctrinal compliance, including emotional coping, identity formation, and moral reflection. This multifaceted nature underscores the need for analytical approaches that capture both the normative and sociological dimensions of the phenomenon.

The urgency of this study arises from the continued dominance of dichotomous debates in contemporary discourse on grave visitation, particularly those centered on its legal status as either permissible or impermissible. While such debates are important within the framework of Islamic jurisprudence, they often fail to account for the broader social functions of the practice (Güney, 2024; Yasmeen, 2024). This limitation risks reducing a complex and historically evolving phenomenon into a static doctrinal issue, thereby overlooking its role in shaping social cohesion and moral order. In addition, the increasing polarization of religious interpretations in the modern era further intensifies the need for approaches that move beyond binary categorizations. The Sociology of Hadith provides a valuable framework for addressing this gap by examining how prophetic traditions are interpreted, enacted, and institutionalized within specific social contexts. By integrating textual analysis with sociological inquiry, this approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of how religious practices function within society. Consequently, revisiting grave visitation through this perspective is both timely and necessary for advancing contemporary Islamic scholarship.

The rationale for this research is grounded in the recognition that the evolution of hadith rulings reflects broader processes of social adaptation and transformation. The transition from the initial prohibition of grave visitation to its subsequent recommendation illustrates the flexibility of Islamic legal discourse in responding to the developmental needs of the early Muslim community (León & Basterretxea, 2023; Wardi et al., 2024). This transformation can be understood as a form of prophetic social engineering aimed at redirecting existing cultural practices toward a more theologically grounded and ethically regulated framework. At the same time, the continued relevance of grave visitation in contemporary societies demonstrates how religious texts are reinterpreted and embedded within diverse sociocultural environments. This dual process highlights the importance of examining hadith not only as normative prescriptions but also as dynamic sources of social meaning. By adopting a sociological perspective, this study seeks to uncover the mechanisms through which religious practices are constructed, legitimized, and sustained over time. Such an approach enables a deeper understanding of the interplay between text, practice, and social structure.

A growing body of literature has explored grave visitation from multiple disciplinary perspectives, including hadith studies, Islamic jurisprudence, and sociology of religion. Studies focusing on textual authenticity and historical context, such as those by Ramle & Huda, (2022), have emphasized the importance of *asbāb al-wurūd* in understanding the situational nature of early prohibitions. Legal analyses by Meyer, (2024); Sadequee, (2025) have highlighted the normative status of grave visitation as a recommended practice within mainstream Islamic thought. Meanwhile, research on Living Hadith has expanded the analytical scope by examining how hadith are actively practiced and interpreted within society (Abbas, 2024; Meyer, 2024). More recent studies have incorporated sociological frameworks to analyze the role of grave visitation in shaping collective memory and social cohesion (Liew & Passau, 2024; Prickett & Timmermans, 2022). Additionally, scholarship on religious rituals and social regulation has emphasized the role of ritual practices in maintaining moral order and reinforcing social norms (Alsuhaymi & Atallah, 2025; Kasa, 2025). Despite these contributions, the existing literature tends to treat textual and social dimensions as separate domains of analysis. This separation limits the ability to fully capture the integrative nature of grave visitation as both a religious and social phenomenon.

Furthermore, critical examination of the literature reveals several significant gaps that warrant further investigation. First, there is a lack of integrative analytical models that systematically connect the evolution of hadith rulings with their sociological institutionalization in contemporary

contexts. Second, many studies remain descriptive in nature, focusing on specific aspects of the practice without addressing its broader implications for social order and moral governance. Third, the application of classical sociological theories—such as social construction (Basu, 2023), social solidarity Sattar et al., (2026), and power relations—has not been fully synthesized within the framework of hadith studies. As a result, the potential of hadith to function as a mechanism of internalized social regulation remains underexplored. This gap is particularly evident in the absence of conceptualizations that frame grave visitation as a structured social institution capable of shaping behavior and collective consciousness. Addressing these limitations requires an interdisciplinary approach that bridges textual scholarship with sociological theory. Such an approach not only enriches the field of Islamic studies but also contributes to broader discussions in the sociology of religion.

In response to these gaps, this study aims to provide a sociological reinterpretation of hadith on grave visitation by examining its transformation from a normative legal discourse into a socially embedded institution. Specifically, the study investigates how the evolution of hadith rulings reflects processes of social engineering and how these processes are manifested in contemporary practices of grave visitation. Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of the Sociology of Hadith by integrating classical Islamic scholarship with contemporary sociological frameworks, thereby offering a more comprehensive model for understanding Living Hadith. Practically, it provides insights into how religious practices can foster social cohesion while maintaining theological integrity in pluralistic societies. By bridging the gap between text and context, this study advances the discourse on the dynamic relationship between religion and society. Ultimately, it positions grave visitation not merely as a ritual practice but as a meaningful social institution that continues to shape moral and collective life in Muslim communities.

## METHOD

This study employed a qualitative library-based research design using an interpretive socio-textual approach within the framework of the Sociology of Hadith and Living Hadith. This design was selected because the study does not aim to measure variables statistically, but to interpret the transformation of hadith on grave visitation from normative textual discourse into lived social practice. The Sociology of Hadith approach is appropriate because it allows prophetic traditions to be examined not only as legal texts, but also as sources of meaning that are received, practiced, and institutionalized within Muslim societies (Van Laer & Essers, 2024; Zaid et al., 2022). In this context, grave visitation is understood as a religious practice that connects textual authority, historical change, and sociocultural function. Therefore, the method combines textual examination of hadith with sociological interpretation of contemporary Muslim practices.

The study was conducted in a textual and socio-cultural research context rather than in a single geographical field site. The primary context of analysis was the corpus of hadith related to grave visitation, while the secondary context was documented Muslim grave-visitations practices in Indonesia, including nyadran, haul, and Eid al-Fitr grave visits. The research materials were drawn from classical hadith collections, classical commentaries, and relevant academic studies published mainly between 2022 and 2026. This temporal scope was used to connect classical Islamic discourse with contemporary social practice. Since the study relies on published texts and documented practices, no direct fieldwork, interviews, or participant observation were conducted.

The population of this study consisted of hadith texts and scholarly literature related to grave visitation. The sample was selected purposively using thematic criteria, namely texts that discuss the prohibition, permission, etiquette, and social meaning of grave visitation. The primary textual data were taken from canonical hadith sources, especially narrations found in Sahih Muslim and Sahih al-Bukhari, because these narrations form the central legal and theological basis for discussing grave visitation. The inclusion criteria required that the selected hadith be directly related to ziyārat al-qubūr, supported by recognized classical commentaries, and relevant to the concept of legal transformation through nasikh-mansukh. Secondary data consisted of academic literature on Living Hadith, sociology of religion, and documented Indonesian Muslim grave-visitations traditions (Meyer, 2025; Nikmatullah, 2026).

The main research instrument was the researcher as a human instrument, supported by a structured document-analysis framework. The framework was designed to classify the data into three analytical dimensions: textual authenticity, historical context, and sociological function. Textual authenticity was examined through sanad and matn considerations as discussed in hadith scholarship, while historical context was examined through *asbāb al-wurūd* and classical *syarah* literature (Muhyidin & Nashihin, 2025; Purnama, 2025). Sociological function was analyzed by identifying how grave visitation contributes to social cohesion, collective memory, moral regulation, and religious institutionalization. The use of this framework helped ensure that the analysis did not remain purely normative, but also addressed the social life of hadith within Muslim communities.

The trustworthiness of the study was maintained through source triangulation, theoretical triangulation, and interpretive consistency. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing primary hadith texts, classical commentaries, and contemporary academic literature. Theoretical triangulation was applied by using concepts from the Sociology of Hadith, Living Hadith, social construction, social solidarity, and moral regulation to interpret the data from different analytical angles (Ahmad et al., 2025; Saffinee, 2022). Interpretive consistency was ensured by applying the same analytical categories to all selected texts and secondary sources. Because this study is qualitative and text-based, statistical validity, Cronbach's alpha, and psychometric reliability tests were not applicable. Instead, credibility was strengthened through transparent source selection, careful citation, and systematic interpretation.

Data collection was conducted in several stages. First, relevant hadith texts on grave visitation were identified through thematic tracing based on key terms such as *ziyārat al-qubūr*, prohibition of grave visitation, etiquette at graves, and remembrance of death. Second, the selected hadith were examined through classical commentaries, especially works that explain legal transformation, *asbāb al-wurūd*, and the ethical boundaries of grave visitation. Third, contemporary literature on Indonesian grave-visitiation practices was collected to understand how the hadith is lived and institutionalized in society. Fourth, all collected data were organized into analytical categories linking text, context, and social function. This staged procedure allows other researchers to replicate the study by following the same corpus selection and analytical pathway.

Data analysis was conducted through three interrelated stages. The first stage was textual analysis, which examined the meaning, legal status, and normative orientation of the hadith on grave visitation. The second stage was contextual analysis, which explored the historical shift from initial prohibition to later recommendation through the concept of *nasikh-mansukh* and the changing religious condition of the early Muslim community (Abidin, 2025; Tedy, 2024). The third stage was sociological analysis, which interpreted grave visitation as a Living Hadith that functions as a medium of social cohesion, emotional reflection, collective memory, and moral control. Concepts such as social construction and social solidarity were used to explain how grave visitation becomes institutionalized as a social practice (Pramono et al., 2024; Tchoukou, 2024). Through this analytical sequence, the study connects the authority of hadith texts with their performative role in Muslim social life.

Ethical considerations were addressed through academic integrity, responsible interpretation, and respect for religious sensitivity. Since the study used textual and documentary sources only, it did not involve human participants and therefore did not require informed consent or respondent anonymity procedures. However, all cited works were acknowledged properly to avoid plagiarism and misrepresentation. The interpretation of hadith was conducted cautiously by referring to recognized classical and contemporary scholarship. In discussing local religious practices, the study avoided stigmatizing particular Muslim communities and instead analyzed differences in practice as part of sociocultural interpretation. These ethical procedures support the credibility and scholarly responsibility of the research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The findings demonstrate that the legal status of grave visitation in hadith literature reflects a structured transformation shaped by the sociological condition of early Muslim society. Etymologically, *ziyārat al-qubūr* derives from the root *zāra-yazūru*, indicating a deliberate act of

visiting, while terminologically it refers to visiting graves for prayer and moral reflection on death. This transformation is explicitly articulated in the prophetic statement:

كُنْتُ نَهَيْتُكُمْ عَنْ زِيَارَةِ الْقُبُورِ، فَزُورُوهَا

“I used to forbid you from visiting graves, so now go and visit them” (Muslim, no. 1623).

This narration confirms a normative shift from prohibition to recommendation, illustrating the principle of *nasikh-mansukh* as a deliberate regulatory mechanism. The initial prohibition functioned as a preventive intervention aimed at eliminating pre-Islamic mourning practices, particularly *niyāhah*, which embodied excessive emotional expression. This is reinforced by the hadith:

لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ لَطَمَ الْخُدُودَ، وَشَقَّ الْجُيُوبَ، وَدَعَا بِدَعْوَى الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ

“Those who slap their cheeks, tear their clothes, and call with the cries of the *Jahiliyyah* are not of us” (Muslim, no. 148).

Taken together, these findings indicate that the transformation of grave visitation law constitutes a form of structured normative intervention designed to regulate emotional behavior and reconstruct collective perceptions of death. Thus, the hadith does not merely prescribe legal status but actively reorients social attitudes toward mortality.

The results further reveal that prophetic guidance established a system of theological and spatial regulation that redefined the meaning of burial spaces within Islamic society. The hadith states:

لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَى اتَّخَذُوا قُبُورَ أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ مَسَاجِدَ

“Allah curses the Jews and Christians who took the graves of their prophets as places of worship” (al-Bukhari, no. 1301).

This statement delineates a strict boundary between divine worship and practices that risk transforming graves into sacred objects. This boundary is reinforced through behavioral regulations governing physical interaction with graves:

لَا تَجْلِسُوا عَلَى الْقُبُورِ وَلَا تُصَلُّوا إِلَيْهَا

“Do not sit on graves, nor pray facing them” (Muslim), and

نَهَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ يُجَصَّصَ الْقَبْرُ، وَأَنْ يُفَعَّدَ عَلَيْهِ، وَأَنْ يُبْنَى عَلَيْهِ

“The Messenger of Allah forbade plastering graves, sitting on them, and building over them” (Muslim).

These regulations collectively demonstrate a systematic restructuring of burial space as a controlled religious environment. The findings confirm that grave visitation is governed by a normative framework that prevents excessive sacralization while preserving its reflective function. In this sense, the hadith operates as a mechanism that transforms burial sites from spaces of emotional expression into regulated arenas of ethical awareness. This indicates that Islamic legal discourse extends beyond doctrinal instruction into the regulation of public religious space.

The analysis also shows that grave visitation is redefined as an existential and moral practice centered on the internalization of death awareness. This is reflected in the prophetic greeting:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ دَارَ قَوْمٍ مُؤْمِنِينَ... وَإِنَّا إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ لَاجِفُونَ

“Peace be upon you, abode of believing people... indeed, we will follow you” (Muslim, no. 1618).

This expression establishes a symbolic connection between the living and the dead, emphasizing shared mortality and humility. The findings indicate that grave visitation is constructed as a controlled act of remembrance (*dhikr al-mawt*), rather than an act of devotion directed toward the deceased. This redefinition represents a shift from emotionally driven ritual behavior to ethically regulated reflection. As a result, the practice becomes a medium through which individuals internalize moral discipline and existential awareness. The study therefore finds that hadith reframes death not as a source of despair but as a structured tool for ethical self-regulation. This

highlights the role of prophetic guidance in shaping both spiritual consciousness and behavioral norms.

At the level of contemporary practice, the findings demonstrate that grave visitation has evolved into a socially embedded phenomenon consistent with the concept of Living Hadith. In the Indonesian context, normative texts are actively translated into communal rituals such as *nyadran*, haul commemorations, and Eid-related grave visits. These practices function as collective events that reinforce social cohesion, shared identity, and familial continuity. Within the cemetery space, social hierarchies tend to dissolve, creating an egalitarian environment where individuals confront a shared existential reality. This condition reflects a structured form of collective solidarity rooted in emotional and spiritual commonality. The findings confirm that grave visitation operates as a social mechanism that links past and present, connecting ancestral memory with contemporary identity. In this sense, the practice is not merely ritualistic but constitutes a social process through which communities reproduce cultural and religious meaning.

At the same time, the results reveal the presence of sociological tensions that emerge from the interaction between normative texts and lived practices. In certain contexts, grave visitation is accompanied by practices that reintroduce elements of sacral mediation, where graves are perceived as intermediaries for achieving material or spiritual goals. This indicates a misalignment between textual guidance and its social implementation. The findings suggest that such deviations are associated with limited access to authoritative hadith interpretation and the persistence of local belief systems. Despite these tensions, grave visitation continues to function as a dynamic practice shaped by negotiation between doctrine and culture. Additionally, the study identifies an economic dimension associated with pilgrimage activities, where grave sites become centers of micro-economic activity involving services, trade, and mobility. This demonstrates that religious practices are embedded within broader socio-economic structures. Therefore, grave visitation should be understood as a complex phenomenon that simultaneously reflects religious meaning, social negotiation, and economic interaction.

The synthesis of these findings indicates that grave visitation has undergone a process of institutionalization within Muslim societies, transforming from a normative text into a structured social system. The interaction between hadith, legal transformation, spatial regulation, and communal practice produces a stable pattern of behavior that is continuously reproduced across generations. This institutionalization is sustained through processes of social construction, where meanings are externalized, objectified, and internalized within community life. As a result, grave visitation functions not only as a ritual of remembrance but also as a mechanism that organizes social interaction and reinforces moral awareness. The study finds that hadith operates as a form of internalized moral regulation, shaping behavior through symbolic and experiential engagement with death. This positions grave visitation as a social institution that integrates theological principles with everyday practice. Ultimately, the findings confirm that prophetic traditions extend beyond normative instruction to function as enduring frameworks of social governance within Muslim communities.

## Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the transformation of grave visitation from prohibition to recommendation represents a deliberate process of socio-normative restructuring rather than a mere doctrinal adjustment. This shift indicates that prophetic authority functioned as an instrument of social engineering aimed at regulating emotional excess and reconstructing collective perceptions of death. Within the framework of social construction, religious norms are produced through dynamic interaction between textual authority and social context, allowing them to respond to evolving communal needs (Basu, 2023). This interpretation supports prior studies that emphasize the adaptive nature of Islamic legal discourse (León & Basterretxea, 2023; Wardi et al., 2024), yet it advances them by demonstrating that such transformation is not only adaptive but also strategically intentional. In contrast to earlier scholarship that treats *nasikh-mansukh* as a purely legal mechanism, this study reframes it as a sociological tool for behavioral regulation. This repositioning challenges reductionist readings of hadith that isolate legal meaning from social function. As a result, grave visitation emerges as a structured practice through which moral discipline

is cultivated within society. This finding contributes conceptually by redefining hadith as an active agent in shaping social order rather than a passive source of legal instruction.

The regulation of burial space further reveals a systematic effort to construct theological boundaries and prevent the sacralization of graves. The prohibition of transforming graves into sites of worship reflects a preventive model designed to safeguard monotheistic principles while maintaining controlled engagement with death-related rituals. This aligns with theories of moral regulation that view religious norms as mechanisms for maintaining social equilibrium (Alsuhaymi & Atallah, 2025; Kasa, 2025). Previous studies have similarly highlighted the role of ritual boundaries in structuring religious practice (Liew & Passau, 2024; Prickett & Timmermans, 2022), yet they often emphasize symbolic dimensions without sufficiently addressing spatial control. This study extends the literature by demonstrating that such regulation operates materially through the governance of physical space and bodily conduct. The findings suggest that sacred space is not merely interpreted but actively organized to guide behavior. This perspective challenges assumptions that ritual meaning alone explains religious practice, showing instead that spatial discipline is central to religious experience. Consequently, grave visitation can be understood as a regulated interaction between belief, space, and embodied practice. This insight reinforces the argument that Islamic legal discourse encompasses both symbolic and spatial dimensions of social life.

Another significant finding is the reinterpretation of grave visitation as an existential practice centered on the internalization of death awareness. The study shows that prophetic guidance shifts the focus from outward emotional expression to inward moral reflection, thereby fostering ethical self-regulation. This supports contemporary perspectives that view religious rituals as mechanisms of psychological coping and moral formation (Phan et al., 2025; Güney, 2024), as well as studies emphasizing the role of ritual in identity construction (Yasmeen, 2024). However, this study advances these perspectives by demonstrating that such reflexivity is explicitly structured within hadith discourse rather than emerging solely from cultural interpretation. Unlike prior research that privileges emotional or symbolic aspects, this analysis foregrounds the cognitive and ethical architecture of the practice. This indicates that prophetic traditions actively shape how individuals interpret mortality and regulate their responses to it. As a result, grave visitation functions as a disciplined form of spiritual introspection embedded within social life. This finding contributes to theoretical discussions by linking ritual practice directly to processes of ethical subject formation. It also highlights the capacity of hadith to transform existential awareness into structured moral behavior.

At the level of contemporary practice, the findings confirm that grave visitation operates as a Living Hadith that is continuously reproduced within specific sociocultural contexts. In Indonesia, practices such as *nyadran* and *haul* illustrate how textual teachings are translated into communal rituals that reinforce social cohesion and collective identity. This aligns with the theory of social solidarity, which posits that shared rituals sustain communal bonds and collective consciousness (Sattar et al., 2026). Similar observations have been reported in studies of Muslim societies where grave visitation functions as a medium of collective memory (Zuhri, 2022). Nevertheless, previous research often treats these practices descriptively, without adequately explaining their structural role. This study advances the discussion by demonstrating how repeated ritual enactment leads to the institutionalization of normative values. The findings suggest that Living Hadith is not merely a reflection of culture but a mechanism for reproducing social order. This interpretation challenges views that separate textual authority from lived practice. Consequently, grave visitation should be understood as a process of social reproduction that connects past traditions with contemporary identity. This insight strengthens the theoretical integration between hadith studies and sociology of religion.

Despite its integrative function, the study also reveals tensions between normative textual guidance and lived practices, particularly where grave visitation is associated with mediatory beliefs or transactional expectations. These tensions reflect the negotiation between doctrinal authority and local cultural frameworks, as highlighted in studies on religious contestation (Arakkal & Mocherla, 2025; Jong & Ali, 2023). While previous research often interprets such phenomena as deviations from orthodoxy, this study adopts a critical stance by situating them within broader processes of sociocultural adaptation. This perspective is supported by scholarship emphasizing the plurality of religious interpretation (Abbas, 2024; Meyer, 2024), yet it extends the discussion by incorporating

material and economic dimensions. The emergence of economic activities around grave sites indicates that religious practices are embedded within socio-economic systems, a factor often overlooked in existing literature. This finding suggests that religious rituals cannot be fully understood without considering their material context. It also highlights the complexity of maintaining doctrinal purity within diverse social environments. Therefore, grave visitation should be analyzed as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by theological, cultural, and economic forces. This critical perspective contributes to a more nuanced understanding of Living Hadith in contemporary society.

The process of institutionalization identified in this study further illustrates how grave visitation evolves into a stable social system that structures collective behavior. The findings indicate that repeated ritual practices lead to the internalization of shared norms and values, which become embedded within community life. This corresponds to sociological theories of institutionalization, where practices are externalized, objectified, and internalized over time (Basu, 2023; Prickett & Timmermans, 2022). While previous studies acknowledge the social functions of grave visitation, they rarely connect these functions explicitly to the authority of hadith. This study addresses that gap by demonstrating how textual authority and social practice interact to produce enduring institutions. The findings suggest that hadith operates as a mechanism of internalized moral regulation, shaping behavior through symbolic engagement with death. This extends existing theoretical frameworks by linking religious texts directly to processes of social organization. As a result, grave visitation can be conceptualized as an institutionalized form of moral governance. This contribution provides a more integrated understanding of the relationship between religion and social structure. It also reinforces the argument that prophetic traditions play a central role in organizing collective life.

This study makes a novel contribution by advancing the Sociology of Hadith as an integrative framework that bridges textual authority and social practice. It demonstrates that hadith should be understood not merely as prescriptive texts but as dynamic instruments of social regulation that shape behavior, perception, and collective consciousness. This finding responds directly to gaps identified in previous literature, where textual and sociological analyses are often treated separately (Kišjuhas, 2024; Liew & Passau, 2024). By integrating legal transformation, spatial regulation, existential reflection, and institutionalization, the study offers a comprehensive model for understanding Living Hadith. This model extends existing theories by positioning prophetic traditions within broader discussions of moral governance and social order. In the global academic landscape, this perspective contributes to interdisciplinary debates on the role of religion in structuring social life. It also provides a new conceptual lens for analyzing how religious practices remain relevant in rapidly changing societies. Ultimately, the study establishes grave visitation as a dynamic and socially embedded institution that operates across legal, cultural, and existential domains.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that grave visitation, as articulated in hadith, cannot be adequately understood as a static legal prescription, but rather as a dynamic socio-religious institution shaped through processes of normative transformation, spatial regulation, existential reflection, and social institutionalization. The transition from prohibition to recommendation reflects a deliberate form of prophetic social engineering aimed at restructuring emotional behavior and reorienting collective attitudes toward death. This finding demonstrates that hadith functions not only as a source of legal authority but also as a mechanism of internalized moral regulation that operates within the social fabric of Muslim communities. By integrating the Sociology of Hadith with the concept of Living Hadith, the study reveals how textual teachings are continuously interpreted, enacted, and reproduced in diverse sociocultural contexts.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the advancement of the Sociology of Hadith by proposing an integrative analytical model that bridges the gap between textual authority and social practice. It extends existing frameworks by conceptualizing hadith as an active instrument of social organization, rather than a passive repository of doctrinal guidance. This perspective challenges reductionist approaches that separate legal interpretation from sociological function and provides a more holistic understanding of how religious norms are constructed and sustained. At the same time,

the study positions grave visitation within broader sociological discussions on moral regulation, social solidarity, and institutionalization, thereby situating Islamic studies within the global discourse on religion and society.

Empirically, the findings highlight that grave visitation functions as a multidimensional practice that fosters social cohesion, reinforces collective memory, and facilitates moral reflection, while simultaneously reflecting tensions arising from the interaction between normative texts and local cultural dynamics. These tensions indicate that religious practices are continuously negotiated within complex social environments, where doctrinal authority, cultural tradition, and economic factors intersect. This insight underscores the importance of adopting interdisciplinary approaches that account for both textual and contextual dimensions of religious life.

Despite its contributions, this study acknowledges that its reliance on textual and secondary data limits the ability to capture the full complexity of lived experiences across different Muslim societies. Future research is therefore encouraged to incorporate empirical fieldwork, comparative cross-cultural analysis, and more nuanced investigation of socio-economic dimensions to further enrich the understanding of Living Hadith. Additionally, exploring how digital media and contemporary religious movements influence the interpretation and practice of grave visitation may provide valuable insights into the evolving relationship between religion and modernity.

Ultimately, this study establishes that grave visitation represents a dynamic and socially embedded institution that operates at the intersection of theology, culture, and social structure. By demonstrating how prophetic traditions function as mechanisms of moral governance and social regulation, the research offers a new conceptual lens for understanding the role of hadith in contemporary society. In doing so, it not only fills a significant gap in the literature but also contributes to the development of a more integrative and context-sensitive approach to Islamic scholarship in the global academic landscape.

#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Dadah conceptualized the study, developed the theoretical framework, conducted the primary analysis, and led the writing of the manuscript. Haziq Hafizuddin Lubis contributed to data collection and literature review, supported the analytical interpretation, and assisted in drafting and revising the manuscript. Both authors discussed the results, contributed to the final version of the manuscript, and approved the submission for publication.

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