

THE IMPACT OF DIGITALIZATION ON SOCIAL ETHICS AND HUMANITARIAN VALUES FROM AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

Adiba Maulidiyah

Islamic Religious Education, Muhammadiyah STAI Probolinggo, Indonesia

Email: mauliadibhh897@gmail.com

Abstract

Keywords :

Digitalization,
Social Ethics,
Human Values, Islamic
Perspective

This study aims to analyze the impact of digitalization on social ethics and human values from an Islamic perspective, highlighting how advances in digital technology influence social behavior, public morality, and the spiritual orientation of modern society. The approach used is a library research with a descriptive-critical analysis method of academic literature, empirical reports, and relevant religious documents. The results of the study indicate that digitalization has significantly changed communication and social interaction patterns, creating a disconnected society phenomenon where human relationships have become shallow and algorithm-based. In addition, a crisis of human values has emerged due to dehumanization, exploitation of personal data, and a decline in social empathy. From an Islamic perspective, values such as adab, tasamuh, akhlaq al-karimah, and the principles of maqasid al-syariah serve as ethical foundations for balancing technological progress and human welfare. This study emphasizes the importance of reorienting Islamic social ethics education to foster a civilized and just digital awareness. The impact of this research is expected to serve as a conceptual basis for the development of Islamic digital ethics policies in educational institutions, as well as strengthening the moral literacy of society in facing technological disruption in the era of Society 5.0.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) license



INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology in the 21st century has radically changed the face of human civilization. Digitalization is now not only an instrument of progress, but also a new structure that shapes the mindset, behavior, and social relations of modern humans. The phenomena of *the internet of things*, *artificial intelligence*, and social media have created a virtual social space that transcends geographical and cultural boundaries.



In Indonesia, according to the 2024 *We Are Social report*, more than 79% of the population is connected to the internet, and more than 90% of them actively use social media every day (Judijanto et al., 2024). This massive change marks the birth of a digital society that is increasingly dependent on algorithms and automated systems in carrying out its social activities. However, behind this progress, new symptoms have emerged in the form of shifting values, decreased social sensitivity, and ethical degradation in interactions in cyberspace.

Digital transformation impacts not only technological aspects but also penetrates the moral and spiritual realms of humankind. The phenomenon of *virtual society* has brought about fundamental changes in how individuals understand social relations and human values. Communication patterns previously rooted in face-to-face interaction and empathy have now shifted to instant communication that tends to be transactional and shallow. Modern society experiences a paradox: increasingly digitally connected, yet increasingly emotionally disconnected. This phenomenon is referred to by modern sociologists as a *disconnected society*— a society that is technologically connected but morally alienated. In this context, Islam, as a religion of mercy for all the worlds, plays a crucial role in providing a normative and ethical foundation to maintain a balance between technological progress and moral excellence.

Islamic social ethics are rooted in the concepts of *adab* (good manners) and *akhlaq* (moral virtues), which guide people to maintain harmonious relationships with others. Principles such as *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawazun* (balance), and *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood) form the foundation of a civilized society. However, in the digital era, these values are often distorted by the individualistic and hedonistic culture brought about by digital globalization. Content containing hate speech, *cyberbullying*, hoaxes, and even pornography is evidence that the digital space is not yet fully civilized. In this situation, Islam offers an ethical framework that can guide humans to be responsible in utilizing technology, as stated by Allah in QS. Al-Hujurat verse 6, which emphasizes the importance of verifying information before it is disseminated (Istiqomah et al., 2025).

Furthermore, digitalization has also given rise to a new, subtle yet profound form of humanitarian crisis: dehumanization. As human interactions become increasingly mediated by algorithms and automated systems, the values of empathy, compassion, and respect for human dignity are slowly eroded. In the digital economy, humans are often reduced to "data," "clicks," or "traffic," losing their existential meaning as dignified beings (*karamah insaniyah*). This contradicts Islamic values, which position humans as caliphs on earth with a moral responsibility to uphold justice and safeguard the common good (*maqasid al-syariah*). Therefore, understanding the impact of digitalization on human values is a crucial step in building a digital ethics paradigm grounded in Islamic spirituality.

From an educational perspective, digital disruption demands a reorientation towards Islamic social ethics education. Education is no longer solely focused on knowledge transfer, but also on character development and moral literacy in the digital space. Islamic educational institutions, whether Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), *madrasahs* (*madrasas*), or universities, have a strategic responsibility to instill the values of *akhlaq al-karimah* (good morals) so that students can be critical, civilized, and responsible in navigating the digital world. Integrating Islamic values into the *digital education curriculum* is an urgent need to prevent a future social ethics crisis. Thus, education serves as a moral bulwark, protecting generations from the negative influences

of digitalization.

The study of digital ethics from an Islamic perspective is not only normative, but also reflective of contemporary social dynamics. Islamic ethical principles such as *sidq* (honesty), *amanah* (responsibility), *iffah* (decency), and *adl* (justice) can be used as a *moral compass* in navigating a value-free digital world. Through *the maqasid al-syariah approach*, Islam provides an ethical framework for balancing technological progress and human benefit (Iwani et al., 2024). Implementation of these values in digital spaces such as social media and communication platforms can be realized through ethical digital literacy, self-control (*muraqabah*), and awareness of social responsibility in cyberspace. This approach is important so that technology is not just a tool, but also a means of upholding human values.

Conceptually, this research departs from *the state-of-the-art* study of the existence of Islamic social ethics amidst the acceleration of digitalization. Several previous studies have examined the phenomenon of digital ethics from a general perspective, but few have examined in depth the relationship between digitalization, social ethics, and humanitarian values within the framework of Islamic epistemology. This limitation opens up space to enrich the scientific discourse with a normative-philosophical approach rooted in sharia principles. Therefore, this research seeks not only to map the impact of digitalization on social behavior but also to offer theological reflections on how Islam can provide relevant ethical guidelines in the technological era.

The urgency of this research lies in the effort to restore the direction of digital progress to true human values. An increasingly digital world requires strong moral guidance to prevent technology from plunging humanity into spiritual emptiness. An Islamic perspective, grounded in revelation and reason, offers a paradigmatic approach to preserving human dignity amidst the tide of modernization. By examining the impact of digitalization on social ethics and human values through an Islamic approach, it is hoped that a conceptual model of civilized digital ethics (*digital akhlaq*) will emerge that can be applied to social life, education, and public policy.

Ultimately, this research is not simply a reaction to changing times, but also a manifestation of academic and spiritual responsibility to uphold Islamic values in modern civilization. Digitalization is inevitable, but its direction and meaning must be guided by morality. Islam, with its principles of justice and welfare, exists not to reject technology, but rather to guide it so that it remains on the side of humanity. Herein lies the relevance of this normative research—returning digitalization to human nature: rational, ethical, and spiritual beings responsible for every digital footprint they leave in the virtual and physical world.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with library research *oriented* toward normative and philosophical analysis of the concepts of social ethics and humanitarian values from an Islamic perspective amidst the current of digitalization. This approach was chosen because the theme studied is conceptual and does not require empirical observation, but rather an in-depth understanding of the texts, values, and principles contained in classical and contemporary literary sources. The research process was conducted by examining relevant scientific works such as books, academic journals, seminar results, and official documents related to digital ethics, humanitarian values, and Islamic teachings. Primary sources in this study include the Qur'an, hadith, and the

thoughts of classical and modern scholars such as Al-Ghazali, Ibn Khaldun, and Syed Naquib al-Attas who extensively discuss morality and human civilization. Meanwhile, secondary sources include the latest research from international institutions such as *the Pew Research Center* (2023) and *the World Economic Forum* (2024) regarding the social impact of digitalization on the behavior of global society. Through this approach, the researcher seeks to build a synthesis between Islamic theological values and the empirical reality of contemporary digital society.

Data analysis was conducted descriptively and analytically using deductive and inductive patterns, namely outlining social phenomena that arise due to digitalization, then interpreting them through the principles of Islamic ethics. The analysis process began with a categorization of literature to identify patterns, issues, and relevance between digitalization, social ethics, and human values. The obtained data were interpreted using the theoretical framework of *maqasid al-shariah* which focuses on maintaining religion (hifz al-din), reason (hifz al-'aql), and humanity (hifz al-nafs), thus obtaining a normative understanding of how Islam organizes moral order in the modern technological era. Data validity was tested through source triangulation by comparing various academic literature and previous research results to obtain objective and scientifically accountable conclusions. Thus, this method not only explores the relationship between digitalization and social ethics theoretically, but also offers a conceptual construction of how Islamic values can serve as moral guidelines in facing humanitarian challenges in the digital era.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digitalization and the Transformation of Social Ethics

The development of digital technology has brought about fundamental transformations in human social behavior around the world, particularly in developing countries. Digitalization has shifted communication patterns from face-to-face to fast, instant, and cross-border virtual networks. Social media platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, and TikTok have become primary means of social interaction, replacing traditional public spaces like assemblies, markets, and social forums. In Indonesia, a 2024 APJII survey showed that 94% of internet users spend an average of more than four hours per day on social media, a figure that signals a significant shift in people's communication orientation and lifestyle (Miswar et al., 2023). While efficient digital communication patterns have expanded social networks, they have also given rise to shallow interactions, where speed often trumps depth of meaning. In the context of Islamic social change, this shift raises questions about how ethical and moral values can be maintained amidst the unstoppable flow of information.

disconnected society phenomenon is a real symptom of the digital era. Technologically connected societies are experiencing emotional and social disconnection. Social relationships previously built on empathy and tangible presence have shifted to mere *engagement metrics* such as "likes," "shares," and "comments." Cases in India and Indonesia demonstrate an increase in social conflict fueled by misinformation on social media, such as the spread of political hoaxes and religiously motivated hate speech. This phenomenon underscores the existence of *a virtual morality* built on digital existence, rather than the reality of values. In this situation, people tend to project an idealized image in cyberspace that does not always align with their true personalities. As a result, social ethics rooted in spiritual values become blurred and relative, replaced by pseudo-standards of digital popularity.

From an Islamic perspective, changes in social ethics in the digital era require reinforcing the values of *adab* (civility), *tasamuh* (compassion), and *akhlaq al-karimah* (good morals). *Adab* in Islam encompasses not only outward manners but also inner attitudes grounded in spiritual awareness of God. *Tasamuh* (compassion) guides humans to appreciate differences in a pluralistic digital space, while *akhlaq al-karimah* forms the basis for civilized and responsible behavior. Thus, Islam does not reject digital transformation, but rather teaches how technological progress should be directed toward strengthening human values. Digitalization without *adab* will create a *moral vacuum*, while digitalization framed by Islamic ethics will give rise to a civilized, civilized society.

The Crisis of Human Values in the Digital Age

One of the most serious impacts of digitalization is the emergence of symptoms of *dehumanization*, namely the decline of human values due to the dominance of algorithmic systems and automation. Artificial intelligence (AI) technology has replaced many human social functions, including in the fields of public services and interpersonal communication. This phenomenon is clearly visible in developing countries such as the Philippines and Indonesia, where many companies replace human customer service with automated *chatbots* (Pradhana, 2024). Although efficient, this reduces empathetic interactions between humans. Furthermore, humans are starting to be treated as data, not individuals. In the digital economy, human identity is reduced to *big data* and algorithmic preferences, while moral and emotional values are ignored. Islam opposes this form of dehumanization, because humans, in the Qur'an's view, are dignified beings (*karamah insaniyah*) who have a soul, reason, and free will.

The humanitarian crisis in the digital era is also reflected in the increasing exploitation of personal data, *cyberbullying*, and *hate speech*. A UNESCO report (2023) shows that approximately 46% of adolescents in developing countries experience digital bullying, especially on social media platforms (Kurniawan, 2025). In Indonesia, the tragic case of a teenager's suicide due to online bullying in 2022 reflects the loss of social empathy in the virtual space. This situation shows a gap between technological progress and society's moral readiness to manage digital freedom. In Islam, freedom cannot be separated from responsibility (*mas'uliyah*). When technology is used without moral control, what arises is not progress, but a humanitarian crisis rooted in the loss of empathy and compassion for others.

Islam affirms universal humanitarian values through the concept of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (blessing for all the worlds) and respect for human dignity. This principle means that every innovation, including in technology, must contain blessings and benefits for human life as a whole. In the digital context, Islamic teachings encourage the use of technology to expand social good, not the opposite. The ethical use of technology must be directed towards the *maqasid al-sharia* (objectives of sharia), namely reason, honor, and human dignity. Therefore, digitalization should be a means of strengthening solidarity and humanitarian values, not an instrument that deepens social and moral inequality. The value crisis gripping the digital world emphasizes the urgency of an Islamic approach as a normative paradigm for building a just and civilized digital civilization.

Digital Ethics from an Islamic Perspective

Digital ethics, from an Islamic perspective, rests on four main pillars: *sidiq* (honesty), *amanah* (responsibility), *iffah* (politeness), and *adl* (justice). These principles serve as the moral foundation for interacting online (Muhyidin & SM, 2025). In the

context of digital communication, *sidq* demands honesty in conveying information, while *amanah* emphasizes responsibility for all published content. *Iffah* teaches politeness in expression, and *adl* ensures a balance between individual rights and the public interest. In practice, implementing these principles remains a major challenge in developing countries, where digital literacy levels are relatively low. In Indonesia, for example, *the Ministry of Communication and Information* reported that more than 40% of netizens are still unable to distinguish between valid information and hoaxes. This fact demonstrates the importance of a spiritual approach in shaping the digital ethics of Muslim communities.

The maqasid al-syariah framework can be used as an ethical basis for maintaining a balance between technological progress and human benefit. Sharia objectives such as protecting reason (*hifz al - 'aql*), protecting religion (*hifz al-din*), and protecting human honor (*hifz al - 'ird*) provide a moral orientation for humanistic technological development. In Malaysia, for example, the National Fatwa Council has issued ethical guidelines for using social media based on the maqasid principle so that Muslims do not get caught up in digital slander and spreading hatred (Rosidi et al., 2022) . A similar approach is also starting to be implemented by Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia which instill ethical awareness in the use of technology among Islamic boarding school students and students. This means that Islam not only provides prohibitions, but also moral direction in using technology constructively and responsibly.

In practical application, Islamic digital ethics can be realized through *ethical digital literacy* , self-control (*muraqabah*), and online social responsibility. Ethical digital literacy emphasizes critical awareness of the social and moral impacts of every activity in cyberspace. The concept of *muraqabah* teaches that every digital action is always monitored by Allah, so technology users are encouraged to be responsible for every digital trace they leave behind. Furthermore, online social responsibility encourages active participation in creating a positive digital space free from symbolic violence. When these principles are implemented, the digital world is no longer a value-free space, but a space for preaching and education that reflects Islamic civility.

Reorientation of Islamic Social Values and Ethical Education in the Digital Era

Islamic education plays a strategic role in restoring society's moral orientation amidst technological disruption. Character education based on Islamic values must be the primary axis in addressing social changes brought about by digitalization. In developing countries like Indonesia and Bangladesh, the primary challenge in education is balancing digital literacy skills with moral development (Sugiarto & Farid, 2023) . The Islamic education curriculum needs to instill the value of *digital etiquette* , namely the ability to use technology ethically, wisely, and responsibly. Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and madrasahs (Islamic schools) have great potential to become pioneers in digital character education due to their strong spiritual development systems. Thus, Islamic education plays a role not only in transferring knowledge but also in instilling moral awareness, which serves as a bulwark against the degradation of social ethics in cyberspace.

Integrating Islamic ethics into *digital education* is essential to enable the younger generation to internalize moral values in the use of technology. In Malaysia, Universiti Islam Antarabangsa (IIUM) has developed an *Islamic Digital Ethics course* that combines Islamic moral teachings with modern media literacy principles (Agustin, 2024) . This model can be adopted by Islamic universities in Indonesia, particularly to address the

growing *digital native phenomenon* amidst social media culture. Furthermore, the integration of Islamic values into digital education must be practical, not merely dogmatic, by instilling reflective, empathetic, and collaborative habits in all online activities. Thus, Islamic education can produce a generation that is not only technologically savvy but also morally and spiritually mature.

Efforts to build a civilized digital culture (*digital morality*) require collaboration between religious institutions, the media, and the government. Religious institutions can play a role in formulating fatwas and digital moral guidelines, the media has an ethical responsibility to disseminate educational content, and the government is obligated to create regulations that support humanitarian values. This kind of collaboration has begun to be implemented in Indonesia through the *National Digital Literacy Movement program* involving the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo), and Islamic educational institutions (Nur, 2019) . If this synergy is strengthened, digital transformation will not erode morality, but rather become a means to expand Islamic values that are *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (blessing for the universe). At this point, Islamic education and spirituality become moral anchors that guide the direction of digital progress towards a civilized and humane civilization.

CONCLUSION

Digitalization has become an unavoidable global phenomenon, bringing about major transformations in various aspects of human life, including the realm of social ethics and human values. Based on the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the flow of digitalization is not only shaping new patterns of communication and social behavior, but also shifting the foundations of traditional morality that previously guided societal interactions. In many developing countries, including Indonesia, this change is evident in the rise of instant, consumerist, and individualistic cultures that erode the meaning of togetherness and social empathy. The phenomenon of *a disconnected society* indicates that although humans are increasingly technologically connected, they are increasingly emotionally and spiritually isolated. In this context, Islamic values such as *adab* (good manners) , *tasamuh* (compassion) , and *akhlaq al-karimah* (good morals) become moral principles that must be revived so that digital progress remains grounded in humanity.

Furthermore, the crisis of human values in the digital age is evident through the dehumanizing practices generated by algorithmic systems and automation. Artificial intelligence and digital platforms, which are supposed to simplify life, sometimes eliminate empathy and reinforce social inequality. The exploitation of personal data, *cyberbullying* , and hate speech on social media demonstrate how technology can become a tool of power that oppresses humans symbolically and psychologically. Islam, with its principles of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (mercy for all the worlds) and *karamah insaniyah* (benevolence for all creation) , emphasizes the importance of respecting human dignity as rational and moral beings. Therefore, the ethical challenges arising from digitalization must be addressed with a normative approach that places universal spiritual values and morality as the primary foundation of every technological innovation.

To address these challenges, Islam offers a concept of digital ethics based on *the maqasid al-sharia* (the principles of Islamic law) , which serves to maintain a balance between the benefits of technology and human morality. The principles of *sidq* (honesty), *amanah* (responsibility), *iffah* (politeness), and *adl* (justice) constitute a moral framework

that must be applied in digital activities, whether in information production, media consumption, or social interactions in cyberspace. Education is key to reorienting Islamic social ethical values in the digital context. Synergy is needed between educational institutions, Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), the media, and the government to build a civilized digital ecosystem by strengthening the Islamic ethics curriculum, character-based digital literacy, and a culture of *muraqabah* (self-control). In this way, technological advances will no longer be a threat to human values, but rather a means to affirm human identity as ethical caliphs in the digital world.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agustin, M. (2024). Islamic Education and Technology. *Islamic Educational Thought* , 142 .
- Istiqomah, SN, Amin, MN, & Ikhwanudin, M. (2025). Interpretation of Surah Al-Hujurat Verse 6 and An-Nur Verse 15 regarding the Hoax Issue from a Maqashidi Approach Perspective. *Lathaif: Literacy of Tafsir, Hadith and Philology* , 4 (1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.31958/lathaif.v4i1.15370>
- Iwani, FN, Abubakar, A., & Ilyas, H. (2024). Digital Morality in Education: Integrating Qur'anic Values in the Technological Era. *Journal of Instructional and Development Researches* , 4 (6), 551–565. <https://doi.org/10.53621/jider.v4i6.419>
- Judijanto, L., Setiawan, Z., Wiliyanti, V., Gunawan, PW, Suryawan, IGT, Mardiana, S., Ridwan, A., Kusumastuti, SY, Putra, BPP, & Joni, IDMAB (2024). *Digital Literacy in the Society 5.0 Era: A Smart Guide to Facing Digital Transformation* . PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia.
- Kurniawan, S. (2025). *Digital Literacy for the 21st Century* . Aksara Library.
- Miswar, MD, Sofyan, E., Rifqi, AI, Wibowo, YA, Asri, S., & Darwis, MA (2023). *HMI leadership roadmap* . Nas Media Pustaka.
- Muhyidin, AM, & SM, MM (2025). *The Secret to Success in Modern Sharia Retail Business: Mastering Omnichannel in the Digital Era* . Takaza Innovatix Labs.
- Nur, M. (2019). RELIGIOUS DIGITAL LITERACY OF RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION ACTIVISTS AT STATE MADRASAH ALIYAH (MAN) IN BANDUNG CITY. *SMART Journal (Society, Religion, and Tradition Studies)* , 5 (1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.18784/smart.v5i1.745>
- Pradhana, GIR (2024). CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE BUSINESS IN IMPROVING SERVICES IN THE INDONESIAN FINANCIAL INDUSTRY. *AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USE: CONCEPTS AND CASE STUDIES* , 102.
- Rosidi, MH, Mokhtar, AW, & Abdul Majid, MN (2022). The Use of Online Media from the Perspective of Maqāsid Al-Shari'Ah. *Journal of Fatwa Management and Research* , 27 (3), 78–105. <https://doi.org/10.33102/jfatwa.vol27no3.451>
- Sugiarto, & Farid, A. (2023). Digital Literacy as a Path to Strengthening Character Education in the Era of Society 5.0. *Cetta: Journal of Educational Sciences* , 6 (3), 580–597. <https://doi.org/10.37329/cetta.v6i3.2603>

