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Islamic Counseling in the Perspective of Digital Ethics and Muslim Family Responsibility

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Abstract: The development of digital technology has changed various aspects of life, including in the practice of counseling. In Indonesia, high internet access has led to the birth of online counseling services, but this has also raised new challenges related to ethics, privacy, and communication effectiveness. Islamic counseling is present as an approach that integrates psychological and spiritual aspects based on the Qur'an and Hadith, so as to be able to answer the needs of modern society without losing religious values. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method through a literature study to analyze Islamic counseling from the perspective of digital ethics and the role of Muslim families in building moral resilience in the era of technological disruption. The results of the study show that Islamic counseling in the digital era will be more effective if Islamic values are combined with digital ethics, supported by Islamic digital literacy, and strengthened by the active role of Muslim families.

Keywords: Islamic Counseling; Digital Ethics; Muslim Family

INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology has brought significant changes in the lives of the Indonesian people, one of which is marked by the increase in internet penetration from year to year. According to the APJII Internet Penetration Survey (2024), the penetration rate reaches around 79.5% and the number of users is estimated at ±221.6 million people (APJII Indonesia, 2024). In addition, global data also provides a consistent picture. Indonesia's Digital 2024 Report recorded a total population of around 278.7 million people with the number of mobile connections reaching 353.3 million, internet users around 185.3 million, and social media users around 139.0 million (Meltwater, 2024). These figures further confirm the large scale of use of digital devices and platforms in Indonesia. In line with this data, the results of the measurement of the Indonesian Digital Society Index (IMDI 2024) by the Ministry of Communication and Digital show that although the level of technology adoption continues to increase, there is still significant variation between regions in digital skills and empowerment (Budiarto et al., 2024). This condition indicates that the capacity for digital utilization, including aspects of data protection and literacy, is not evenly distributed in all provinces and districts. The digital literacy gap also has implications for the field of psychosocial services.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, many guidance and counseling services switched from face-to-face to online platforms via chat, phone, and video (cyber/online counseling). This shift does expand accessibility, but at the same time poses new ethical and technical challenges (Ais, 2020). In addition to ethical and technical challenges, the increase in digital adoption is also accompanied by rampant incidents of data leaks and privacy issues that have an impact on various institutions, including counseling services, educational institutions, and national data centers. The findings of a number of case studies and academic reports in recent years confirm that the security and confidentiality aspects of data are now a priority issue in the practice of online-based services (Imanuel Toding Bua & Nur Isdah Idris, 2025).

This condition is further clarified through data and field observations that show a number of real phenomena related to Islamic counseling in the digital era. Among them are the practice *oversharing* on social media that has the potential to threaten the privacy and reputation of adolescents; the increasing need for online counseling services which are still overshadowed by concerns about confidentiality and quality; the vulnerability of families, especially parents, in providing moral supervision and media ethics due to the limitations of digital literacy; to the emergence of online da'wah practices that are provocative or unethical so as to trigger polarization. A number of empirical findings regarding *oversharing* and the effectiveness of Islamic digital literacy also strengthens this picture (Nur Kamila et al., 2025).

These phenomena hint at the importance of a solid theoretical foundation in Islamic counseling practice in the digital age. Islamic counseling is positioned in a framework that integrates the psychological and spiritual dimensions, with an emphasis that the healing and coaching processes must be rooted in Qur'an and Sunnah principles such as monotheism, morals, and adab rather than solely technical psychotherapist interventions. In addition, theories about therapeutic alliances, professional ethics, and family education theories enrich the professional and pedagogical dimensions of Islamic counseling (Bastomi, 2017). The theoretical framework needs to be expanded by considering the digital context which is now the main medium of interaction. In this realm, the theory of digital ethics is like the issue of *Privacy, informed consent*, and the security of the platform needs to be linked to Islamic ethical principles, including trust (trust), prohibition of harming others (*la darar*), and the obligation to maintain the honor of others. The integration of the two results in a typical online counseling ethical framework or Islamic e-ethics (Budiarto et al., 2024). Several studies on data protection and Islamic communication ethics even recommend combining technical norms with sharia principles so that digital counseling practices remain safe and spiritually valuable.

The urgency of integrating digital ethics with sharia principles is also reflected in a number of empirical studies in Indonesia. For example (Nur Kamila et al., 2025) found that Islamic parenting plays a significant role in preventing digital conflicts while maintaining family communication harmony amid the rapid flow of social media interactions. In line with that, research conducted by (Himmatun 'Aliah et al., 2024) Highlight ethical issues of digital privacy in community counseling settings. The results of the study show that there is a risk of leakage of counseling information that has a serious impact on client trust, both psychologically and socially. This research also emphasizes the urgency of strengthening the code of ethics and implementing digital security protocols so that online counseling services maintain confidentiality and sustainability of therapeutic relationships. In addition, the literature on online guidance and counseling services during the pandemic also confirms a significant increase in the demand for online-based services, despite the challenges of implementation. This is as shown in research

conducted by (Ais, 2020), which identifies technical and ethical obstacles in the implementation of online counseling.

Some previous research has highlighted the shift of counseling services to online formats from a general perspective, such as psychology, technology, and digital communication. However, studies that specifically link Islamic counseling to the digital ethical framework and Muslim family responsibility are still relatively limited. Some studies have touched on issues of privacy, data security, and the need to adapt professional codes of ethics in online counseling, but not many have integrated Islamic principles, such as trust, manners, and family responsibility—into the discourse. In fact, strengthening the role of the family through Islamic parenting and Islamic digital literacy is a crucial factor in building moral resilience while maintaining the sustainability of Islamic counseling practices in the digital era.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze in depth Islamic counseling in the context of digital ethics, as well as examine the role of Muslim families in supporting the quality, integrity, and sustainability of online counseling services. With this approach, it is hoped that conceptual models and practical guidelines can be formulated that are relevant for the development of codes of ethics, family interventions, and Islamic counseling practices in the digital era.

METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method. The main goal of qualitative research is to gain an in-depth understanding of an event or subject by analyzing individual behavior as well as social dynamics. The descriptive approach itself is a research strategy that seeks to present a detailed description of the phenomenon being studied. It includes an overview of the features, characteristics, quality, and defining models, with the aim of gaining a deeper understanding and a more comprehensive explanation (Razali et al., 2020).

The method applied is literature study, or *library research*. This method involves a series of activities related to collecting data from various library sources, reading relevant literature, recording important information, and processing research data without conducting direct research (Mestika, 2014). This research focuses on an analysis of the existing literature to build a deeper understanding of the topic discussed, namely "Islamic Counseling in the Perspective of Digital Ethics and Muslim Family Responsibility". This approach allows researchers to dig into information from a variety of text sources and understand concepts related to the topic.

DISCUSSION

The Basic Concept of Islamic Counseling in the Digital Era

Term *counseling* has several meanings, such as advice (*to obtain counsel*), recommendations (*to give counsel*), and talk (*to take counsel*) (Putra & Hakim, 2020). In Arabic literature, the term counseling is known as *al-Iryad* (instructions) and *al Istiyarah* (ask for advice or consultation). (Nashruddin, 2020). Thus, counseling can be defined as a process of providing advice or assistance carried out by an expert in the field of counseling to counseling in dealing with his life problems, in accordance with the applicable professional code of ethics standards (Putra & Hakim, 2020).

In an Islamic perspective, counseling is not only directed at solving psychological problems, but also at strengthening spiritual awareness as a servant of Allah SWT and *khalifah* on the face of the earth. The main goal is to assist individuals to be able to maintain the purity of their nature. With a maintained nature, a person is expected to be able to solve his life problems, develop himself, and achieve a healthy quality of soul (Manik & Imamuddin, 2023). The fundamental

difference between Islamic counseling and General counseling lies in its spiritual orientation. Islamic counseling emphasizes the attitude of total surrender to Allah as a source of inner peace. By using Divine revelation as a guideline for life, Islamic counseling seeks to realize true mental health through a spiritual approach oriented to peace of mind (Tiffani et al., 2024).

The peculiarity of Islamic counseling lies in its foundation which is derived from the Qur'an and Hadith, in contrast to general counseling which is generally based on secular theories (Rahmadhani & Siregar, 2023). These Islamic principles provide a clear identity as well as a solution to the limitations of Western counseling approaches. In Djamaludin Ancok's view, it is important for the development of counseling to make religious teachings and the example of the Prophet as a foothold. This kind of counseling model is directed at the realization of peace of life (*sakinah*) through closeness to Allah, so that individuals are not only able to face life's problems, but also be able to solve them comprehensively (Tiffani et al., 2024).

Along with the rapid development of information technology, counselors are required to adapt well and have skills in using technology as part of counseling practices (Siregar & Pulungan, 2024). Presence *cybercounseling* As a form of digital counseling service, it is an innovation that is in accordance with the demands of the times while answering the needs of modern society. This service is considered to be able to complement the role of face-to-face counseling by utilizing various media such as websites, email, *Chat Apps* video conference, and other web-based networks (Himmatun 'Aliah et al., 2024). However, the use of digital media in counseling has its own challenges, such as related to ethical issues in the implementation of digital counseling, limited emotional closeness in online interactions, and the difficulty of building complete empathy of counselors due to distance, which can affect the quality of therapeutic relationships (Siregar & Pulungan, 2024). Therefore, counselors are also required to have adequate digital competencies in order to be able to use technology optimally and provide effective services (Nadhiroh, 2025).

From an Islamic perspective, digitalization can be used to strengthen mental as well as spiritual aspects, for example through faith-based counseling services that help individuals deal with problems with faith values (Asbari et al., 2025). Therefore, Islamic counselors are required not only to master counseling theories and techniques, but also to have a deep understanding of religion and make themselves an example for counselors. Thus, the main opportunity of Islamic counseling in the digital age lies in its ability to reach more individuals through technological media, while offering services that focus not only on psychological but also spiritual aspects. Meanwhile, the challenges that must be faced are how to maintain the quality of counseling relationships, improve the digital skills of counselors, and ensure that Qur'anic and Hadith values remain the main foothold so that Islamic counseling does not lose its identity (Puandina & Nurjannah, 2023).

The function of Islamic counseling is crucial in fostering the resilience of Muslim families in the digital era. Family is a bond built through a marriage contract to live in accordance with Islamic teachings (Muttaqin, 2022). In reality, in having a family can never be separated from problems, such as communication breakdowns, egocentric attitudes, economic problems, busyness, education, infidelity, and distance from religious values (Apriani & Sriharini, 2024). These various problems can be solved through family counseling. Family counseling is present as an effort to help family members improve relationships, solve problems, and create a harmonious atmosphere in the family (Noffiyanti, 2020). From an Islamic perspective, the main function of family counseling emphasizes the curative aspect, which is to help individuals and families solve domestic problems by returning them to the values of the Qur'an and Hadith. In this way, family counseling is not only oriented to worldly happiness, but also to the happiness of the hereafter, through a

home life built on the basis of affection, communication, deliberation, and constancy to religious principles (Alawiyah, 2023).

Professional Ethics and Code of Ethics in Islamic Digital Counseling

Ethics is basically a form of self-control that leads humans to good moral rules, so that they are able to form a person with morals and become an example for their environment. In general, ethics can be understood as a moral philosophy that focuses on how human beings should act correctly and beneficially (Hammer, 2024). In the context of Islamic digital counseling, ethics serve as a guideline so that the digital counseling process remains in harmony with Islamic teachings (Muttaqin, 2022). Therefore, counselors need to ensure that the approach used remains based on Islamic values, as well as maintaining the privacy and security of counseling data in the use of technology (Hayati & Titdoy, 2024).

From an Islamic perspective, ethics are closely related to morals. Moral science regulates human behavior in daily life, but its foundation is not only on reason but also on revelation. Ethical practices in Arabic are called *Manners*, namely manners sourced from the Qur'an and Hadith. Therefore, Islamic ethics does not only talk about good and bad rationally, but also leads people to carry out *Akhlakul Karimah* in every activity, including when interacting in the digital space. The Qur'an warns people to protect their speech, hearing, sight, and heart from things that lead to disobedience such as ghibah, slander, arrogance, lies, and *Hoaxes*. This guidance shows that digital literacy from an Islamic perspective emphasizes carefulness, self-awareness, and prioritizing ethics over lust (Juminem, 2019).

In context *Manners* media, the Qur'an and Hadith provide clear guidelines. A Muslim is required to convey information correctly and to *Tabayyun* before spreading it, and staying away from despicable behaviors such as *Su'udzon* or bad thoughts, ghibah, slander, *Tajassus* (spying), as well as avoiding *São Paulo* (sheep fighting) and *sukhriyah* (demeaning others). A wise and responsible attitude in using social media is not only personal ethics, but part of implementation *Akhlakul Karimah* (Juminem, 2019). These principles also apply in digital counseling interactions, where counselors and counselors are required to maintain ethics in communication and prioritize goodness in every counseling process.

Technological developments has encouraged the emergence of online counseling services as an alternative to face-to-face. The presence of digital counseling makes access easier, but it also presents new ethical challenges, especially related to confidentiality, privacy, and quality of counseling relationships. Therefore, the professional code of ethics from both ABKIN and an Islamic perspective needs to be used as a basis for online services to remain professional, safe, and spiritually valuable. These principles remain relevant and even become crucial in online services because technology-based services are vulnerable to misinterpretation and misuse of data (Purnamasari et al., 2024). Some of the crucial issues regulated in the code of ethics are; First, The Principle of Confidentiality (*confidentiality*) and privacy (*Privacy*) emphasized that counselors are obliged to maintain all counselor information, both in direct interaction and through digital media, so that it is not misused or known by unauthorized parties (Safitri et al., 2025). This principle is increasingly relevant because counselors are not only tasked with helping to solve psychological problems, but also ensuring that the media used support the safety and comfort of counselors. In the Qur'an, Allah emphasizes the importance of fulfilling the mandate and upholding justice (QS. An-Nisa: 58), so Muslim counselors are obliged to maintain confidentiality and provide services fairly both in person and in the digital space. This principle is also affirmed in research on digital Islamic counseling that emphasizes ethics as an integral part of professionalism (Bastomi et al., 2022).

Second *informed consent* or conscious consent is a fundamental element in online counseling. The counselor must explain to the counselor the purpose of the service, procedures, benefits, risks, and limitations of online counseling, and the counselor must express consent to participate in the service. This is in accordance with ABKIN's mandate that *informed consent* is a form of respect for the right to counseling autonomy (ABKIN, 2018). In Islam, *informed consent* in line with the principles of *ridha* and *akad* in every interaction. All forms of agreements must be done with the willingness of both parties (QS. An-Nisa: 29). Thus, the application of *informed consent* in Islamic online counseling is not just a formal procedure, but also part of maintaining justice and trust.

Third The success of online counseling is determined not only by the technical and administrative aspects, but also by the quality of the relationship between the counselor and the counselor. The three important elements in this regard are empathy, *Trust* and *therapeutic alliance*. Empathy is the ability of the counselor to understand the counselor's feelings deeply. In online counseling, empathy becomes more challenging because non-verbal communication is limited. Therefore, counselors need to express empathy through warm language, the use of appropriate voice intonation, and provide quick and relevant responses (Bastomi et al., 2022). Next *Trust* (trust) is the main foundation in counseling relationships. Without trust, counselors will not be open in expressing their problems. *Trust* In online counseling, it is built through the consistency, integrity, and commitment of counselors to maintain confidentiality (Stubbe, 2018). Meanwhile, *therapeutic alliance* Or therapeutic alliance is a cooperative relationship between counselor and counselor that involves an emotional bond, agreement on goals, and mutual involvement in the counseling process. From an Islamic perspective, *therapeutic alliance* is worth worship if it is based on sincere intentions for the sake of Allah. The counselor not only acts as a listener and solution provider, but also as a guide who helps the counselor get closer to God. Thus, Islamic online counseling relationships become a means of psychological healing as well as increasing spirituality (Bastomi et al., 2022).

The Responsibility of Muslim Families in the Digital Age

The role of parents in the digital era is no longer limited to providing educational facilities and basic needs, but also must supervise, accompany, and teach media ethics to children. Parents should be like *role model* which shows how to use technology wisely and in accordance with sharia. Parental involvement includes giving advice, limiting the use of technology, and showing consistency in guiding children (Tokolang et al., 2022). The advice conveyed is not just a prohibition, but must be accompanied by an understanding of the benefits and harms of digital media. On the other hand, Masyhuri and Adawiyah stated that a consistent, compassionate, and exemplary-based education pattern will have a great influence on children's moral development (Masyhuri & Adawiyah, 2024). In other words, parents do not only set rules, but also exemplify Islamic behavior, such as limiting themselves from negative content and using technology for good, so that children are accustomed to imitating these attitudes both in the real world and in the digital space.

To form family resilience in the digital era, Islamic digital literacy is needed, namely the ability to use technology and information based on Qur'anic principles and Islamic ethics. Subakti stated that digital literacy is not only a technical problem, but must be the basis for *da'wah* and strengthening the morals of Muslims in facing the rapid flow of information on social media (Subakti, 2022). With Islamic digital literacy, families can get used to *tabayyun* (clarification of

information) before spreading news, reject misleading content, and direct children to use technology as a medium of worship, da'wah, and learning.

Islamic digital literacy serves as a moral filter that protects the younger generation from the negative effects of media, such as pornography, hate speech, and instant culture. In the context of Muslim families, digital literacy should be part of household education. Parents can teach their children to choose Islamic content, get used to talking about information found on the internet, and direct children to use technology as a tool for worship, da'wah, and learning.

In addition, the resilience of Muslim families is not enough with technical supervision of the use of gadgets, but must be supported by the strengthening of Qur'anic values and Islamic manners. Yuda et al. emphasized that the principle of *Sakinah, Mawaddah and Rahmah* as mentioned in QS. Ar-Rūm [30]:21 is the main principle that maintains family harmony in the midst of the onslaught of technology (Yuda et al., 2025). These values affirm that the family is not just a place to live together, but a place to love, educate, and care for one another in faith. Meanwhile, Buchori et al. emphasized the importance of Qur'an-based character education, such as mutual respect, love, and upholding honesty (Buchori et al., 2024). In the digital context, this education can be realized by accustoming children to communicate politely on social media, avoiding ghibah and slander, and making Islamic manners the main guideline for interacting in cyberspace. Thus, Qur'anic values and Islamic manners become a family fortress so that they are not easily influenced by digital culture that is contrary to Islam.

In the era of technological disruption, there is a paradox. Although technology offers great opportunities for learning and preaching, on the other hand, it brings problems such as digital addiction, negative content, and lack of social interaction. Sayid Qutub underlined that the solution to this condition is to strengthen digital literacy, wise supervision, and integrate moral values in every technological activity (Qutub, 2025). This responsibility must be the commitment of all Muslim family members, not just on children.

This awareness of responsibility can be realized by making household rules related to the use of digital media, conducting joint evaluations of online activities, and building open communication between parents and children. Thus, Muslim families are not only able to survive the negative effects of technological disruption, but can also utilize technology as a means of worship and strengthening spirituality.

Challenges of Implementing Islamic Counseling in the Digital Era

The implementation of Islamic counseling in the digital era faces various challenges, especially in the context of ethics, social media, and family dynamics. One of the main challenges is ethical violations in online services, such as the misuse of counselor data. In online services, personal data submitted by counselors is very vulnerable to leakage if counselors do not maintain the security of the platform used. Weak data protection can lead to a crisis of trust, which ultimately hinders the counseling process itself. Therefore, it is important for Islamic counselors to uphold the principles of Trust in maintaining the confidentiality of counselor information, as the guidance of the Qur'an which emphasizes honesty and moral responsibility. In addition, Islamic digital ethics reminds that counseling data is not only a technical aspect, but also part of the Human Rights What to look out for (Azmi & Syarqawi, 2024).

Another challenge that is no less crucial is the negative impact of digital addiction on Muslim adolescents. Digital addiction, especially to gadgets and social media, is a serious problem faced by Muslim teenagers. The negative impacts that arise include mental health disorders, decreased

academic achievement, and weakened social interaction with family. Research shows that gadget addiction can isolate children from the social environment, damage emotional balance, and interfere with the development of self-identity (Joseph, 2024). Islamic counseling has an important role in dealing with this problem with a spiritual and moral approach, such as through the habit of dhikr, prayer, and the recitation of the Qur'an. Thus, adolescents are directed to rediscover the balance of life between the digital world and the real world based on Islamic values.

Facing these challenges, family-based preventive strategies are the main bulwark. Islamic counseling can be used as a means to help families identify potential digital problems early on and provide solutions based on Qur'anic values. Casmini's research (2019) confirms that prevention-oriented family counseling is able to create healthier relationships and build a *sakinah* family (Casmini, 2019). This strategy is very relevant to be applied in the face of increasingly complex technological disruptions, so that Muslim families can still maintain harmony and spiritual resilience in the midst of the onslaught of digital media.

CONCLUSION

Islamic counseling in the digital era has an important role in helping individuals and families face various life problems. In contrast to general counseling, Islamic counseling is based on the Qur'an and Hadith with the aim of maintaining human nature, fostering spiritual awareness, and bringing about inner peace. The use of technology makes Islamic counseling more accessible, so that it is able to reach more people with services that still prioritize religious values.

However, the use of digital media also poses its own challenges, such as data security, limited emotional closeness, and the rampant abuse of social media. Therefore, the application of Islamic ethics is urgently needed, for example maintaining confidentiality, honesty, *tabayyun*, and polite communication. These principles will ensure that Islamic counseling continues to run professionally, safely, and according to religious guidance even though it is carried out online.

In addition to the role of counselors, the family also plays a big role in forming moral and spiritual resilience in the midst of digital currents. Islamic digital literacy must be taught so that technology is used for positive things such as learning, worship, and *da'wah*. With the foundation of Qur'anic values and the principles of *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*, the Muslim family can be the main bulwark against the negative impact of the digital age. Thus, Islamic counseling in the digital era is not only a solution to psychological problems, but also a means of strengthening faith, morals, and family harmony.

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