

Exploitation of Women in Virtual Spaces: A New Challenge to Islamic Law in the Post-Truth Era

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Abstract

The exploitation of women in social media has become a worrying phenomenon in the digital era, where women are often used as objects to attract public attention, increase popularity, or maximize commercial profits. This phenomenon includes various forms of objectification, stereotyping, and the spread of content that degrades women's dignity. This research aims to examine this phenomenon from a critical perspective of Islamic law, by focusing on the protection of human honor (*hifz al-'ird*) as one of the main elements in *maqashid al-shari'ah*. The research method used is a normative approach with descriptive-qualitative analysis of relevant Islamic legal principles, including the prohibition of actions that degrade individual dignity, the need to maintain women's honor, and moral responsibility in the media. The study also analyzes factors that encourage women's exploitation on social media, such as content commercialization, patriarchal culture, and the lack of effective regulation on digital platforms. The results of the study show that the exploitation of women in social media is contrary to the values of justice and respect for human dignity in Islam. Furthermore, Islamic law mandates the need for strict supervision and regulation to prevent exploitative acts, and emphasizes the importance of media ethics education for the community. This study makes an important contribution in formulating a strategy based on Islamic law to overcome the exploitation of women on social media, as well as encouraging the creation of a fairer and more dignified digital ecosystem.

Keywords: Exploitation of women, social media, Islamic law, *maqashid al-shari'ah*, human honor.

Abstrak

Eksplorasi perempuan dalam media sosial telah menjadi fenomena yang memprihatinkan di era digital, di mana perempuan sering kali dijadikan objek untuk menarik perhatian publik, meningkatkan popularitas, atau memaksimalkan keuntungan komersial. Fenomena ini meliputi berbagai bentuk objektifikasi, stereotipisasi, hingga penyebaran konten yang merendahkan martabat perempuan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji fenomena tersebut dari perspektif kritis hukum Islam, dengan berfokus pada perlindungan kehormatan manusia (*hifz al-'ird*) sebagai salah satu elemen utama dalam *maqashid al-shari'ah*. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan normatif dengan analisis deskriptif-kualitatif terhadap prinsip-prinsip hukum Islam yang relevan, termasuk larangan terhadap tindakan yang merendahkan martabat individu, keharusan menjaga kehormatan perempuan, serta tanggung jawab moral dalam bermedia. Penelitian ini juga menganalisis faktor-faktor yang mendorong eksploitasi perempuan di media sosial, seperti komersialisasi konten, budaya patriarki, dan minimnya regulasi efektif di platform digital. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa eksploitasi perempuan dalam media sosial bertentangan dengan nilai-nilai keadilan dan penghormatan terhadap martabat manusia dalam Islam. Lebih lanjut, hukum Islam mengamanatkan perlunya pengawasan dan regulasi yang ketat untuk mencegah tindakan eksploitasi, serta menekankan pentingnya pendidikan etika bermedia.

bagi masyarakat. Kajian ini memberikan kontribusi penting dalam merumuskan strategi berbasis hukum Islam untuk mengatasi eksploitasi perempuan di media sosial, sekaligus mendorong terciptanya ekosistem digital yang lebih adil dan bermartabat.

Kata Kunci: Eksploitasi perempuan, media sosial, hukum Islam, maqashid al-shari'ah, kehormatan manusia.

Introduction

The era of globalization has profoundly changed human life in almost all aspects, especially in lifestyle. Mass media technology, which is increasingly sophisticated in this era, plays a crucial role in shifting and changing the paradigm and way of life of humans. Information and communication are no longer limited by geographical boundaries, allowing individuals from different parts of the world to connect instantly and continuously. This not only affects the way we communicate and obtain information, but it also affects how we work, learn, and even interact socially.¹

The current development of mass media shows a significant increase in the involvement of women in various fields, including in important roles as news anchors, producers, journalists, and even leaders in the media industry. The increasing number of women involved in the mass media can be seen as tangible evidence of efforts to realize gender equality that has been fought for for a long time. This shows that women have equal abilities and potentials to men, especially in the fields of technology and communication, so that they can reduce gender inequality and bias that have often occurred in this sector.²

Mass media is now an important platform for women to express themselves, convey ideas, and channel their creativity. Women are not only present as news objects or visual representations, but also as producers of information that are able to influence public opinion, shape narratives, and contribute intellectually to social discourse. In this context, women are able to demonstrate their abilities in various forms, from critical analysis, creating informative and educational content, to participating in public debates on important issues.³

Women's involvement in mass media also reflects a larger social change, where women's traditional roles in the domestic sphere are beginning to shift to the public sphere, particularly through technology and media. They use this platform to empower themselves, fight for their

¹ Dewi Sallamah dan Dinie Anggraeni Dewi, "The Role and Implementation of Pancasila Values in Life in the Era of Globalization," *Antropocene: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Humaniora* 3, no. 1 (2023): 9–14. <https://doi.org/10.36456/inventa.5.2.a3549>

² Sinta Mahera, "Expression of Religiosity of UIN Ar-Raniry Students on Social Media," 2023. h. 1-81.

³ Sulehah Sulehah, "The Effect of Implementing Puzzle Play Therapy on Anxiety Levels in Preschool Children Aged 3-6 Years in the Inpatient Room of the Serang City Hospital in 2023," h. 2-16.

rights, and contribute to community development.⁴ Television media as audiovisual media is in the spotlight because it displays the role of women which is currently more directed towards entertainment that is less educational than educating the public. In fact, reality shows often highlight women sexually and vulgarly. In many television programs, women are often used as objects, not subjects. Often without realizing it, women become objects of exploitation, even at some point they lose their personality and identity. Television, with its various advantages as an audiovisual medium, often uses the body and sexuality as a tool to attract attention. Social media-based reality shows, for example, are often enlivened by female presenters. However, women are actually made objects; Actions such as touching, hugging, and even throwing vulgar expressions at them often occur and are considered commonplace. The private realm, even disgrace, is often used as a public meal and a source for laughter. Shows like the one hosted by Tukul Arwana often contain covert sexual harassment, such as poking women while appearing on the show, which is then considered as mere jokes and entertainment.⁵

Thus the portrait of women who are often used as objects and subordinated in the capitalistic mass media that is oriented towards profit. Without realizing it, women are treated unfairly and even become victims, thus obscuring their identity and personality. Moreover, the mass media industry has been immersed in market pressure that deifies ratings, to the point of forgetting broadcasting rules and ignoring the quality of content. The mass media has been reduced to the interests of the market and the profits of capital owners, and women are one of the parties affected by these interests. As a result, women are often visualized in physical forms that highlight their bodies, sexiness, beauty, and minimal clothing. This is used to influence the audience to continue to consume the messages conveyed to the audience.⁶

The confluence of the logic of capital and patriarchal logic gives birth to a shortcut in gaining profit, namely by selling women's sexuality on television screens through sexy body displays in sexually nuanced shows. Narratives in television shows are often directed at sexual harassment aimed at women. This kind of show clearly ignores the aspect of protection for women. In fact, television actually does not only function as an entertainment medium, but also has an important role in the socialization function. By presenting women in this way, television

⁴ M Faizal Kurniawan, "Pekanbaru City Community Perceptions of the Commodification of Islam in Television Advertisements," 2023. h. 5-24.

⁵ Nabilah Vincy Ramadhani dkk., "Phenomenon of Teenage Phubbing in Using TikTok," *Al-Furqan: Journal of Religion, Social, and Culture* 3, no. 6 (2024): 2810–26. <https://doi.org/10.35931/alfurqan.v3i6>

⁶ Fahmi Ibnu Khoer, Syarifah Gustiawati, dan Yono Yono, "Women's Leadership in the Perspective of Islamic Law," *As-Syar'i: Journal of Family Guidance & Counseling* 4, no. 1 (2022): 42–49. <https://doi.org/10.47467/as.v4i1.536>

places women as sex objects while affirming patriarchal values that position women as the second-class gender. This kind of representation is a form of injustice and includes symbolic violence against women.⁷

This problem is increasingly complex because it is influenced by factors such as the lack of effective regulation on social media, weak public legal awareness, and the dominance of consumptive culture that exploits women as objects. In Islam, this kind of action not only violates moral values, but is also contrary to sharia law which prohibits acts of degrading, discriminating, or exploiting individuals for personal or commercial gain. To understand the context of this research, it is necessary to present several relevant studies to avoid the possibility of similarities, both in terms of the focus of the discussion, the research method, and the results obtained. Therefore, in this section, the study of previous studies will be systematically arranged as follows:

First, a study conducted by Aslati⁸ in 2018 entitled "*The Phenomenon of Exploitation of Women by the Media*" highlights how the media tends to exploit women to the point of resembling a form of *soft pornography*. The results show that women's representation in the media is often used as a commercial strategy to increase attractiveness and profits for certain individuals and groups. In addition, in Islam, women are cared for, treated well, and given a high position, while in modern media practices, women are often the object of exploitation.

Second, a study conducted by Akhmad Rudi Maswanto⁹ in 2024 entitled "*The Phenomenon of Women's Interaction on Social Media in the Perspective of Islamic Law*" highlights the relationship between women's activities on social media and family resilience. The results of the study show that in public perception, the increase in problems in the household is often associated with the pattern of women's interaction on social media. Through a qualitative approach, this study seeks to identify various problems that arise in order to evaluate whether this phenomenon is really the main factor in the collapse of family institutions. In addition, this study also discusses how Islam regulates the pattern of women's interaction in social life outside the home, with the aim of providing a more comprehensive understanding of the limits and ethics that should be applied.

7 Kana Kurniawan, *Women in the Perspective of Islamic Law and Human Rights* (Publica Indonesia Utama, 2022). h. 1-20.

8 Aslati Aslati and Silawati Silawati, "The Phenomenon of Women's Exploitation by the Media," *Journal of Da'wah Risalah* 29, no. 2 (2018): 133–42. <http://dx.doi.org/10.24014/jdr.v29i2.6389>

9 Akhmad Rudi Maswanto, "The Phenomenon of Women's Interaction on Social Media in the Perspective of Islamic Law," *AL-ASHLAH: Journal of Family Law and Islamic Law* 3, no. 1 (2024): 20–35. <https://doi.org/10.69552/alashlah.v3i1.2505>

Third, the research conducted by M. Alif Fianto and Syamsuri¹⁰ in 2023 entitled "*Positive Law and Islamic Law Studies on the Exploitation of Women's Bodies through Live Streaming on Social Media*" highlights the legal aspects in the phenomenon of spreading pornographic content on digital platforms. The results of the study show that from the perspective of Islamic law, these acts are included in the category of *jarimah*, which is an act that is prohibited by sharia and threatened with *the punishment of had*. The perpetrator knowingly disseminates pornographic content for the viewer to enjoy and derive economic benefits from the activity. In the context of positive law, Article 4 paragraph (1) of the Pornography Law categorizes all pornographic crimes as acts committed deliberately (*dolus*), even though the element of intentionality is not explicitly mentioned. In addition, Article 27 paragraph (1) of the ITE Law makes it clear that acts of moral violations in the digital space are included in the category of violations of the law. Thus, both from the perspective of Islamic law and positive law, the exploitation of women's bodies through live streaming on social media is an act that has serious legal consequences.

Previous research has shown that women have a high position in Islam, including in the context of media and digitalization. Although women are now able to express their existence on various media platforms, challenges remain, especially regarding the misuse of digital spaces for exploitation. This research has similarities with previous studies in terms of legal subjects, namely women, but focuses specifically on aspects of women's authority in the mass media in the perspective of Islamic law. The novelty of this research lies in an in-depth analysis of the central role of women in social media and how Islam views their authority in the public sphere. Thus, this research is expected to make a significant contribution in understanding the position of women in the media and answering the issue of gender subordination that still often arises in legal and social discourse. Therefore, this study is important to explore the phenomenon of exploitation of women in social media from the perspective of Islamic law. The goal is to provide a strong theoretical foundation for understanding the impact of such exploitation, as well as to offer *maqashid al-shari'ah-based* solutions to create a more just, moral, and respectful social media ecosystem that respects Islamic values.

Research Methods

¹⁰M Alif Fianto and Syamsuri Syamsuri, "Positive Legal Studies and Islamic Law on the Exploitation of Women's Bodies through Live Streaming on Social Media," *Hakam: Journal of Islamic Law Studies and Islamic Economic Law* 7, no. 2 (2023). h. 4-15.

This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical approach to examine the phenomenon of exploitation of women in social media from the perspective of Islamic law.¹¹ This method aims to understand in depth and systematically how the exploitation of women occurs on social media, the factors that influence it, and how the phenomenon is analyzed within the framework of Islamic law.¹² The data sources in this study include Islamic legal texts, such as Qur'anic verses, hadiths, and relevant fiqh books, and direct observation of social media content that shows indications of women's exploitation. To ensure the validity of the data, this study applied the data triangulation method by verifying findings from various sources and data collection methods. Discussions with Islamic law experts and social media academics were also conducted to strengthen analysis and interpretation.¹³

Research and Discussion Results

Social Media and the Existence of Women in the Nuances of Islamic Law

Women in the media are often represented as objects of men's views. The presence of models who wear minimal clothes on the covers of men's magazines has become a common sight. Similarly, the presenters of popular television shows are often chosen more for their physical appearance than for their deep abilities or expertise. When we open the newspaper randomly, we will easily find images or news reviews that clearly highlight Women. Turn on the television at home, and we will immediately be treated to various advertisements that mostly feature women as the main characters. The same thing happens in online media, where the first attention is often directed to women who are promoting a product.¹⁴

Likewise, large advertisements displayed along urban streets often feature images of women with unkempt hair and minimal clothing. This kind of phenomenon is too much to describe one by one in this discussion. However, it is clear that everything related to women is often overexploited by the media. The analysis that can be proposed regarding the large portion of news about women is that this is used as a strategy to increase the marketability of the media. The media has become part of the wheel of capitalism and the growing currents of consumerism. In this kind of market system, social norms and ethics are often ignored. In fact, in the Islamic view, women's bodies should not be exploited, let alone used as high-value commodities.

¹¹ Zainuddin Ali, *Legal research methods* (Sinar Grafika, 2021). p. 16.

¹² Nurul Qamar and Farah Syah Rezah, *Legal Research Methods: Doctrinal and Non-Doctrinal* (CV. Social Political Genius (SIGn), 2020). p. 8-10.

¹³ Ika Atikah, "Legal Research Methods," 2022. p. 3-9.

¹⁴ Korry El-Yana, *Perempuan dalam Bingkai Media* (Indigo Media, 2021). h. 5-7.

Unfortunately, women are now often seen as mere objects or materials, with their bodies being used as mere commodities.¹⁵

In essence, the relationship between women and the media today is a complex and problematic one. First, in the context of the millennial era, as predicted by Alvin Toffler, women in the information realm that have shifted due to the advancement of information technology, are only passive objects of the interests of patriarchal reason that works behind the mass media. Second, women in the visualization of mass media are only a tool for capital accumulation based on their stereotypes as objects of desire. Third, women in mass media reports are often victims due to reporting that does not have a perspective on women.¹⁶

Exploitation of Women on Digital Platforms: The Influence of Social Media on Public Perception of Women

Women's appearance in the media is often displayed through beauty ads that are urgently needed by the market share. These ads shape the image of women according to the standards they want. The image of women is described as beautiful, fair-skinned, slender, smooth-haired, shiny black, blushing red lips, big breasts, even without body hair. This kind of construction can change a new mindset for consumers who see it. This is what ads do. Advertising seeks to change the attitude that consumers have towards the image. Finally, the concept of beautiful women can be considered the norm and should be imitated.¹⁷

Advertising through television does have many advantages. There are three ethical scopes in advertising in television media, namely: conversation, music, and action. Advertisements such as news and documentation, music define the mode of production, and action illustrate aspects of production. According to estimates, 90 percent of ads feature women as their advertising models. A form of subordination to women also occurs in Indonesian films, many of which are found in horror genre films such as 'Suster Ngesot', 'Hug of the Ghost Widow', or the like. These are the scenes that often show the female body, where women are used as objects to satisfy the audience's curiosity and lust for sexuality. The body, which is supposed to be an ethical human means, has instead become a hedonistic means of industrial consumption, which in the end gives birth to pseudo-needs, thus making women become market capitalism towards an increasing consumption

¹⁵ Imamatul Silfia dan Rizaludin Kurniawan, "Media Stigma Against Female Fandom in Fan Reporting K-Pop," *Jurnal Komunikasi* 17, no. 1 (2022): 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.20885/komunikasi.vol17.iss1.art1>

¹⁶ Hafifah Dinda Pratiwi, Sunarto Sunarto, dan Triyono Lukmantoro, "Gender Discrimination Against Journalists Women in Media," *Interaksi Online* 9, no. 3 (2021): 111–25.

¹⁷ Ratna Noviani, *middle ground understanding advertising*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka pelajar, 2002, h.25

culture. Women are not only exploited physically, but also mentally, so they do what is not worth doing.¹⁸

From a gender perspective, the position of men and women is the same in a society that is more equal to each other. So, gender can be categorized as an operational tool in measuring the issue of equality between men and women, especially those related to the role in society that has been constructed by society for a long time. Women are more highlighted in discussions to pursue gender equality, especially in the field of education, because this field is expected to change patterns of thinking, acting, and playing a role in social life. Several studies focusing on women were conducted to look at the relationship between men and women in the context of relationships in society. Gender itself is formed through a long process that is socially and culturally constructed. The existence of the term gender, unconsciously and slowly, has led to the practice of discrimination and marginalization of women. Discriminatory attitudes towards women imply a political relationship, namely the power relationship between men and women.¹⁹

This relationship must be understood in a broad sense, namely as a relationship of domination and subordination. Women in this kind of relationship tend to be in a subordinate position. Patriarchy has influenced the view that women and men have an unequal or precisely unequal position, among the majority and minorities in various social, cultural, and religious contexts. Feminists view that patriarchal culture is a structured system that favors men as the controllers of social life. The construction of gender bias in society is formed, one of which is through mass media channels that massively show roles based on gender in a stereotypical manner. The mass media, with its point of view, constructs the social reality of gender stereotypes and presents them to an audience that is unfortunately taken for granted, thus strengthening the understanding of this. Heitty Siregar mentioned how the mass media presents a picture of women, namely:

1. Most of them are related to social, dressing, food, hobbies, and stairs in general. If a woman does not succeed in building her household, no matter what achievements outside the home, then she is considered a failed creature;
2. Leverage social tips to balance men, both from the way they behave and dress;

¹⁸ Primada Qurrota Ayun, "Sensuality and Women's Bodies in Horror Films in Indonesia (A Study of the Political Economy of Media)," *JURNAL SIMBOLIKA Research and Learning in Communication Study* 1, no. 1 (2015). Doi:10.31289/simbolika.v1i1.46

¹⁹ Een Irianti dan Tania Adesari, "Representation of Women in Gender Perspective (Critical Discourse Analysis of Van Dijk on the News of the Ratna S. Paet Hoax Case in the Republik and Kompas.com Mass Media)," *Journal of Scientific Communication (JSC)* 1, no. 2 (2020). <http://dx.doi.org/10.31506/jsc.v1i2.7803>

3. Advertisements in the mass media treat women with sexist symbols or symbols;
4. Women are portrayed as decorations or models to beautify the pages of the mass media.

In the Indonesian mass media, stereotypes about women are seen in various shows, such as soap operas, infotainment, and news. The construction of women is often portrayed as grumpy, jealous, or sufferer, which always appears in television soap operas. Infotainment shows often promote couples as a very important thing in the life of an adult woman. If a female artist does not have a partner, then she will often be asked about her status and when to have a partner by the infotainment worker. Single status is often constructed with negative connotations for women displayed by the mass media in Indonesia. In addition, there is also a 'beautiful' status that is always displayed in the mass media industry. Anyone who appears as a celebrity on television should always be beautiful. If she is not beautiful, then a woman will receive ridicule such as sexy, less white, less attractive, or less prestigious than other beautiful women.

The mass media has portrayed women in a disadvantageous position. Through its news, the mass media shows that women have not gained equality with men. Women are still portrayed as figures who do not have autonomy over themselves, even though women are often objects of exploitation. News in the mass media is dominated by images of male strength, success, and excellence. So, if there is news about women who are considered sexy, less white, or less attractive, she will be less prestigious than other beautiful women. The mass media has shown that women are in a disadvantageous position. In its reporting, the media showed that women had not achieved equality with men. Women are still portrayed as figures who do not have autonomy over themselves, even though women are often objects of exploitation. News in the mass media is dominated by images of male strength, success, and excellence. Therefore, if the news about women who succeed in the public sphere, as well as men, is seen as something unusual, because it is considered unusual in society.²⁰

Modern Capitalism and the Culture of Consumerism: Implications for Society in the Contemporary Era

Capitalism creates consumptive humans. The science of capitalism seems to have succeeded in creating a beauty standard that depends on market interests. Capitalism does not care about the human side of women; Women are only made objects and forgotten their personalities.

²⁰ Feryna Nur Rosyidah dan Nunung Nurwati, "Gender and stereotypes: Construction of reality in social media Instagram," *Share Social Work Journal* 9, no. 1 (2019): 10–19.

Women's bodies are used as commodities to reap profits. So, product promotion, ranging from clothing, accessories, to everything related to women's bodies, is used as a means of promotion. The actors of the capitalist economic system have succeeded in creating public perception to buy their products. This is the domino effect of capitalist economic logic, where consumerism is one of the main goals for capital owners and producers. If you look at the history, subordination to women is not only a current phenomenon, but has been carried out since the past. In Greek civilization, women were placed (held captive) in courts. Meanwhile, in the lower classes, women are trafficked. In the household, women are completely under the power of men, without having civil rights and inheritance. Free sexual relations do not look at modesty. Many nude statues are evidence of the rest of history.²¹

In Roman civilization, women were completely under the authority of their fathers. After marriage, the power passed into the hands of her husband, who had the right to sell, expel and even kill her. This lasted until the 6th century AD. Meanwhile, in Hindu and Chinese civilizations, the right to life of a married woman ends on the death of her husband. Women had to be burned alive when their husbands died and also burned. In the same way, the status of women is considered equal to a maid and is considered a source of curse, as happened to Adam who was expelled from heaven. Meanwhile, ancient Christian leaders considered that women were a form of demon that could mislead humans. That is how women were portrayed before the Qur'an and Islamic treatises came. Women are not considered more dignified than men, and are only considered to satisfy men's lust. So, what is the situation of women after Islam comes? The Qur'an gives the answer in Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13:

O people, We have created you from a male and a female, and then We have made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble among you in the sight of Allah is the most pious. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Knowing." (QS. Al-Hujurat: 13)

The verse underlines that before God, all human beings male and female, black or white, rich or poor have the same status, except in terms of piety. Islam affirms that there is no difference in dignity between men and women, and that we are obliged to be fair to both. There is no reason to consider women inferior or inferior to men, and we should treat them with respect. As Mahmud Syaltut said, "The human character of men and women can be said to be almost the same." Islam

²¹ Heldi Heldi, "Consumption Patterns of Post-Modern Society (A Study of Consumptive Behavior in Post-Modern Society)," *Al-Iqtishad: Jurnal Ilmu Ekonomi Syariah* 1, no. 1 (2009). DOI: 10.15408/aiq.v1i1.2458

firmly opposes discrimination against women, and prohibits the exploitation of women's bodies that are often used for entertainment or commodity purposes. Islam views the dignity of women not only on their physical appearance, but also on their integrity and devotion to Allah. The honor of women in Islam is not measured by opening the awrah or showing off themselves in public, but on their ability to maintain their self-honor and behave as obedient servants to Him.²²

From a historical perspective, it can be clearly seen how Islam raised the status of women compared to their condition before the advent of Islam. Before Islam, women in many cultures and civilizations were treated very badly, not even recognized as individuals with the same rights as men. They are often considered property or objects, have no right to inherit property, and their rights in marriage are often very limited. Women at that time, especially in Jahiliyah Arabia, were also often treated with physical and emotional violence, and even newborn baby girls were often buried alive because it was considered a disgrace. However, after Islam came, the position of women underwent significant changes. Islam affirms that women and men are created equal before Allah. In the Qur'an and Hadith, many verses and words of the Prophet Muhammad raise the dignity of women. One of them is the right of women to inherit property, which they did not have before. Islam also gives women the right to choose their life partner, the right to study and seek knowledge, and the right to participate in social and political life. Islam emphasizes the importance of protecting women and giving them more rights than before. In Islamic teachings, women are not objects or goods, but have dignity, rights, and obligations that are equal to men. One of the most obvious examples is in Surah Al-Ahzab (33:35) which states that believing men and women, who do good to each other, both in terms of worship and deeds, will receive the same reward from Allah.²³

In the perspective of sharia, it is clear that there is no discrimination between men and women before Islamic law. This is in line with the principles of justice and equality affirmed in the Qur'an and Hadith. Islam teaches that men and women have equal rights and obligations in various aspects of life, although in some cases there are different roles arranged for specific purposes, such as in family or inheritance matters. However, the basic principle that applies is that both are treated fairly and equally in God's sight. The Qur'an clearly states equality between men and women, both in terms of creation, position with Allah, and in their rights and obligations. Allah says in Surah Al-Ahzab (33:35), which states that men and women who believe and do righteous deeds will be rewarded equally. This

²²Alhani Azhari Putri dkk., "Study of Indonesian Society's Consumer Culture Through Herbert Marcuse's One Dimensional Man Theory Approach," *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik* 38, no. 1 (2024): 20–34.

²³Muhibbin, Z. (2011) *Wanita dalam Islam*. *Jurnal Sosial Humaniora*, 4 (2): 109-120.

shows that there is no difference in nature between men and women before Allah in terms of charity and worship.

The statement of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, which affirms that women should be treated well and respected, also strengthens the view that Islam is present to elevate the status of women. In many ways, social realities are often not on the side of women, but this is contrary to the main mission of Islam which is to glorify human dignity, regardless of gender. Discrimination against women in Islam is not an unfair privilege, but rather a form of respect and protection of their rights. Islam affirms that everyone, both men and women, has the same test of life to prove their deeds. Allah SWT says in Surah Al-Mulk (67:2): "It is He who created death and life to test you, which among you is the best in deeds."

This shows that the trials faced by men and women are the same, and that both have an equal opportunity to gain a noble position in the sight of Allah based on their acts of worship, regardless of gender. Therefore, both men and women are faced with the same mandate to behave well and make a positive contribution to society, with each individual being tested according to the capacity and responsibilities given to them. Rules of Islamic jurisprudence have outlined a number of things that deserve attention and guidance, especially in terms of social ethics, behavior, self-adornment, and other aspects related to women. As explained by Dr. Abdul Qadir Manshur in *Fiqh al-Mar'ah al-Muslimah*, there are at least five main points that are emphasized. One of them is the ethics of being outside the home.

For women, it is recommended not to wear tight clothes that can show curves. In addition, you should also not use clothing materials that are thin and exposed so that they can show the skin. There are also ethics that a woman should maintain when interacting with men, including: being able to hold her gaze, covering the entire body except the face and palms, being calm and honorable in her movements, and speaking politely, seriously, and not flirting. In decorating yourself, there are limits that must be considered. According to Ibn Abidin, in addition to the obligation to cover the aurat, the condition for a woman to be allowed to leave the house is not to wear excessive and conspicuous jewelry. This view is in line with respect for women's dignity and protection of their tenderness, as described by Sayyid Qutb, a prominent Egyptian scholar. To affirm the position of women, the Qur'an contains a special letter, *An-Nisa'* (Women), which discusses in depth various aspects related to women. In essence, women are seen as an important part of the upholding of religion. Therefore, nothing is more expected than the presence of a pious woman, who is able to maintain her nature and dignity in daily life.

In the Qur'an, Allah SWT affirms: *"Say to the believing woman, 'Let them restrain their gaze, and guard their genitals, and let them not show their ornaments except what is visible from them'"* (QS. An-Nūr: 31). This verse, among other things, is the basis for the prohibition for women to be alone with men who are not mahrams in a lonely place, because it is not justified and the law is haram. The Prophet Muhammad PBUH was very disliked this kind of act. In one of the hadiths, he said that being alone between a man and a woman who is not a mahram is a form of disobedience: *"A man is not alone with a woman, unless Satan becomes a third party among them"* (HR. Ahmad and At-Tirmidhi).

Among the manners that women must observe are to hold their gaze, cover the entire body except the face and palms, be calm and respectful in their movements, and speak politely and seriously. In terms of self-adornment, there are certain limits. According to Ibn Abidin, in addition to the obligation to cover the awrah, the condition for a woman to be allowed to leave the house is not to wear jewelry excessively and conspicuously, because it can cause attraction for men. Therefore, in the Qur'an, Allah SWT warns that women should not imitate the behavior of previous ignorant women (QS. Al-Aḥzāb: 33).

Transformation of Legal Protection for Women in the Digital Space: A Study of Islamic Law

The transformation of digital technology has brought various conveniences in communication, information access, and social interaction globally. However, behind these advances, there are new challenges that have emerged, especially related to the protection of women in the digital space. The phenomenon of online gender-based violence, digital harassment, unauthorized dissemination of personal content, and exploitation of women are issues that are increasingly urgent to be taken seriously by the legal system, including from the perspective of Islamic family law.²⁴

Islamic family law, which has strong roots in the principles of justice and the protection of human dignity, needs to adapt to the times, especially in the context of the digital space. Women, as subjects who are vulnerable to various forms of violence and exploitation in cyberspace, must receive special attention to ensure that their rights are protected. Therefore, the protection of women in Islamic family law in the digital context is essential to realize a legal system that is responsive and relevant to the challenges of the times.²⁵

²⁴ Kristophorus Hadiono and Rina Candra Noor Santi, "Welcoming Digital Transformation," 2020. h. 1-14.

²⁵ Lilis Hidayati Yuli Astutik and Muhammad Ngizzul Muttaqin, "Positive Family Law in the Muslim World Through Family Law Reform: Islamic Family Law," *Islamika: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 20, no. 01 (2020): 55–65.

The digital space, which was supposed to be a neutral and inclusive place, has now developed into a terrain that is vulnerable to various forms of violence against women. Various forms of digital violence, such as *cyber harassment*, *body shaming*, *doxing*, *revenge porn*, and *cyberstalking*, are increasingly targeting women as a vulnerable group. This phenomenon reflects deep gender inequality, where women are the main targets of violent and discriminatory practices, both directly and indirectly in cyberspace.²⁶

In many cases, these violations are rooted in ongoing gender inequality in society and weak legal literacy. Many women do not have adequate knowledge about their rights in the digital space, so they often do not have access to existing protection mechanisms. This shows that women's vulnerability in the digital space is not only technical, but also socio-cultural where patriarchal norms that are still rooted in society reinforce discriminatory practices and disregard for women's rights, even in the cyber realm.²⁷

It is important to look at the role of law, especially Islamic family law in providing protection to women in the digital space. Islamic law, which prioritizes the principles of justice, dignity, and respect for women, needs to be used as a basis for forming protection policies that are more responsive to issues of digital violence. In this context, Islamic family law can play a role not only in building legal awareness among the community, but also in providing preventive and corrective solutions to violent practices that occur in the current era of digitalization.²⁸

Islamic family law, which has largely governed domestic relations such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance, is now faced with new challenges in terms of women's protection, especially in the context of the digital space. In the fast-paced and open digital era, women are increasingly vulnerable to violations of rights and honor, whether through the dissemination of personal content without permission, sexual harassment, and other forms of gender-based violence. Therefore, the reorientation of Islamic family law is very important so that it can respond to these issues in a way that is in accordance with sharia principles.²⁹

The principles of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* (sharia goals) place the protection of the welfare of individuals and society as a top priority. One of the main purposes of Islamic law is to safeguard

²⁶ Khoiruddin Nasution, "Protection of Children in Indonesian Islamic Family Law," *Al-'Adalah* 13, no. 1 (2017): 1–10.

²⁷ Sarmauli Sarmauli, Selvia Veronika, and Yuverdina Yuverdina, "Gender Studies on Gender Inequality in Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal on Education (IJoEd)* 1, no. 2 (2024): 66–70.

²⁸ Bayu Setyawan, "Patriarchy As The Root Of Gender Discrimination In Sri Lanka," *Resolusi: Jurnal Sosial Politik* 3, no. 1 (2020): 1–14.

²⁹ H Imron Rosyadi and M H SH, *Reconstruction of the Epistemology of Islamic Family Law* (Prenada Media, 2022). 1-30.

honor (*ḥifẓ al-'ird*), soul (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), and reason (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*). In the context of the digital space, violations of women's honor often occur through the dissemination of harmful or defamatory personal information on social media, which can damage a person's reputation and dignity.³⁰ For this reason, Islamic family law needs to develop a legal apparatus that not only regulates aspects of domestic life, but also provides protection for women from threats in cyberspace. This includes provisions on privacy rights, protection against the unauthorized dissemination of personal content, and prevention of other forms of digital violence. Thus, Islamic family law can carry out its role as a protector of women's honor and dignity in the digital era, in accordance with the principle of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* which emphasizes the importance of protecting the honor of individuals in all aspects of their lives, both in the real world and cyberspace.

The concept of hijab in Islam is not only limited to clothing, but also includes manners and ethics in interacting with others, both directly and through social media. Hijab, in a broader sense, regulates behavior, communication boundaries, and interactions between men and women in order to maintain the sanctity and honor of both. In the digital space, the concept of hijab can be translated as ethical awareness in using social media, where women are taught to maintain privacy, avoid interactions that can cause harassment, and protect their self-image from abuse. Islam places great emphasis on the importance of adab in the interaction between men and women, including the prohibition of *khalwat* (being alone in a lonely place) and the command to subdue one's gaze. In the real world, this rule aims to keep the relationship between the sexes maintained within legal limits and not cause temptation or slander. However, in a freer and often borderless digital world, uncontrolled interactions can lead to similar problems, such as harassment, exploitation, or the disclosure of harmful personal information. Given this potential danger, Islamic family law needs to reaffirm the values of hijab as part of preventive efforts against gender-based digital violence. Women in the digital context need to be given clear guidance on how to maintain privacy, avoid situations that are prone to harassment, and still maintain their dignity even in cyberspace.

Several fatwa institutions and contemporary scholars have begun to respond to the phenomenon of digital violence by issuing fatwas that affirm that disseminating other people's personal content without permission is haram. In addition, they also emphasized the importance of maintaining ethics in social media, especially in interactions between men and women. These

³⁰ Nurul Rahma Nur, Akhmad Hanafi Dain Yunta, and Muhammad Harsya Bachtiar, "Boycotting Crime Supporting Products from Maqāṣid Al-Syarī'ah Perspective," *AL-FIKRAH: Jurnal Kajian Islam* 1, no. 1 (2024): 284–303.

fatwas demonstrate the ability of Islamic law to adapt to the times and social changes, and reflect its flexibility in providing solutions to modern challenges, including in the digital space. In countries with dualistic legal systems, there is an opportunity to encourage women's protection through family law based on Islamic values. In this case, Islamic family law can be used as a foundation to protect women from the threat of digital violence and to ensure respect for their dignity and honor in cyberspace. The role of the state has become very important in this context, especially in strengthening the regulations that govern the digital world. The state needs to broaden the definition of gender-based violence, to include forms of violence that occur in cyberspace, as well as strengthen protections for women who are victims of online violence. This effort can be done by developing policies that include preventive measures, counseling, and increasing awareness among the public about the importance of digital ethics and the protection of women's rights in cyberspace.

Some studies show that women who are victims of digital violence often face difficulties in obtaining adequate legal protection. Factors such as the limited understanding of law enforcement officials about digital violence, difficulties in obtaining digital forensic evidence, and the stigma against victims, are the main obstacles that hinder the provision of effective protection. One of the biggest challenges in providing legal protection for women in the context of digital violence is how to reinterpret classical fiqh texts that are not familiar with the concept of digitalization. The texts, while rich in moral and ethical values, are often limited to social and technological contexts that are very different from today's. Therefore, to answer the challenges of the times, it is very necessary to have a contemporary ijihad approach that is able to interpret these classic texts by considering the dynamics of technology and women's rights in the digital space.

Contemporary ijihad plays a key role in bridging the gap between existing sharia principles and the new realities offered by the development of digital technology. Islamic jurists must make room for the reinterpretation of the text while adhering to the core values of sharia that protect human dignity and rights, including the protection of women. This is not only a matter of adapting the law to the times, but also strengthening Islam's commitment to protecting the honor, dignity, and safety of women from all forms of violence, both in the real world and in cyberspace. Thus, the Islamic legal protection system for women must be able to respond more adaptively to the challenges of digitalization, while ensuring that women's rights in the digital space are protected without any justification or neglect of victims. The reinterpretation of fiqh texts, through

contemporary *ijtihad*, is very important in creating a responsive and progressive legal system to the problem of gender-based digital violence.

Legal transformation must be accompanied by women's empowerment, especially in the aspects of digital literacy and law. This empowerment is important so that women not only understand their rights in daily life, but also can understand their rights in the context of the digital world. In an era where social media and digital platforms are an integral part of life, it is important for women to have the ability to protect themselves online. Strong digital literacy can help women identify potential digital dangers and violence, as well as give them an understanding of how to properly report the offences they experience.

Women's empowerment in this field also includes knowledge of existing legal mechanisms, both sourced from Islamic family law and national law. Thus, women will be better prepared to take advantage of their legal rights, and dare to take legal steps if they become victims of digital violence. The synergy between Islamic family law and national law is very important to ensure that the protection of women in the digital world can be realized effectively. Islamic family law, with its principles that prioritize justice, equality, and the protection of women's dignity, can provide a strong normative basis for national law to comprehensively address the issue of gender-based violence. In this regard, Islamic family law not only serves to regulate domestic affairs, but can also serve as a moral and ethical guideline in dealing with various legal challenges faced by women in the digital space.³¹

Good cooperation between Islamic family law and national law is expected to create a more comprehensive and responsive protection of women's rights, both in the physical and virtual realms. Thus, the transformation of the law will not only protect women, but also empower them to take an active part in creating a safer and more equitable digital space. Contemporary Islamic family law must be able to evolve with the changing times, not just as a collection of norms that govern marriage and divorce. As an integral part of a dynamic Islamic legal system, Islamic family law must respond to new challenges, including in the protection of women in the digital space. The increasingly digital world poses a variety of challenges, including gender-based violence, digital harassment, and the unauthorized dissemination of personal content. Therefore, it is important for Islamic family law to adapt quickly in order to become a relevant, responsive, and effective legal system in protecting women in the digital context. Transformation of legal protection of

³¹ Dewa Ayu Dian Sawitri and Ni Ketut Supasti Dharmawan, "Protection of Transformation of Lontar Creative Works in the Form of Digitalization," *Acta Comitas: Jurnal Hukum Kenotariatan* 5, no. 2 (2020): 298–308.

women in the digital space requires an approach that integrates noble Islamic values, human rights principles, and state policies that support gender equality and women's protection. Islamic values of justice, equality, and protection of human dignity are a strong moral basis in facing the challenges of digital violence. The principle of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* which emphasizes the protection of honor (*ḥifẓ al-'ird*), life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), and reason (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*) must be translated in a digital context to protect women from exploitation and threats that exist in cyberspace.³²

Thus, it can be understood that the wisdom of the prohibition of indecent dress in Islam is a form of protection for women from all forms of danger that originate from sexual orgasm. Islam has established preventive measures, both directly and indirectly, to prevent the occurrence of slander and moral damage. In addition to guaranteeing women's rights, Islam also protects them from everything that can degrade their honor, undermine their authority, and damage their dignity. Women are seen as noble beings who deserve to be respected and maintained.³³

Based on this principle, a number of rules are set by Allah SWT in order to ensure the safety and glory of women in carrying out their strategic roles, especially as educators of the generations of the people. Muhammad Thahir 'Āsyūr in his tafsir *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* stated that Islam is very concerned about the good of women's affairs. This is because women are half of the human type, and are the first educators in shaping the human soul before the rest. The education provided by women is not only intellectual, but also spiritual, which directs the mind so as not to be influenced by bad influences and to keep the heart from being possessed by the whispers of the devil. Therefore, Allah SWT commands women to maintain their honor in front of men who are not mahrams. This is done by avoiding free mixing with men, increasing time at home unless there is a need for sharia, maintaining his sight, not using fragrance when leaving the house, and not beautifying voices that can cause slander. All of these provisions aim to create a healthy social environment and maintain the dignity of women in the Islamic society.³⁴

Conclusion

Exploitation of women in social media is a phenomenon that continues to grow along with technological advances and social changes. This form of exploitation is often seen through the depiction of women as objects of visual attraction to increase popularity or commercial gain.

³² Usep Saepullah, "The Nature and Transformation of Islamic Family Law Regarding Child Protection" (LP2M UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, 2021).

³³ Izzat Zaini, "Prevention of Sexual Harassment in the Qur'an: Perspective of Tafsir Al-Qurthubi (Study of Munasabah Qs. An-Nur: 30-31)" (Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2022). h. 1-22.

³⁴ Nilna Fauza and Moh Afandi, "Perjanjian Perkawinan Dalam Menjamin Hak-Hak Perempuan," *Al-Manhaj: Journal of Indonesian Islamic Family Law* 2, no. 1 (2020): 1-17.

These practices include the use of women's bodies in advertising, entertainment content, and product promotions that often ignore human and moral values. In the perspective of Islamic law, the exploitation of women is contrary to the principle of respect for the honor and dignity of the individual. Islam teaches that women have the same right to be respected, protected, and treated fairly. The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of maintaining the honor of women and prohibiting all forms of actions that degrade their dignity, as stated in various verses, including Q.S. Al-Hujurat: 13. The exploitation of women on social media not only violates Islamic values but also has the potential to have negative impacts, both psychologically and socially, such as degrading the image of women and reinforcing unfair gender stereotypes. Therefore, Islam emphasizes the importance of maintaining women's honor by avoiding actions that make them objects of exploitation, as well as encouraging women to use social media positively and productively.

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