The Role of Hadith in Shaping Digital Spirituality: An Analysis of Texts on Controlling the Gaze and the Heart

Retno Endah Kusuma Wardani[1], Nasrulloh[2]
[1,2] Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, Malang, Indonesia
[1]retnoendah08@gmail.com, [2]nasrulloh@syariah.uin-malang.ac.id

Abstract

This article examines the role of Prophetic hadith in shaping digital spirituality, with a specific focus on the ethical principles of controlling the gaze and safeguarding the heart in the online environment. The increasing of visual and distraction-driven nature of digital culture has created significant challenges for Muslim spiritual life, including weakened self-regulation, loss of attentiveness, and heightened exposure to morally harmful content. This study aims to explore how selected hadiths concern about lowering the gaze (*ghaḍḍ al-baṣar*) and the purification of the heart can offer a relevant ethical-spiritual framework for navigating digital spaces. Using a qualitative library research method with a thematic (*mauḍuʿi*) and semantic (*maʿāni al-ḥadīth*) approach, this article analyzes foundational texts and their classical commentaries to uncover their contemporary implications. The findings indicate that the Prophetic teachings on visual discipline, inner vigilance, and heart-centered consciousness provide practical guidance for resisting digital overstimulation, maintaining moral clarity, and cultivating spiritual presence. This study concludes that recontextualizing hadith within the dynamics of digital life contributes to the formulation of digital spirituality that is ethically grounded, psychologically stabilizing, and spiritually transformative.

Keywords: *digital spirituality, hadith, gaze ethics, heart purification, online ethics*

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji peran hadis Nabi dalam membangun spiritualitas digital dengan menitikberatkan pada prinsip etika pengendalian pandangan dan penjagaan hati dalam lingkungan daring. Budaya digital yang semakin visual dan sarat distraksi telah melahirkan berbagai tantangan bagi kehidupan spiritual seorang Muslim, seperti melemahnya kemampuan regulasi diri, hilangnya fokus batin, serta meningkatnya paparan terhadap konten yang merusak moral. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengeksplorasi bagaimana hadis-hadis terkait *ghaḍḍ al-baṣar* (menundukkan pandangan) dan penyucian hati dapat menawarkan kerangka etik-spiritual yang relevan untuk menavigasi ruang digital. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif berbasis studi pustaka dan pendekatan tematik (*mauḍuʿi*) serta semantik (*maʿani al-ḥadith*), artikel ini menganalisis teks-teks hadis dan syarah klasik guna menemukan relevansi kontemporernya. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ajaran Nabi tentang disiplin visual, kewaspadaan batin, dan kesadaran hati memberikan panduan praktis dalam menghadapi overstimulasi digital, menjaga kejernihan moral, serta membangun kehadiran spiritual. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa reaktualisasi hadis dalam dinamika kehidupan digital dapat berkontribusi pada pembentukan spiritualitas digital yang berlandaskan etika, menumbuhkan stabilitas psikologis, dan memberikan transformasi ruhani.

Kata Kunci: spiritualitas digital, hadis, etika pandangan, penyucian hati, etika daring.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of digital technology has transformed the ways individuals interact, consume information, and experience spirituality. Digital environments, characterized by visual overstimulation, constant connectivity, and attention-fragmenting interfaces, present unique challenges to the spiritual well-being of Muslims. Continuous exposure to unfiltered content, algorithm-driven distractions, and limitless visual stimuli weakens self-regulation, diminishes inner presence, and affects the stability of the heart (*qalb*). As people spend more time in digital spaces, the need for ethical-spiritual guidance grounded in Islamic teachings becomes increasingly relevant. Within this context, the Prophetic hadith offers foundational principles on disciplining the gaze (*ghaḍḍ al-baṣar*) and safeguarding the heart, which may serve as a spiritual compass for navigating the digital age.

Previous studies on Islamic ethics and digital behavior generally focus on issues such as cyber morality, online communication, or media literacy. However, research that explicitly integrates hadith-based spiritual ethics, particularly those related to visual discipline and heart purification, with the challenges of digital overstimulation remains limited. This gap indicates the necessity of a thematic and semantic examination of hadith as a framework for understanding digital spirituality.

This study aims to analyze selected hadiths related to controlling the gaze and protecting the heart, interpret their meanings through classical commentaries, and explore their relevance to contemporary digital experiences. By doing so, this research seeks to articulate how Prophetic teachings can guide Muslims in maintaining spiritual presence, moral clarity, and emotional stability within digital environments. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to formulating a hadith-based model of digital spirituality that responds to modern challenges while remaining faithful to the ethical foundations of the Islamic tradition.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design using a library-based approach to analyze the role of hadith in shaping digital spirituality. The research process consists of identifying relevant hadiths related to controlling the gaze and safeguarding the heart, examining their textual structures, and interpreting their meanings through classical and contemporary commentaries. The thematic (*maudu'i*) approach is used to collect and categorize hadiths under specific ethical-spiritual themes, while the semantic (*ma'ani al-ḥadith*) approach is applied to explore their conceptual depth and contextual implications.

The primary data sources include hadith collections such as Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhari, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Sunan al-Tirmidhi, and other reputable compilations, supported by scholarly commentaries from Ibn Ḥajar, al-Nawawī, Ibn al-Qayyim, and later hadith scholars. Secondary data are drawn from contemporary literature on digital culture, attention dynamics, self-regulation, and Islamic spirituality.

The analysis technique involves three stages: (1) textual analysis to examine the linguistic and structural features of the hadiths, (2) intertextual analysis to compare classical explanations with modern interpretations, and (3) contextual analysis to assess the relevance of the teachings within the dynamics of digital environments. This method

enables the formulation of a coherent ethical-spiritual framework that aligns Prophetic teachings with the realities of digital life.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Prophetic Teachings on Controlling the Gaze

In examining the Prophet's teachings on controlling the gaze (*ghadd al-baṣar*), it becomes clear that this was not a simple moral command, but a deeply spiritual discipline aimed at safeguarding the soul. The Prophet Muhammad emphasized the act of lowering one's gaze as a preventative measure, not merely to avoid sin, but to protect the heart (*qalb*) from subtle contaminations. In one report, he warned against following a first glance with a second: the first may be involuntary, but the second often carries desire, fantasy, and spiritual risk.

This emphasis is echoed by classical commentators and exegetes. For instance, in the study of Qur'anic exegesis, *ghadd al-baṣar* is defined not as a complete aversion of the eyes, but rather as a restriction: one should not fixate on what is forbidden, but rather redirect one's gaze when necessary (the exegesis of Quraish Shihab supports this understanding)[1]. This restraint serves as a spiritual buffer: by not allowing viral or alluring images to take root, the believers limit the possibility for desire to fester into something more dangerous. But controlling the gaze is not just about avoiding vision; it is intrinsically linked with the inner self. As interpreted by many Islamic scholars, such as through tafsir and hadith commentary, uncontrolled looking weakens the heart's guard. The gaze acts as a channel: what the eyes feed into the heart can spark longing, moral decay, and emotional instability.

To illustrate, some hadith literatures liken the gaze to a poisoned arrow of Satan: the Prophet reportedly said that whoever restrains his gaze for the sake of Allah will be rewarded with a sweetness of faith in his heart. This metaphor is striking, rather than seeing the eye as passive, it is framed as an active weapon that, if left unchecked, can wound a person's spiritual integrity. The spiritual warfare here is subtle but profound: the eyes may spark temptation, but the heart must remain vigilant. In light of this, restraining the gaze is not a denial of human nature but a higher-order self-discipline. It nurtures self-regulation, not only over physical acts, but over inner desires. Such discipline is part of a broader prophetic ethics: the believers learn to monitor not just what reaches their minds, but what seeps into their hearts. The goal is not repression but transformation: by choosing where and how to look, one shapes the inner landscape.

In today's digital age, this teaching resonates more than ever. Visual temptation is no longer limited to in-person interactions or fleeting glances; it saturates social media, websites, videos, and ads. The unending scroll feeds selective images directly into our awareness, and without conscious spiritual discipline, the gaze becomes a conduit for overstimulation and disquietude. When believers apply the prophetic teaching of *ghadd al-baṣar* in digital contexts, they are effectively reactivating a timeless spiritual strategy. By consciously redirecting or limiting visual exposure, they can reduce the risk of the

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[1] Nur Muhammad Hudallah and Abu Khaer, 'Ghadul Bashar (Menahan Pandangan) sebagai Strategi Preventif Konten Seksual terhadap Perilaku Remaja dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an', *Maghza: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* 10, no. 1 (2025): 106–22.

heart being drawn into patterns of desire, envy, or distraction.

Exegeses and classical commentaries provide guidance here: the act of lowering the gaze means more than averting the eyes, it involves a mindful turning away, a decision to disengage. This is not avoidance for its own sake, but a form of self-preservation for the heart. When translated into modern digital practice, it could mean pausing before clicking on provocative content, choosing not to linger on certain images, or even cultivating a habit of mindful scrolling. Moreover, a spiritual dimension underlies this discipline: believers who restrain their gaze internalize the awareness that Allah observes them. They recognize that the heart is not an isolated private realm but a place under divine watch. This consciousness cultivates God-consciousness (*taqwa*), grounding the practice of gaze control in a deeper relationship with the Creator.

From an ethical perspective, then, controlling the gaze in the Prophetic tradition is not merely a personal virtue but a social one. It impacts how individuals engage with the world; especially visually, and how they maintain moral and spiritual boundaries[2]. In a digital environment where the visual often dominates, this teaching provides a normative anchor. It reminds believers that seeing is not value-neutral; the eyes are not passive recipients but active agents in spiritual life. In sum, the prophetic guidance on *ghadd al-baṣar* offers a rich, multi-layered framework: spiritually, it nurtures self-discipline and heart-guarding; ethically, it promotes a mindful engagement with the world; and practically, it gives strategies that are highly relevant for navigating the temptations of the digital age.

Prophetic Teachings on Safeguarding the Heart

One of the most profound teachings in the Prophetic tradition concerns the heart (*qalb*), not merely as a physical organ, but as the spiritual core of a person. In many hadiths, the Prophet Muhammad highlighted the heart's central role in one's moral and spiritual life, warning that it can fluctuate, be corrupted, or turned away from remembrance of God. This concern is not symbolic only; the heart is portrayed as the seat of intentions, faith, and inner resilience. From this perspective, safeguarding the heart becomes a foundational spiritual task: it means protecting one's inner world from corrupting influences and nurturing it toward purity and devotion.

In classical Islamic thought, the heart is not a static entity. Scholars of Sufism and theology have long emphasized that the qalb has different "stations" or levels (*maqamat*), reflecting its dynamic nature. For example, Al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi maps the heart into stages such as *sadr*, *qalb*, *fu'ad*, and *lubb*, each with its particular spiritual function and capacity[3]. According to him, the heart is more than a physical muscle; it is a metaphysical locus where human spiritual awareness, cognition, and divine remembrance converge. This view suggests that the heart is not just passive: it actively receives, processes, and transforms spiritual stimuli.

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[2] Farista Intan Saputri et al., 'Ghaddhul Bashar Dalam Perspektif Hadis', *El-Sunnah: Jurnal Kajian Hadis Dan Integrasi Ilmu* 4, no. 2 (2023): 153–63, https://doi.org/10.19109/elsunnah.v4i2.20905.
[3] Ryandi Ryandi, 'Konsep Hati Menurut al-Hakim al-Tirmidzi', *Kalimah* 12, no. 1 (2014): 109, https://doi.org/10.21111/klm.v12i1.221.

The ethics of the heart in Prophetic teachings are closely aligned with the concept of *tazkiyah al-nafs*, the purification of one's soul. In modern Islamic discourse, this purification is seen as a pathway to inner peace. A recent study argues that contemporary people, despite technological advances, suffer spiritually when their *nafs* (soul) becomes "polluted" by anxiety, distraction, and emotional turmoil. According to this view, the heart is the "estuary of happiness and misery": when the heart is pure, one's life is spiritually healthy; when it is corrupt, the heart becomes a source of imbalance and suffering. From the Prophetic perspective, the heart can be afflicted by various "diseases": apathy, hypocrisy, attachment to *dunya* (worldly life), envy, and neglect of the remembrance of God. These spiritual maladies do not manifest only in outward actions, but in states of being. The Prophet's guidance therefore emphasizes ongoing vigilance: the believers are commanded to monitor their hearts, to perform *muraqabah* (self-examination), and to engage in practices like *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah) to keep the heart alive and spiritually attuned.

This teaching is echoed in Islamic educational and psychological discourse. In a study about *Tarbiyah al-Qalb*, researchers argue that developing self-regulation in the heart is essential for character formation[4]. According to them, control over the heart improves emotional regulation and promotes moral stability; believers who engage in this spiritual training become more resilient to the emotional turbulence of life.
Furthermore, neuroscience perspectives also offer interesting resonance with this idea. According to a critical review, the *qalb* can be understood in light of limbic system functioning, the brain part that processes emotion and memory[5]. Theoretically, the heart (*qalb*) is not detached from neurological reality: spiritual states tied to the heart likely correlate with neural processes associated with emotion regulation, meaning that cultivating a "pure heart" may involve both spiritual practices and psychological resilience.

Another important source discusses how the Qur'an and hadith emphasize the transformational role of the heart. In a qualitative study, the authors interpret that in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the heart acts as a moral compass: a "center of consciousness" that judges right and wrong, stores intentions, and maintains a spiritual connection with Allah. When the heart is "clean"; by which they mean spiritually purified, the person's behavior becomes more consistent with Islamic ethics: kindness, sincerity, and piety follow naturally from inner purity. *Tazkiyah* (heart purification) therefore is not optional: it is a deeply embedded prophetic ethic. Through *dhikr*, prayer, reflection, and constant moral vigilance, believers strive to treat their heart as a beloved entity, to be nurtured, examined, and protected. In the face of internal distractions, jealousy, greed, forgetfulness, the guidance of the Prophet offers concrete spiritual practices. This is not theoretical mysticism, but practical ethics: the heart must be looked after, just as one would care for a delicate and precious garden.

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[4] Fauriyatul Irfani et al., 'Tarbiyah Al-Qalb: Pengembangan Kontrol Diri Dalam Psikologi Islam', *IJEDR: Indonesian Journal of Education and Development Research* 2, no. 2 (2024): 1281–87, https://doi.org/10.57235/ijedr.v2i2.2572.
[5] Muhammad Nasruddin and Abdul Muiz, 'Tinjauan Kritis Neurosains Terhadap Konsep Qalb Menurut Al-Ghazali', *Syifa al-Qulub* 4, no. 2 (2020): 70–87, https://doi.org/10.15575/saq.v4i2.7736.

Now, placing this teaching in the context of the digital age gives it renewed power. In our times, distractions are more than physical temptations: they are emotional, cognitive, and spiritual. Notifications, messages, social media content, and constant news cycles tug at the heart and mind. Without a disciplined guardian, the heart might be overwhelmed by anxiety, envy, impetuosity, or spiritual disconnection. The Prophetic emphasis on the heart as a center to be protected gives us a blueprint: *muraqabah*, self-examination, and remembrance become not just spiritual practices but digital survival skills.

Moreover, cultivating a pure heart in the age of digital distraction can improve mental well-being. When individuals regularly practice heart-watching (through *dhikr* or introspection), they build a spiritual resilience; an inner sanctuary that resists being overly swayed by trending content, sensational headlines, or social validation. This is supported by pedagogical views in Islamic education: the heart's training leads to self-regulation that extends beyond spiritual life into emotional and social maturity[6]. At a social level, the transformation of the heart has communal implications. A community of individuals who aspire to purify their hearts will likely cultivate sincerity, empathy, and trust. Rather than reacting impulsively to digital provocations, such as rumors, grudges, or sensationalism, they may better deliver wisdom, compassion, and patience. The heart becomes a moral seat not just for personal spirituality but for collective integrity.

Still, despite the richness of this teaching, there is a shortage of empirical research that ties classical hadith-based ethics of the heart to measurable digital behaviors. While the literature on *tazkiyah al-nafs* is growing (for instance, in educational or psychological journals), rigorous behavioral studies, such as how digital reminders, app-based *dhikr* trackers, or heart-focused mindfulness interventions, are rarely explored in peer-reviewed Islamic or social science journals. This scholarly gap opens up an important frontier: integrating hadith ethics, digital design, and behavioral science to design spiritually centered digital tools. In conclusion, the Prophetic teachings on safeguarding the heart provide a deeply holistic framework. The heart is not just an organ; in Islamic thought, it is the spiritual axis of human existence. Through *tazkiyah* and *muraqabah*, believers are called to continuously purify their inner world, watch over their intentions, and remain spiritually alert. In today's age of digital distraction, these practices offer vital resources for preserving inner stability, moral clarity, and spiritual resilience.

Spiritual Challenges in Digital Environments

In the digital age, the spiritual terrain faced by many Muslims has become fraught with profound challenges. The very attributes that make the internet a powerful tool; endless connectivity, rapid information exchange, and visual immediacy, can also undermine spiritual quietude and disorient the heart. One of the central spiritual challenges is digital detachment, a condition where constant exposure to online stimuli diminishes the depth of inner life. The relentless flow of social media content tends to

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[6] Fahrul Rozi and Fathurrahman Mukhtar, 'Peran Qalb dan Fu'ad dalam Pendidikan Islam Menurut Al-Ghazali', *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan* 9, no. 3 (2024): 1611–16, https://doi.org/10.29303/jipp.v9i3.2361.

erode sustained reflection and spiritual consciousness, replacing it with a distracted, surface-level religiosity[7].

Alongside digital detachment is a growing paradox of cyberreligion. Online platforms enable new forms of religious expression; virtual communities, digital sermons, and even "cyber mysticism", yet these virtual forms sometimes blur the line between authentic religion and a kind of simulacrum of spirituality. Some scholars warn that cyberreligion may prioritize performance over substance, as individuals curate their piety for visibility rather than inner transformation[8]. This tension becomes especially pronounced when spiritual roles traditionally held by in-person religious teachers are replaced by virtual gurus or influencers, raising questions about authority and depth in digital faith communities[9].

A second challenge relates to identity hybridity in the digital realm. As individuals navigate online spaces, religious identity becomes more fluid and hybrid. In this fluid identity landscape, traditional markers of religious belonging may be reshaped, and the depth of spiritual commitment diluted by the demands of digital aesthetics and community validation[10]. Moreover, fear of missing out (FoMO); a phenomenon amplified by social media, poses a serious spiritual threat. Gen Z's anxiety about missing out on social connection, online events, or religious content pressures them into constant online engagement[11]. This perpetual engagement can lead to superficial piety: users may feel spiritually connected, but their engagement often remains reactive, rather than reflective or contemplative.

Psychological and emotional stress is yet another dimension of spiritual challenge in digital life. A clear correlation between digital overload and mental health issues: anxiety, depression, and emotional fatigue are rising, and spiritual practices like *dhikr* and prayer are sometimes displaced or diluted in the face of constant notifications[12]. The digital sphere can become a source of spiritual fragmentation rather than solace, especially when religious content competes with entertainment, gossip, or polarized discourse. In response to these challenges, many Muslims turn to Sufi-inspired psychological and spiritual practices as a possible remedy. That Sufism's emphasis on *tazkiyah al-nafs*, *takhalli* (detachment), and *mujahadah* (struggle) can help young Muslims build inner resilience in the digital era[13]. In particular, the practice of spiritual

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[7] Alwi Mawardy, 'Memaknai Digitaldetachmentdalam Perspektif Hermeneutik Keislaman Di Era Media Sosial', *Jurnal Ilmiah Spiritualis* 7 (2025): 224–33.

[8] Ali Ridho et al., 'Cyberreligion: The Spiritual Paradox of Digital Technology', *Ri'ayah: Jurnal Sosial Dan Keagamaan* 8, no. 2 (2023): 1, https://doi.org/10.32332/riayah.v8i2.7699.

[9] Habibi Malik, 'Cyber Religion Dan Real Religion Di Tengah Masyarakat Digital', *KOMUNIKA* 4, no. 1 (2021): 63–78, https://doi.org/10.24042/komunika.v4i1.8615.

[10] Lailatur Rofidah and Abdul Muhid, 'Media dan Hibrid Identitas Keagamaan di Era Digital', *Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunikasi* 7, no. 1 (2022): 81, https://doi.org/10.29240/jdk.v7i1.4805.

[11] Shinta Shavira and Pitri Pardomuan, 'Strategi Spritualitas Qur'ani untuk Mengatasi FOMO pada Generasi Z', *Hikmah : Jurnal Studi Pendidikan Agama Islam* 2, no. 2 (2025): 181–97, https://doi.org/10.61132/hikmah.v2i2.950.

[12] Siti Rahmah and Latifah, 'Ketuhanan dan Kesehatan Mental: Pengaruh Praktik Spiritual terhadap Kesejahteraan Psikologis di Era Digital', *JIKES : Jurnal Ilmu Kesehatan* 4, no. 1 (2025): 81–87, https://doi.org/10.71456/jik.v4i1.1509.

[13] Mashita Putri Waluyojati and Darsista Irma Swari, 'Peran Psikologi Tasawuf Mengenai Kesehatan Mental dan Spiritualitas Generasi Z Pada Era Digital', *Mutiara : Jurnal Penelitian dan Karya Ilmiah* 2, no. 4 (2024): 199–209, https://doi.org/10.59059/mutiara.v2i4.1484.

"detox," long valued by Sufis, is reinterpreted in modern terms as a digital detox, an intentional break from online stimuli to reconnect with inner life.

Another layer of challenge arises within religious education itself. Islamic education in digital contexts often struggles to integrate spiritual depth into online curricula. For instance, integrating spiritual formation in digital learning to ensure that students develop not only intellectually, but also emotionally and spiritually. Without such spiritual integration, educational platforms risk prioritizing cognitive knowledge at the expense of cultivating moral and spiritual maturity. Values like patience (*sabr*), gratitude (*shukr*), self-restraint (*iffah*), and trust in God (*tawakkul*) instilled through religious education act as psychosocial buffers against the stressors of digital life[14]. When Muslim youth internalize these values, they are better equipped to navigate online pressures without losing their spiritual center.

At the communal level, there is a risk that digital religiosity becomes transactional. In the scramble for likes, shares, and followers, spiritual practices can be gamified: virtuous acts are displayed publicly and authenticity is sometimes sacrificed for visibility. This dynamic for strengthening spiritual and moral values through religious education, ensuring that spirituality is rooted in character rather than performance[15]. When communities emphasize inner transformation rather than public display, digital engagement can foster genuine moral growth, not just superficial piety. Another significant challenge is the distortion of time and attention. The Islamic conception of time encounters significant tension when confronted with the scrolling culture embedded in social media practices. Scrolling encourages fragmented attention and instant gratification, which undermine the Qur'anic ethic of mindful time consciousness. This fragmentation can erode spiritual practices that require reflection, patience, and sustained focus.

In addition, the emergence of "digital religion" as a distinct spiritual modality demands new theological and ethical frameworks. Digital religion is not merely religion transplanted into cyberspace, but rather a transformed spiritual reality; one where rituals, community, and authority adapt to the affordances of digital media[16]. In this context, believers must strengthen the authenticity of their religious practices by maintaining the integrity of worship, spirituality, and moral formation even as much of their religious life unfolds in digital spaces.

There is also an existential risk: the virtualization of spiritual authority. As religious influences migrate online, the traditional role of scholars, teachers, and spiritual guides is supplanted by influencers, social media personalities, and algorithmic recommendation systems. Urban tasawuf in Indonesia shows that digital platforms have reshaped Sufi identities, leading to a "cyber mysticism" where spiritual guidance is often virtual. This shift raises urgent questions about how spiritual legitimacy and depth can be sustained when guidance is mediated and commercialized. Finally, the cumulative effect

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[14] Dimas Maulana Rahman, 'Pendidikan Islam sebagai Modal Resiliensi Mental di Era Digital', *An-Nur: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, 1, vol. 1 (2025).

[15] Adiva Rahma Almahira, 'Penguatan Nilai-Nilai Spiritual dan Moralitas di Era Digital melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam', *JEMARI: Jurnal Edukasi Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* 6 (2024): 94–103.

[16] Ayu Jelita Ningrum and Moh Anas Kholis, 'Modernisasi Kehidupan Spiritual (Studi Literatur terhadap Agama Digital di Ruang Digital)', *Jurnal Partisipatoris* 5 (2023): 41–51.

of these challenges can lead to spiritual fatigue: a kind of weariness born not only of emotional overload but of meaninglessness. In the absence of anchored spiritual practices, the heart may float through digital spaces without resting in contemplative presence, reducing faith to habitual consumption. Addressing this fatigue requires comprehensive solutions, including intentional formation, community accountability, and spiritual rhythms that resist the logic of perpetual distraction.

Integrating Prophetic Guidance into Digital

If the Prophetic guidance on lowering the gaze and guarding the heart is to have practical traction in our era, it must be translated into habits, tools, and communal arrangements that work with; rather than against, the architecture of digital life. The Prophetic ethic is not merely a set of prohibitions; it is a set of spiritual technologies: small, repeatable practices that shape attention and interiority[17]. Reimagined for online life, these technologies can help believers convert the attention economy into an arena of moral formation rather than moral erosion.

A first domain of translation is digital visual discipline. The simple prophetic practice of averting a second look can be operationalized as concrete online habits: curating one's feeds, disabling autoplay, hiding or muting provocative accounts, and practicing intentional pauses before clicking. These micro-habits function like "spiritual click-stoppers", brief moments of reflection that interrupt automatic scanning and protect the heart from escalatory desire. Research on digital morality and online conduct emphasizes how unregulated visual exposure contributes to spiritual fatigue and desensitization; thus, intentional visual restraint is an ethically coherent response[18].

Second, heart-centered micro-rituals provide an immediate way to maintain inner equilibrium within digital rhythms. Short acts of *muraqabah* or brief *dhikr* before and after engaging with social media; even a single phrase or a short breathing prayer, can act as cognitive resets, restoring moral clarity and reducing reactivity[19]. Pedagogical studies suggest embedding such reflective practices into everyday routines enhances emotional regulation and supports long-term spiritual formation, especially among younger users facing relentless online stimuli.

Third, Sufi spiritual technologies supply conceptual and pratical resources for digital life. Practices of *takalli* (detachment), *tazkiyah* (purification), and *mujahadah* (struggle) can be converted into intentional digital patterns: scheduled periods of online silence, "digital retreats," and devotional clusters that meet virtually for guided reflection[20]. Indonesian scholarship on mediatized tasawuf shows how Sufi practices

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[17] Nasrulloh Nasrulloh, 'Tajdîd Fiqh Dari Konservatif Tekstual Menuju Fiqh Progresif Kontekstual', *De Jure: Jurnal Hukum dan Syar'iah* 6, no. 1 (2015), https://doi.org/10.18860/j-fsh.v6i1.3189.

[18] Nuraini et al., 'Moralitas di Dunia Maya: Hukum Mengemis Online Live Tik Tok dalam Perspektif Al-Ghazali', *Jurisprudensi: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah, Perundang-Undangan dan Ekonomi Islam* 16, no. 1 (2024): 64–82, https://doi.org/10.32505/jurisprudensi.v16i1.7577.

[19] Noor Haliza and Surawan Surawan, 'Influence of Spirituality on The Mental Health Impact of TikTok Scrolling in University Students', *Journal of Islamic Education and Ethics* 3, no. 2 (2025): 118–33, https://doi.org/10.18196/jiee.v3i2.92.

[20] Hanung Sito Rohmawati et al., 'Mediatization and Hypermediation in Digital Religion and the Transformation of Indonesian Muslim Religious Practices through Social Media Usage', *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama* 18, no. 2 (2025): 133–50, https://doi.org/10.14421/jsa.2024.182-01.

adapt to online modalities and offer resilience against spectacle and performativity in cyberspace. These resources are culturally resonant and pedagogically potent for many Muslim communities.

Fourth, religious education must be retooled for formation, not merely information transfer. Many online religious courses excel at transmitting knowledge but do not automatically produce inner transformation[21]. Curricula that intentionally integrate reflective exercises, spiritual mentorship, and evaluative practices (e.g., spiritual journals, moderated group sharing) are better positioned to produce authentic spiritual growth. Educational research recommends that digital Islamic pedagogy incorporate heart-formation practices to prevent the hollowing-out of religiosity into mere performance.

Fifth, community scaffolding and accountability are essential in online contexts. Digital spirituality flourishes when communities create norms that privilege sincerity, mutual correction, and humility over likes and display. Virtual study circles, peer mentorship groups, and moderated reflection sessions can help resist the gamification of piety and foster deeper practice[22]. Case studies from Indonesia indicate that moderated online communities produce better outcomes in humility and sustained practice than purely broadcast forms of digital religiosity.

Sixth, technology design matters. Digital tools for spiritual formation should intentionally embed features that protect attention and invite reflection: *dhikr*/reminder widgets, content-filter options aligned with moral thresholds, "reflection breaks," and timers that encourage short rituals between sessions. Work on ethical UX and mediatization suggests that design interventions; when aligned with Islamic values and *maqasid* principles, can scale practices of *tazkiyah* and gaze control across large user bases.

Seventh, the question of authority and authenticity must be addressed. The migration of religious teaching to online platforms increases visibility but also amplifies unvetted voices. Contemporary *fiqh* renewal and digital moral issues underline the need for credible scholarly presences online and for media literacy that helps audiences discern genuine guidance from performative piety[23]. Trained scholars and recognized spiritual mentors should be encouraged to participate in digital spaces to model depth and provide trustworthy guidance.

Eighth, integrating prophetic ethics into digital practice invites practical research: knowing the interventions measurably improve spiritual resilience. Action-research and experimental designs, for example combining app reminders, short reflective prompts, and moderated debriefs, can test which approaches actually sustain heart health and attentive practice. Early empirical work points toward promising mixed interventions, but this remains an urgent research frontier.

Ninth, publicness versus privacy deserves ethical specification. Prophetic sincerity cautions against ostentatious piety; translated online, this suggests creating

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[21] Muhammad Fahmi Syafi'uddin, *Optimalisasi Ta'lim Al-Quran Dalam Meningkatkan Bacaan Dan Pemahaman Al-Quran; Studi Pada Mahad Al-Jamiah UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang*, 3 (2025).

[22] Dzata Farahiyah and Afrizar Fikri Reza, 'Improved RSSI-based path-loss model for indoor positioning and navigation in LabVIEW using trilateration', *JURNAL INFOTEL* 13, no. 3 (2021): 151–59, https://doi.org/10.20895/infotel.v13i3.600.

[23] Nasrulloh, 'Tajdîd Fiqh Dari Konservatif Tekstual Menuju Fiqh Progresif Kontekstual'.

semi-private spiritual spaces where confidentiality and mentorship allow genuine *tazkiyah* to occur without performative pressures. Platforms and communities that enable small-group confidentiality can protect beginners and foster depth. Studies on online religious performance show that semi-private, moderated spaces better facilitate authentic spiritual transformation than purely public broadcast formats.

Tenth, institutional collaboration is required for scale. Universities, pesantren, religious councils, and technology developers should work together to build ethical digital ecosystems: curricula that form the heart, apps that nudge reflection, and community guidelines that resist spectacle[24]. The institutional dimension is essential for embedding prophetic ethics into social infrastructures of digital life.

Finally, this integration is not an exercise in nostalgic retrenchment. Rather, it is a creative and faithful application of prophetic wisdom to new circumstances. By cultivating attentional discipline, embedding heart practices, adapting Sufi techniques, reforming education, strengthening community accountability, designing value-sensitive technologies, and reinforcing scholarly authority online, Muslims can develop a robust digital spirituality, one that protects the heart, governs the gaze, and transforms the attention economy into a field of spiritual formation instead of moral erosion[25]. Such a project combines textual fidelity with humane innovation, producing spiritual resources that are both timeless and timely.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that Prophetic teachings on controlling the gaze (*ghadd al-basar*) and safeguarding the heart (*ḥifẓ al-qalb*) offer a deeply coherent and timeless spiritual framework that directly addresses the challenges of the digital age. These teachings were never meant to function as isolated moral injunctions; rather, they form an integrated spiritual technology designed to shape attention, regulate desire, and cultivate inner clarity. By lowering the gaze, believers learn to manage visual stimuli that may corrupt the heart, while the emphasis on heart purification underscores the central role of inner vigilance, intention, and remembrance in sustaining moral stability.

In exploring the digital landscape, this study reveals that contemporary online environments intensify the very risks that the Prophetic tradition seeks to mitigate. The saturation of visual stimuli, the acceleration of attention cycles, the fluidity of online identity, and the rise of performative religiosity collectively contribute to spiritual fragmentation. Digital environments, by design, compete for attention, disrupt reflection, and weaken emotional and moral self-regulation. This creates a condition in which the heart becomes vulnerable to distraction, anxiety, envy, and spiritual fatigue. The Prophetic guidance, therefore, emerges not only as relevant but urgently necessary for navigating these pressures.

At the same time, the digital age also offers new pathways for spiritual formation. When integrated thoughtfully, Prophetic ethics can inform practical digital habits: visual

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[24] Farahiyah and Reza, 'Improved RSSI-based path-loss model for indoor positioning and navigation in LabVIEW using trilateration'.

[25] Nindy Putri Aprilia et al., *Konsep Tazkiyah Al-Nafs dalam Al-Qur'an dan Implikasinya Terhadap Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 10, no. 2 (2024).

restraint, mindful scrolling, reflective pauses, short *dhikr* practices, intentional digital detoxes, and curated online environments. Likewise, Sufi-derived concepts such as *tazkiyah*, *takhalli*, and *mujahadah* can be adapted into digital rhythms that help believers cultivate inner stillness amid online noise. Educational and communal structures, such as moderated online learning, reflective assignments, virtual spiritual circles, and small-group accountability, further enhance the possibility of developing genuine digital spirituality rooted in sincerity rather than display.

Moreover, this study identifies a critical gap in contemporary scholarship: the lack of empirical research linking classical Islamic spiritual ethics with measurable digital behaviors. Future interdisciplinary work that draws from behavioral science, UX ethics, Islamic studies, and educational psychology is essential to develop evidence-based interventions capable of strengthening digital spiritual resilience.

Integrating Prophetic teachings into digital life is not about resisting technological progress, but about ensuring that spiritual integrity, attentional discipline, and heart-centered consciousness remain at the core of Muslim engagement with the modern world. By embracing Prophetic guidance as a transformative framework; rather than as a restrictive rule set, believers can convert the attention economy into a field of spiritual growth. In doing so, they protect the heart, govern the gaze, and build a digital spirituality that is both faithful to tradition and responsive to contemporary realities.

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