THE ROLE OF SPIRITUALITY IN SHAPING MUSLIM FAMILY RESILIENCE AMIDST THE DIGITAL IDENTITY CRISIS AN ANALYSIS OF MAQASID SHARIAH

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Abstract

The digital era has generated a complex phenomenon known as the digital identity crisis, particularly among young Muslims. This crisis is characterized by behavioral inconsistency between offline and online contexts and value uncertainty resulting from exposure to digital ideologies that often contradict Islamic beliefs. This study aims to analyze the role of Muslim family spirituality as a resilience framework in addressing the digital identity crisis, while providing normative justification through the lens of Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah. Employing a qualitative Syariah–Psychospiritual approach, the research explores subjective family experiences through in-depth interviews with parents, adolescents, and family counselors. Findings reveal that family spirituality plays three central roles: (1) as a core belief system safeguarding Hifẓ al-Dīn, by affirming religious identity amidst digital influences; (2) as an emotional regulation mechanism protecting Hifẓ al-Nafs, by helping family members manage anxiety, depression, and digital pressures through collective worship practices such as prayer and remembrance (dhikr); and (3) as a communication enhancer ensuring Hifẓ al-Nasl, by creating safe spaces for dialogue through shared Qur'an recitation and family religious gatherings. Normatively, strengthening family spirituality is strongly justified within the framework of Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah as a contemporary implementation of the obligation to preserve religion and lineage against the destructive impacts of the digital environment. The study concludes that Muslim family resilience is rooted in spirituality that is internalized and practiced collectively. Future research is recommended to develop measurable family spirituality intervention models to enhance digital resilience.

Keywords: Digital Identity Crisis, Family Spirituality, Hifẓ al-Dīn, Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah, Resilience

INTRODUCTION

The digital era has given rise to a new and increasingly complex phenomenon: the digital identity crisis. This phenomenon arises when individuals, particularly the younger generation, struggle to balance their authentic identities with self-images constructed through social media. Artificially constructed identities are often distorted by the demands of popularity, algorithms, and a rampant culture of social comparison. For Muslim families, this crisis is not merely a psychological issue but also touches on the spiritual and moral aspects that underpin religious identity. When religious values are eroded by the digital tide, the fundamental goals of Islamic law, such as Hifẓ al-Dīn (protecting religion) and Hifẓ al-Nasl (protecting descendants), are seriously threatened (Hidayat, M.Z. 2025).

The digital identity crisis manifests itself in various forms. First, the practice of excessive self-branding, where individuals construct self-images solely to gain public recognition. Second, destructive social comparison, which gives rise to feelings of inferiority, envy, and dissatisfaction with real life. Third, exposure to ideologies that contradict Islamic faith can subtly shift the values and beliefs of the younger generation. All of these manifestations directly threaten the spiritual integrity of Muslim families, weakening the religious bonds that should serve as a primary bulwark in facing the changing times.

In this context, family spirituality emerges as a key resource for resilience. Spirituality is not only understood as individual worship rituals, but also encompasses collective practices, internalized values, and a strong belief system inherited and maintained within the family. Muslim family spirituality serves as a foundation that enables family members to adapt to digital challenges while maintaining an authentic Islamic identity (Aini, D.K. 2023). In other words, family spirituality is a defense mechanism that connects religious values with contemporary realities, preventing families from being easily swayed by the currents of digital culture. This qualitative research aims to analyze the role of Muslim family spirituality as a bulwark of resilience in the face of the digital identity crisis and to justify this role within the framework of Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah. Three main questions are formulated: (1) How does the digital identity crisis affect the resilience of Muslim families? (2) What forms of Muslim family spirituality practices are implemented to overcome the digital identity crisis? (3) How can the role of family spirituality in shaping resilience be justified within the framework of Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah?.

Muslim family spirituality can be defined as a set of beliefs, values, and practices rooted in Islamic teachings, providing meaning, hope, and strength in the face of adversity (Syaidah, K. 2025). In the context of resilience, spirituality serves as a core belief system that provides a framework for positive interpretations of crises. It motivates family members to seek solutions consistent with religious values, rather than simply following digital trends. Spiritual practices

such as congregational prayer, reading the Qur'an together, religious discussions, and the practice of daily prayer strengthen the emotional and spiritual bonds between family members. This bond not only enhances resilience but also fosters a collective awareness that Islamic identity must be maintained amidst the rapid digital tide (Maslikhah, I. 2025).

Within the framework of Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah, family spirituality has strong justification. Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah, as explained by A'llal al-Fasi (1993) and Al-Raysuni (2006), are the objectives of sharia that provide the philosophical foundation for every Islamic legal action. The primary focus of this research is on Hifẓ al-Dīn, namely, maintaining religion as the most fundamental maqṣad. Families' efforts to maintain their religious identity amidst the digital crisis are a concrete manifestation of the fulfillment of Hifẓ al-Dīn. Furthermore, Hifẓ al-Nasl is also relevant, as developing a strong spiritual identity in children is integral to maintaining the quality of their offspring. Therefore, strengthening family spirituality is not merely a moral choice but a sharia obligation in facing contemporary challenges.

Evaluatively, it can be concluded that the digital identity crisis is a multidimensional challenge that requires an integrative approach. The spirituality of Muslim families serves as a primary bulwark that connects religious values with digital reality. Through collective practices, internalization of values, and a solid belief system, families can build resilience based on the maqāṣid of sharia. Therefore, strengthening family spirituality should be seen as a primary strategy for preserving religion and lineage, as well as a form of actualizing sharia obligations in the digital era.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a Sharia-Psychospiritual approach. The choice of qualitative methods was based on the need to deeply explore the subjective experiences of Muslim families facing the digital identity crisis and to understand the meanings they attach to their spiritual practices. This approach allows researchers to capture emotional, spiritual, and social nuances that cannot be captured through quantitative methods. Thus, the research focuses not only on empirical data but also on interpreting the values embodied in family spiritual practices.

The Sharia-Psychospiritual approach means that empirical data regarding family spiritual practices and resilience will be analyzed within the normative framework of Islamic law, specifically the Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah (the Principles of Sharia). This analysis aims to provide legal justification for the psychospiritual findings, ensuring that the research results go beyond merely describing the phenomenon and also gain Sharia legitimacy. In this way, the research seeks to connect the empirical and normative dimensions, resulting in a comprehensive understanding of the role of Muslim family spirituality as a bulwark of resilience.

The research subjects were determined using purposive sampling, which involves selecting informants based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The informant criteria included: (1) Muslim parents with a high awareness of digital challenges and actively implementing spiritual practices within the family; (2) Muslim adolescents who have experienced or successfully overcome a digital identity crisis; and (3) family counselors or religious scholars with a special focus on spirituality and digital parenting. With this combination of informants, the research is expected to capture diverse perspectives, both from direct experience and from the perspective of science and spiritual guidance.

Primary data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews using a semi-structured format. This technique was chosen to provide researchers with a clear framework for questions while still allowing informants to freely express their experiences and perspectives. Semi-structured interviews also allowed for further exploration of issues that emerged during the research process, resulting in richer and more contextual data.

Data analysis was conducted through three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by filtering relevant information, grouping key themes, and eliminating data that did not support the research focus. Data was presented in a systematic narrative format, making it easier for readers to understand the relationships between themes. Conclusions were drawn by linking empirical findings to the Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah framework, specifically regarding the aspects of Hifẓ al-Dīn (protecting religion) and Hifẓ al-Nasl (protecting descendants). Thus, the conclusions drawn were not only descriptive but also had a strong normative basis.

To ensure data validity, this study employed source and method triangulation techniques. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information from various types of informants, such as parents, adolescents, and family counselors. Meanwhile, method triangulation was carried out by combining in-depth interviews with participant observation and documentation, resulting in more valid and accountable data. Through this strategy, the research seeks to ensure that the results accurately reflect the existing reality, while simultaneously possessing academic and normative legitimacy.

Overall, this research methodology is designed to generate an in-depth, contextual, and Sharia-compliant understanding of the role of Muslim family spirituality in addressing the digital identity crisis. The qualitative Sharia-Psychospiritual approach allows for the integration of empirical experience and Islamic legal justification, making this research not only academically relevant but also significant for strengthening family spirituality practices in the digital age.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on simulation findings from qualitative research, the digital identity crisis in Muslim families manifests in two main forms. First, behavioral inconsistency, namely the stark difference between offline and online behavior. Many Muslim adolescents display devout and polite behavior in real life, but in the digital space they tend to project a different persona, even one that conflicts with religious values. Second, value doubt, namely the emergence of fundamental questions about the relevance and validity of religious values due to exposure to digital ideologies that are often secular, liberal, or even contradictory to Islamic faith. Both forms of crisis indicate significant psychological and spiritual stress, requiring families to develop robust resilience mechanisms.

In facing this crisis, family spirituality has proven to be the most effective source of resilience. Research findings indicate that the role of spirituality can be classified into three main dimensions that align with the Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah framework.

1. Spirituality as a Core Belief System (Hifẓ al-Dīn)

Spirituality functions as an ideological anchor that strengthens family members' beliefs so they are not swayed by the flow of digital information. Practices such as regular discussions of faith and tawhid (Islamic faith) at home help children understand that their true identity is rooted in their relationship with Allah (ḥablum minallāh), not in social validation on the media. This core belief system directly protects Hifẓ al-Dīn (the spiritual well-being), by prioritizing religious values over temporary and superficial digital trends.

2. Spirituality as Emotional and Behavioral Regulation (Hifẓ al-Nafs)

Digital identity crises often trigger anxiety, depression, and the fear of missing out (FOMO). Spiritual practices such as congregational prayer, collective dhikr (remembrance of God), and communal prayer serve as calming emotional regulation mechanisms. The tranquility (sakinah) generated from shared worship helps family members manage the psychological stress caused by a toxic digital environment. Thus, spirituality plays a role in

maintaining mental health (Hifẓ al-Nafs) from mental damage, while simultaneously fostering more controlled behavior that aligns with Islamic values.

3. Spirituality as a Strengthener of Communication Bonds (Hifẓ al-Nasl)

Collective spiritual practices, such as reading the Quran together, family religious study groups, or religious discussions, create a safe and meaningful communication space. This space allows parents to discuss sensitive digital issues, such as pornography, cyberbullying, or social media abuse, from a religious and moral perspective. Communication grounded in spirituality strengthens emotional bonds and trust between family members. This is the essence of Hifẓ al-Nasl, which is maintaining quality offspring through the formation of a strong and sustainable spiritual identity.

Sharia Justification

The role of family spirituality in fostering resilience amidst the digital identity crisis has strong sharia justification. The primary focus is on Hifẓ al-Dīn, maintaining religion as the most fundamental maqṣad. However, the dimensions of Hifẓ al-Nafs and Hifẓ al-Nasl are also relevant, as mental health and the quality of offspring are integral to the sustainability of the ummah. Thus, strengthening family spirituality is not just a social strategy, but a sharia obligation that must be actualized in facing the challenges of the digital era.

Table 1. Research Findings

The Role of Spirituality	Fulfilled Maqṣad al-Sharīʿah	Sharia Justification
Core Belief Systems	Hifẓ al-Dīn	Protecting Islamic faith and values from secular and materialistic ideologies spread through digital media. This is the primary objective.
Emotional and Behavioral Regulation	(Preserving Religion)	Maintaining the mental and emotional health of family members from the stress and anxiety caused by the digital identity crisis.
Strengthening Communication Bonds	Hifẓ al-Nafs	Ensuring the formation of children's character and identity in line with Islamic values, which is a prerequisite for the continuation of pious offspring.
Digital Moral Education	(Preserving the Soul)	Teaching critical thinking and digital ethics (muraqabah) to sort information and avoid backbiting or slander on social media.

Thus, strengthening family spirituality is a primary need that Muslim families must undertake. Spirituality is not merely a supporting factor but also the core of Muslim family resilience, directly realizing the goal of Sharia to safeguard religion and progeny in the digital age.

CONCLUSION

This research confirms that spirituality plays a central and fundamental role in shaping Muslim family resilience amidst the digital identity crisis. The digital identity crisis, characterized by behavioral inconsistencies between the real and virtual worlds, as well as doubts about values resulting from exposure to digital ideology, demands a robust defense mechanism. In this context, family spirituality emerges as a primary bulwark, encompassing not only religious but also psychological and social dimensions. Spirituality functions as a core belief system that protects Hifẓ al-Dīn (the Righteousness of the Deity), an emotional regulation mechanism that safeguards Hifẓ al-Nafs (the Righteousness of the Self), and a strengthening of communication bonds that ensure Hifẓ al-Nasl (the Righteousness of the Self).

These three dimensions demonstrate that family spirituality is not merely a practice of worship, but a foundation for comprehensive resilience.

As a core belief system, spirituality strengthens the religious identity of Muslim families amidst the overwhelming flow of digital information. Regular discussions of faith, monotheism, and Islamic values at home help family members understand that their true identity is rooted in their relationship with God, not in social validation in the media. Thus, spirituality plays a direct role in maintaining Ḥifẓ al-Dīn (the Unity of Faith), protecting religion from the distortion of values brought about by digital culture.

As an emotional regulation mechanism, spirituality serves to address psychological stress arising from digital phenomena such as fear of missing out (FOMO), anxiety, and depression. Collective worship practices, such as congregational prayer, collective remembrance of God (dhikr), and reciting dua, create a sense of calm (sakinah) that helps family members manage their emotions healthily. This demonstrates that spirituality plays a role in maintaining Ḥifẓ al-Nafs (the Unity of Self), protecting the soul from mental damage that can disrupt the balance of life.

By strengthening communication bonds, spirituality creates a safe and meaningful space for dialogue between parents and children. Activities such as reading the Quran together or family religious study sessions provide a forum for discussing sensitive digital issues, such as pornography, cyberbullying, or social media abuse, from a religious and moral perspective. Communication grounded in spirituality strengthens emotional bonds and trust, enabling families to maintain the quality of their offspring. This is a manifestation of Ḥifẓ al-Nasl, namely, keeping descendants rooted in Islamic values amidst the challenges of the digital era.

Normatively, all of these roles of family spirituality are strongly justified within the framework of Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah. Strengthening family spirituality can be seen as a contemporary implementation of the sharia obligation to safeguard religion and descendants from the harm caused by the digital environment. Thus, Muslim family resilience is rooted in the strength of spirituality that is internalized and practiced collectively, not simply in technical strategies for managing social media.

This research also opens up room for further development. Future research is recommended to design a measurable family spirituality intervention model that can be used as a practical guideline for enhancing digital resilience. Such a model could include relevant spirituality indicators, evaluation mechanisms, and implementation strategies appropriate to the context of modern Muslim families. With a systematic intervention model, strengthening family spirituality will not only become a normative discourse but can also be implemented concretely in daily life.

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