

The Influence of Social Media on Marital Conflict: An Analytical Study Through the Lens of Maqasid Al-Shariah in Preserving Family Stability and Dignity

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ABSTRACT

Social media has become a pervasive element of contemporary life, profoundly influencing daily communication and interpersonal dynamics. Platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and TikTok facilitate connectivity and introduce complex challenges to family institutions, particularly marital relationships. This study investigates the impact of social media usage on marital conflict through the lens of Maqasid al-Shariah, focusing on the preservation of family harmony (sakinah), protection of dignity (hifz al-'ird), and safeguarding lineage (hifz al-nasl). Employing a qualitative content analysis of local scholarly literature, this research identifies key issues including social media addiction, jealousy arising from interactions with third parties, neglect of quality family time, and the public disclosure of private information. The findings reveal that unregulated social media engagement can disrupt effective communication, foster misunderstandings, and erode marital stability, thereby contravening the objectives of Islamic law designed to protect the family unit. The study underscores the imperative of cultivating awareness, self-regulation, and ethical digital conduct to uphold marital harmony in the digital age. These insights contribute to developing culturally sensitive strategies that harmonise modern technology use with Islamic principles for the sustainability of Muslim families.

Keywords: Marital Conflict, social media, Maqasid al-Shariah, Family Institution

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era has accelerated information dissemination and facilitated virtual social interaction. In Malaysia, internet and social media use have become a part of modern society's daily life. Platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, TikTok, and Instagram not only serve as communication tools but have also shaped a new culture of interaction and self-expression. According to the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (2023), over 89% of Malaysians use social media, making it one of the countries with the highest internet penetration rates in Southeast Asia. While social media offers various conveniences for information delivery and long-distance social connections, its unwise and uncontrolled use can affect relationships within the family institution. Households, as the basic unit of society, now face various new challenges resulting from the side effects of modern technology. Among the most significant effects are disruptions to communication between spouses and changes in interaction patterns that can lead to emotional tension and conflict.

Social media is now identified as a primary factor contributing to marital problems and conflicts, whether directly or indirectly. Local studies indicate that excessive social media use can strain relationships when partners prioritise smartphones and the virtual world over their spouses (National Population and Family Development Board [LPPKN], 2021). This creates a communication gap and feelings of neglect, contributing to disagreements. Additionally, partners' tendency to interact with third parties via social media, whether new or old acquaintances, can trigger jealousy and suspicion. Actions like hiding messages, blocking partners, or 'liking' specific individuals' photos may seem trivial, but can cause serious conflict (Hushim, 2025). Furthermore, social media algorithms that display seemingly "ideal" lives often lead individuals to compare their marriages, fostering stress, dissatisfaction, and low self-esteem (Shah Alam Times, 2025). More

concerning, some couples choose to express anger or disclose marital conflicts publicly on social media. While some aim for moral support, these actions can expose private matters, invite public condemnation, and escalate tensions (Majoriti, 2024; Sinar Harian, 2019). In the long term, social media damages privacy and weakens the foundation of marital harmony.

Therefore, social media should not be viewed merely as a neutral medium. Instead, it must be acknowledged as a catalyst that can contribute to the deterioration of family relationships and open doors to virtual affairs, potentially leading to emotional or physical betrayal in marriage if not used ethically and prudently. This phenomenon necessitates a deeper examination of household dynamics in the digital age. Thus, the objective of this study is as follows:

- ✓ To emphasise the concept of social media
- ✓ To explore how social media impacts marital conflict in Malaysian society
- ✓ To analyse the relationship between the use of social media and Maqasid Syariah

The Concept of Social Media

Social media is a digital communication technology enabling users to create, share, and interact with content in real-time. Kaplan (2010) defines social media as “a group of internet-based applications built on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content.” Widely used platforms include Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), WhatsApp, and Telegram. Social media primarily serves as a boundless two-way communication tool, fostering social connections, information exchange, community building, and open expression of views. Boyd (2007) notes that social media creates virtual spaces supporting identity formation, interaction, and social relationships. Education facilitates informal learning (Greenhow, 2016), while in politics and society, it acts as a tool for social mobilisation and public empowerment (Castells, 2012).

In Malaysia, social media is recognised for strengthening social networks and providing emotional support, especially during crises like pandemics (Naslund, 2016). A study by Shahfiqah (2022) at Universiti Malaysia Sabah found that social media has altered family interactions, particularly between teenagers and parents, leading to communication gaps at home when device focus surpasses face-to-face interaction. However, excessive social media use can lead to negative consequences, including mental health issues like depression, anxiety, and unhealthy social comparison (Keles, 2020). In family relationships, overuse also disrupts interpersonal dynamics. Coyne (2020) observed that social media dependence among couples can reduce marital satisfaction, diminish the quality of communication, and create trust problems. Alifah (2023) further highlights that social media can cause household tension, including emotional neglect, excessive suspicion, and conflict due to communication breakdowns. Moreover, interactions with third parties on social media can lead to emotional infidelity, ultimately threatening marital harmony. Chotpitayasunondh (2018) also supports the idea that social comparison on social media can induce dissatisfaction with one's partner.

From an Islamic perspective, unethical social media use raises various Sharia issues, such as the spread of disgrace (aib), slander (fitnah), and uncontrolled interaction between non-mahrams (Rosidi et al., 2022a). Razali et al. (2019) state that social media use inconsistent with Islamic etiquette principles can harm family relationships and erode brotherhood (ukhuwah) within the household. According to Sharia, this necessitates greater awareness of digital ethics as guidance for Muslim users. Furthermore, provocative short videos or displays of luxurious lifestyles on social media can cause social pressure and negatively affect individuals' perceptions of their partners (Zainal, 2025). Thus, while social media offers numerous conveniences and vast communication opportunities, its use must be balanced with self-control and an understanding of digital etiquette. Moral awareness, responsibility, and communication based on love and respect between partners must ensure social media is used positively and not becomes a source of marital conflict.

Forms Of Marital Conflict Due To Social Media

Generally, conflict is a disagreement or dispute between individuals or groups due to differing views, interests, or values (Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2005). In marriage, marital conflict arises from spousal disagreements on aspects like communication, division of tasks, financial management, or emotional connection. While disputes are common in married life, if left unresolved, they can escalate into severe issues such as emotional distress, domestic violence, neglect of responsibilities, and divorce (LPPKN, 2021).

The evolution of communication technology, particularly social media, has introduced new dimensions to marital dynamics. Digital platforms like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok, initially designed for social interaction, have, when overused or uncontrolled, led to various family problems.

From an Islamic perspective, the household is not merely a social unit but the foundational pillar of society and religious preservation. Therefore, maintaining family harmony is a crucial Sharia imperative. Marital tension or breakdown due to social media misuse not only harms the spousal relationship but can also undermine the core objectives of Maqasid Syariah, such as preserving progeny (*hifz al-nasl*), honour (*hifz al-'ird*), and intellect (*hifz al-'aql*) (Rosidi et al., 2022b). Persistent conflict can disrupt the family's role in emotional development, education, and religious values, thereby threatening the social structure of the Muslim community.

a) Jealousy Due to Unrestricted Interaction with Non-Mahram Individuals on Social Media

Jealousy due to unfettered social media interaction with non-Mahram people. In today's world, jealousy resulting from unfettered social media engagement with non-mahram people has become a more noticeable problem, especially regarding family life. Created to help people connect, social media has become a difficult place for married couples since it frequently crosses boundaries between users, whether on purpose or accidentally. Some spouses view the interactions on these platforms, private messages, comments, "likes," and sharing images or videos as dangers to the trust and loyalty underpinning a marriage.

Based on Clayton et al.'s (2013) study, using Facebook excessively raises the possibility of marital discord and divorce. This is because someone is more likely to be exposed to events or temptations that could raise their partner's suspicions the more they engage on social media. When the spouse feels the interaction is going too far, it can cause significant conflict and lead to misunderstandings. These interactions with non-mahram people may begin as simple information sharing or viewpoint exchanges. According to the study, the problem is not just the substance of communications but also the amount of time and focus prioritised over one's spouse.

Krasnova et al. (2013) demonstrated how social media fosters social comparison, which subtly plants the seeds of jealousy. A person may quickly feel unworthy or abandoned if they witness their spouse engaging with a non-mahram person in public on social media, whether through remarks, compliments, or encouragement. This is consistent with the social comparison theory, which holds that when one sees what other people have or the attention their partner provides to others, they start to feel less valuable.

Fox and Warber (2017) also emphasised how the propensity to keep tabs on a partner's social media activity might worsen matters. Every small move taken by the spouse on social media could be interpreted as proof of misconduct when someone looks for evidence of infidelity or inappropriate interactions. As a result, there is more emotional turmoil, and the partnership becomes less secure. Couples are frequently drawn into a vicious loop by such circumstances: the more envy there is, the more they want to monitor; the more monitoring there is, the more conflict results.

Beyond these investigations, social psychology and communication theory can potentially be connected to this reality. Social media communication frequently lacks body language, facial emotions, and tone of voice. This makes it simple to misunderstand communications, particularly when a non-mahram third party is involved. The husband could interpret a joke or informal greeting as an indication of intimacy or a propensity for adultery. This is where envy thrives, and if it is not dealt with, it can erode the basis of trust in a marriage.

This different research shows that social media is more than just an impartial medium for communication. It is a complicated contact area that may present many emotional risks to marriages. Social media can lead to unhealthy jealousy, undermine trust, and disturb family harmony if used responsibly and mindfully. Therefore, to avoid misunderstandings and maintain the harmony of family life, couples must establish clear boundaries for their relationships with non-mahram people on social media and encourage open face-to-face communication.

b) Social Media Addiction and Its Impact on Family Harmony

Addiction to social media is not just a waste of time; it is becoming more widely acknowledged as one of the primary causes undermining the institution of the family in contemporary culture. A person's emotional priorities and mental focus, which should be allocated to the family, are impacted when they become overly engrossed in the virtual world. As a result, relationships between spouses, parents and kids, and other family members suffer, and conflicts surface.

As Vanden Abeele et al. (2018) indicated, families' daily routines might be upset, and excessive social media use might impact the quality time spent together. In this situation, parents or spouses who are absorbed in social media frequently overlook their fundamental duties, such as paying attention to their partner's worries, spending time with their kids, or caring for the house. The connection becomes chilly, and the partner or kids feel neglected and undervalued, which causes stress.

This result is consistent with research by Turkle (2011), which demonstrates that social media addiction impairs interpersonal communication quality and lowers the amount of time spent with family. Feelings of loneliness, a lack of empathy, and a decreased sensitivity to family members' emotions start to develop when someone prefers to communicate online rather than in person. When digital interactions, which are sometimes superficial or devoid of proper attention, replace face-to-face contact, this issue gets worse.

The Idea of "phubbing," first presented in the paper by Przybylski and Weinstein (2017), is also connected to this problem. Phubbing, which is the practice of neglecting a partner or family member in front of you in favour of using a phone or social media, hurts family members and makes them feel neglected and undervalued. Because digital distractions increasingly impede conversation, which should be a bridge to intimacy, this behaviour harms emotional ties within the household.

Besides, Valenzuela et al. (2009) linked increased Facebook use to sentiments of jealousy and marital conflict in the Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication. This supports research by Chou and Edge (2012), who described how social comparison on social media might result in discontent with one's life or spouse. People start comparing and feeling that their relationship is inadequate when they see pictures or posts of other couples that seem romantic and ideal. This can lead to discontent and conflict.

In the end, social comparison, jealousy, poor communication, and responsibility neglect all combine to produce a conflict cycle that further erodes marital bonds. According to McDaniel and Coyne (2016), it may become an obstacle to intimacy if not handled carefully. Instead of fostering closer family ties, technology now obstructs genuine connection, leading to arguments, miscommunications, and ultimately, family dissolution. These studies demonstrate that social media addiction not only has an impact on individuals but also poses a significant risk to the peace of the home. In order to maintain healthy and happy family relationships, social media use must be managed more deliberately and morally, in addition to initiatives to improve in-person contact within the family.

c) Miscommunication on Social Media as a Cause of Marital Conflict

In the current digital era, miscommunication on social media has emerged as one of the primary reasons for marital discord. Initially created to help with communication, social media has become a challenging environment where messages are frequently misunderstood. This is due to the inherent constraints of social media communication, which include the absence of body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice, making communication more susceptible to misunderstanding. This danger is increased when the

communications deal with delicate subjects or entail dealings with outside parties, such as non-mahram people, as misunderstandings may result in more severe disputes.

According to a 2013 study by Clayton et al., excessive Facebook use can exacerbate marital discord and even result in divorce. This occurs when a partner's social media contacts raise red flags, particularly when those interactions or messages lack context or explicit explanations. This demonstrates how the lack of non-verbal clues in digital communication frequently causes it to miss the mark, leaving couples vulnerable to forming unfavourable presumptions or misinterpreting their partner's behaviour.

Moreover, Valenzuela et al. (2014) stressed that too much exposure to pictures of other couples on social media that seem romantic or ideal can cause jealousy and lower marital satisfaction. Such behaviours frequently result in harmful societal comparisons, making one doubt their partner's sincerity or love. When someone misinterprets their partner's actions, like liking a photo or leaving a comment on someone else's post, as indications of intimacy or interest, they may cause misunderstandings.

Communication in marriage is further complicated by the behaviour of phubbing, or phone snubbing, as described by McDaniel and Coyne (2016). Phubbing focuses more on social media or phone than on one's physically present companion. In addition to making the spouse feel abandoned, this compromises in-person communication, which ought to be the cornerstone of marital intimacy. When in-person communication is neglected, spouses may begin to assume things about one another's intentions and behaviour, which increases the likelihood of miscommunication.

These findings show that although social media is primarily meant to help people connect, when it is used carelessly and without limitations, it can seriously jeopardise marital peace. Because social media communication is indirect and lacks non-verbal clues, messages are more likely to be misunderstood, particularly when combined with excessive information exposure or a partner's social connections. This fosters an environment of distrust, jealousy, insecurity, and eventually conflict that may jeopardise the marriage's continued existence. Therefore, to prevent misconceptions that can cause marital conflict, it is imperative that couples improve their in-person communication, establish clear guidelines for social media use, and foster mutual trust.

Social media's application of Maqasid al-Syariah in marital disputes

a. Protection of Religion (Hifz al-Din)

The principle of *ḥifz al-dīn* (protection of religion) emphasises safeguarding religious beliefs, practices, and values from distortion, deviation, or misguidance. In social media, this principle calls for content sharing that aligns with Islamic teachings and avoids speech that may mislead or harm others spiritually. Rosidi et al. (2022b) stress that Muslims are urged to use social media to promote content that brings individuals closer to God. Shompa (2019) warns against discussing religious issues online without proper knowledge, which can mislead the public and lead to sin. Farida (2022) adds that online platforms should promote religious tolerance and not be used as tools for hate speech or misinterpretation of sacred teachings.

Regarding marital disputes, *ḥifz al-dīn* is deeply connected to preserving Islamic ethics within the family institution (Rosidi et al., 2025). Misuse of social media has resulted in many couples being exposed to misguided religious advice on marriage and divorce (*ṭalāq*). For example, some may issue or discuss divorce through messaging apps without understanding the proper conditions or consequences under Shariah, leading to invalid or sinful acts (Mahmud, 2020). Publicly airing marital problems to seek online sympathy may also result in backbiting (*ghibah*) or slander (*fitnah*), which are strictly forbidden in Islam and detrimental to the dignity of the spouses involved.

Moreover, online content that mocks or challenges religious rulings on polygamy, obedience (*ṭā'ah*), or gender roles can weaken one's religious commitment and disrupt the harmony of Muslim marriages. Exposure to such content risks shaping a worldview that is distant from Islamic ethics, leading to conflict, mistrust, and ultimately the breakdown of the family unit (Ismail & Khalid, 2021).

Thus, protecting religion through media literacy becomes crucial in a digital world saturated with beneficial and harmful information. The family, the foundation of society, requires guidance rooted in authentic religious knowledge. Couples must be educated to distinguish between credible religious authorities and unqualified influencers, ensuring that any religious discourse related to marriage is grounded in sound scholarship (Yusof & Ahmad, 2023).

In short, applying *hifz al-dīn* in social media use is not limited to personal piety but extends to protecting the sanctity of marriage. Upholding this objective ensures that religious values remain intact within marital relationships and that social media is a tool for healing and educating, rather than dividing and misleading.

b. Protection of Life/Soul (Hifz al-Nafs)

The Islamic principle of *hifz al-nafs*, which refers to safeguarding life and the soul, extends beyond the mere protection of physical existence to encompass psychological, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Within marriage, this principle manifests through establishing a lawful and morally sound union that guarantees the fulfilment of essential human needs such as love, security, and companionship through legitimate means (Rosidi, 2022b; Yusoff, 2021). Islam prohibits any form of self-harm or the unjust taking of life, emphasising the importance of inner peace and emotional stability. While social media can positively contribute to preserving life, such as by aiding law enforcement or alerting communities to danger, its misuse introduces severe risks to personal safety and mental health, disrupting marital harmony.

One of the gravest concerns arising from digital platforms is cyber extortion, which has led to cases of severe psychological distress, depression, and even suicide. Victims, particularly women, may face threats involving the release of private images or information, creating unbearable emotional pressure within a marital relationship. Additionally, the widespread availability of pornography contributes to distorted sexual expectations and emotional disconnection between behaviours. Such behaviours constitute a form of spiritual and emotional infidelity that corrodes trust and intimacy, two foundational elements of a stable marriage. Islamic ethics uphold that emotional equilibrium is vital to marital peace, and seeking psychological or spiritual intervention in response to mental health issues is not only permissible but commendable (Ihsancoaching, 2024). Tazkiyah (2024) reinforces this view by arguing that pornography consumption violates the sanctity of modesty and undermines the exclusivity expected in marital relationships.

Considering these challenges, the classical understanding of *hifz al-nafs* must be reinterpreted to address the realities of digital life, where psychological and spiritual harms can be as damaging as physical threats. Online exposure to exploitative content or emotional manipulation constitutes a “digital assault” that can severely affect one’s mental stability, leading to breakdowns in communication, emotional withdrawal, and marital conflict. To protect the sanctity of marriage in the modern age, a holistic approach is required to combine digital literacy, mental health support, and faith-based counselling. Through such comprehensive efforts, the spirit of *hifz al-nafs* can be preserved within contemporary marital life.

c. Protection of Intellect (Hifz al-Aql)

This concept protects the human intellect by encouraging critical thinking and rational cognition and prohibiting anything impairs cognitive function. Since any disruption to intellectual capacity can significantly negatively impact society, maintaining intellect entails safeguarding the human mind from harm (Rosidi, 2022b). When misused, social media can lead to addiction, less face-to-face communication, and ethical and legal problems because of content that breaches privacy or morals (Farida, 2022). It can “intoxicate society with unreality and deception” and promote a “herd mentality” (Ahmed, 2025). Online disinformation can spread quickly and hurt public perception, which emphasises how important it is to double-check information before sharing it (Team, 2024). In a different context, child marriage has been found to violate the principle of *hifz al-aql* by disrupting education, which in turn hinders intellectual growth (Saiman, 2024). To promote self-awareness and mental clarity, Islamic therapy, on the other hand, strongly emphasises introspection and the critical assessment of ideas (Ihsancoaching, 2024).

The findings demonstrate how social media can lead to "cognitive pollution" by promoting a "herd mentality," disseminating false information, and possibly impairing critical thinking skills. By compromising logical decision-making, a skill essential for successfully settling marital disputes, this directly undercuts hifz al-aql. It can worsen misunderstandings and obstruct productive communication in a marriage when online narratives influence people, make it difficult to distinguish fact from fiction, or make them prone to impetuous sharing.

The concept of Hifz al-Aql emphasises the protection of the human intellect by encouraging critical thinking and rational cognition and prohibiting anything that impairs cognitive function. This highlights how intellectual disability can seriously hinder a couple's capacity for logical conversation, wise decision-making, and effective communication, which exacerbates arguments rather than settles them in the context of marital conflict.

d. Protection of Progeny (Hifz al-Nasl)

The main goals of this mission are the preservation of ancestry, the family, and the general welfare of children. Marital disputes, often rooted in serious marital problems such as emotional disconnection, lack of trust, or persistent conflict, can severely impact family stability. When these issues lead to divorce, children may suffer from emotional problems, anxiety, and a decline in academic performance (Muzaqi, 2024). In custody disputes, Islamic law prioritises the well-being of the child and usually grants custody to the mother unless she is deemed unfit (Arifia, 2025). Mediation efforts during divorce proceedings reflect the hifz al-nasl principle, which aims to protect children from the adverse effects of family breakdown (Azizah, 2021). The Prophet Muhammad promoted reconciliation and moderation in dealing with divorce, regarding it as a final option to avoid greater harm, especially to children (Hakim, 2025). Even after divorce, both parents are still responsible for raising and educating their children (Arifia, 2025).

Unresolved marital conflict, mainly when influenced by social media, reveals deeper problems in the marriage, such as poor communication or digital intrusion. Online conflict can damage a child's emotional and social development, particularly when arguments are made public or used as evidence in legal proceedings. These patterns affect the parents' relationship and risk harming the child's long-term well-being. Parents must manage online interactions wisely to prevent exposing their children to ongoing conflict. This underscores the urgent need for legal and counselling systems to support healthy digital co-parenting and protect children from the psychological impact of marital breakdown displayed online.

e. Protection of Property (Hifz al-Mal)

This idea is part of protecting money, fostering financial stability, and abstaining from excess or illegal gains. Conflicts and financial limitations are commonly mentioned as the leading causes of marital stress (Ihsancoaching, 2025). In divorce situations, social media posts can be utilised to refute allegations of financial difficulty or provide substantial proof of careless spending patterns (Anderson, 2024). Given that contemporary social trends frequently push people towards debt and extravagance while ignoring Sharia laws that prioritise financial caution, safeguarding money (hifz al-mal) is fundamental when handling wedding expenses (Husin, 2024). As a safeguard against issues like divorce and financial disputes, financial literacy is considered essential for efficient family financial management (Diniyya, 2020). Wealth is regarded in Islam as a trust from Allah that should be acquired through legal channels and prudently handled for the good of the individual, their family, and the community at large (Hussain, 2025).

A new aspect of hifz al-mal is revealed by social media's role in financial conflicts and the stress associated with wedding expenses. Online platforms unintentionally increase financial transparency to a level never seen before, which can be used as proof of wrongdoing or irregularities in divorce proceedings. On the other hand, couples may experience financial difficulties due to their wasteful spending and the "keeping up with the Joneses" effect, which is greatly exacerbated by social media and directly contradicts the idea of wealth preservation.

Protecting Money (Hifz al-Mal) is deeply relevant to marital conflict, as financial issues are frequently cited as a primary source of stress in marriages. This advocates the improper handling of finances, often influenced and

exposed by social media, directly undermines the Islamic principle of Hifz al-Mal and directly links to a heightened risk of marital conflict.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing from the reviewed literature, the following recommendations are proposed to mitigate marital conflicts associated with social media usage, in alignment with the objectives of Maqasid al-Shariah, particularly the preservation of family harmony (sakinah) and protection of dignity (hifz al-‘ird):

Implement Digital Boundaries for Quality Spousal Interaction: Couples should establish designated ‘tech-free’ periods, especially during shared time, to foster genuine communication and emotional connection. This approach echoes McDaniel’s (2016) findings on how technological distractions diminish interpersonal engagement, potentially causing emotional neglect. Couples uphold the Maqasid goal of preserving family tranquillity by consciously managing digital use.

Foster Mutual Trust and Transparency: Spouses must maintain openness regarding their social media interactions to prevent jealousy and suspicion, which are major catalysts for conflict (Muisse, 2009; Tokunaga, 2011). Incorporating targeted counselling and awareness programs on responsible social media behaviour can support this objective, reinforcing the Maqasid principle of safeguarding personal dignity and respect within marriage.

Address the Psychological Impact of Social Comparison: Educational initiatives should highlight the curated nature of social media content to reduce harmful self-comparison and resultant relationship dissatisfaction (Vogel, 2014; Chou, 2012). Promoting realistic perceptions aligns with the maqasid aim of protecting spouses’ intellect (‘aql) and emotional well-being.

Enhance Community and Governmental Support: Authorities and social organisations should develop workshops and counselling services to manage social media addiction and its repercussions on family life (Andreassen, 2016). Such interventions contribute to the maqasid objective of preserving life (hifz al-nafs) by promoting mental health and social stability.

Together, these measures can cultivate a balanced integration of digital technology within marital life, ensuring that modern communication tools strengthen rather than undermine the sacred institution of marriage.

CONCLUSION

In today’s digitally connected world, social media wields immense influence over marital relationships, sometimes strengthening bonds but often fueling conflicts. This study underscores actionable strategies rooted in both contemporary research and the timeless objectives of Maqasid al-Shariah, which emphasise the protection of family harmony (sakinah), dignity (hifz al-‘ird), and sound intellect (‘aql).

Foremost, couples must consciously carve out dedicated “technology-free” moments during meals, conversations, or family time to nurture genuine, uninterrupted connection. This mindful practice, supported by McDaniel’s (2016) insights, counters the pervasive distractions that can quietly erode intimacy and foster feelings of emotional neglect.

Equally important is cultivating an environment of radical transparency and trust concerning social media use. As Muise (2009) and Tokunaga (2011) highlight, unchecked suspicion or covert monitoring can ignite jealousy and misunderstanding. Proactively engaging in counselling or educational programs empowers couples to set healthy digital boundaries, reinforcing respect and safeguarding marital trust.

Furthermore, the seductive allure of social media’s “highlight reels” often tempts couples into destructive comparison, undermining relationship satisfaction (Vogel, 2014; Chou, 2012). Broadening awareness about the curated nature of online lives equips spouses with realistic perspectives, helping them resist envy and foster gratitude for their unique journey together.

Finally, acknowledging the real risk of social media addiction, government and community initiatives must offer accessible support and counselling. Andreassen's (2016) research reveals the profound toll excessive online engagement takes on family dynamics. Thoughtful interventions can restore balance, reduce stress, and ultimately protect the sanctity of the marital bond.

By embracing these holistic approaches, we address modern technology's challenges and uphold Islamic law's higher objectives, preserving Muslim families' well-being, dignity, and unity in a rapidly evolving digital era.

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