



Digital civility: A study on Muhammadiyah's information fiqh

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ABSTRACT

Background: The digital era has profoundly transformed the way people communicate and process information. However, this advancement has also brought serious challenges, including the erosion of digital civility through hoaxes, hate speech, and ethical degradation in communication. This article aims to examine the relevance of Muhammadiyah's *fiqh al-ma'lumat* (information jurisprudence) as an Islamic ethical framework that responds to the dynamics of contemporary media. **Methods:** Using a qualitative approach through library research, this study analyzes official Muhammadiyah documents, scholarly works, and supporting literature. **Findings:** The findings indicate that Muhammadiyah's information *fiqh* embodies core ethical principles such as *tabayyun* (verification), *tatsabbut* (caution), *ta'awun* (collaboration), and *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* (promoting good and preventing evil), all of which are highly contextual and applicable in today's digital discourse. Moreover, this *fiqh* reflects thematic *ijtihad* that is not only normative, but also educative and transformative. Therefore, Muhammadiyah's approach plays a strategic role in cultivating a digitally literate Muslim society rooted in ethics, accountability, and religious values. **Conclusion:** The study concludes that Muhammadiyah's information *fiqh* provides a comprehensive and contextually relevant Islamic ethical framework that strengthens digital civility by guiding Muslims to navigate misinformation, unethical communication, and spiritual challenges in the digital era through principles of verification, caution, cooperation, and moral responsibility. **Novelty/Originality of this article:** This article lies in its articulation of Muhammadiyah's *fiqh al-ma'lumat* as a distinctive Islamic ethical-communication framework that not only addresses contemporary challenges of digital discourse—such as misinformation and ethical erosion—but also aligns with the journal's scope by offering an original integration of religious rhetoric, digital media practices, and transformative religious communication for shaping digitally responsible Muslim communities.

KEYWORDS: digital civility; digital literacy; information *fiqh*; islamic communication ethics; Muhammadiyah.

1. Introduction

The development of digital technology has drastically transformed the landscape of human civilization. Cyberspace is no longer merely an alternative sphere of interaction; it has evolved into a second living environment that shapes individuals' ways of thinking, behaving, and engaging with others. However, alongside the rapid flow of information, new phenomena have emerged that disrupt societal ethical norms, ranging from the spread of hoaxes and hate speech to cyberbullying and the erosion of decorum in public communication (Agustin & Najicha, 2024).

This condition indicates that technological advancement does not necessarily correspond with moral progress. Many internet users—including Muslims—remain

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trapped in destructive patterns of digital interaction, neglecting ethical values and social responsibility. Social media, instead of serving as a space for fostering relationships, often becomes an arena for identity-based conflicts, verbal attacks, and even incitement (Al-Ayyubi, 2019). This underscores the urgency of cultivating digital civility, namely the ability to use digital media wisely, ethically, and responsibly, which has become an indispensable issue.

Various efforts have been made to promote digital literacy and media ethics, including within educational and family settings (Indriani & Yemmardotillah, 2021). However, secular approaches have been insufficient in addressing the spiritual and religious dimensions of Indonesian society, which is predominantly Muslim. Therefore, the role of religious institutions such as Muhammadiyah becomes essential in offering an ethical framework grounded in Islamic values while remaining contextual to contemporary dynamics. As one of the largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah has responded to these challenges through the concept of information *fiqh* (information jurisprudence)—a legal and ethical framework addressing the treatment of information in the digital age. This *fiqh* not only incorporates classical jurisprudential principles but also explores the social and moral dimensions of media usage. Principles such as *tabayyun* (verification), *ta'awun* (cooperation), and *tatsabbut* (carefulness) serve as the foundational pillars for shaping a civilized Muslim character in the digital sphere (Fathurrijal & Saudi, 2023).

Information *fiqh* is not merely a compilation of legal propositions; it is a progressive response to the challenges of contemporary times. It represents Muhammadiyah's social *ijtihad* oriented toward public benefit and community empowerment in navigating the era of disruption. This effort demonstrates that *fiqh* is not static but dynamic, evolving in accordance with the needs of the era and ongoing social change (Hastuti et al., 2023).

On the other hand, academic studies on Muhammadiyah's information *fiqh* remain relatively limited, particularly in relation to the concept of digital civility. Existing research tends to be descriptive and has not yet explored in depth the relationship between information *fiqh* and the development of ethical and spiritually grounded digital citizenship (Hasrullah, 2024). In fact, Muhammadiyah's religious approach can serve as a crucial pillar in building a civilized digital social order rooted in moral values.

Amid the shifting dynamics of the digital ecosystem and the growing urgency of media ethics, the Muhammadiyah Central Board's Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid formally ratified the information *fiqh* in the *Berita Resmi Muhammadiyah* (BRM) Number 05/2022–2027 in May 2025. This structural legitimization reinforces the status of information *fiqh* as both a normative and educational guideline—one that exists not only within academic discourse but also possesses practical authority within Muhammadiyah's socio-religious framework. This decision affirms that information *fiqh* is not a temporary product of *ijtihad*, but part of Muhammadiyah's broader *tajdid* strategy to cultivate a digital society that is civilized, critical, and spiritually responsible (Sayuti, 2025).

This affirmation also reflects Muhammadiyah's institutional awareness of the increasingly complex crisis of digital civility. With the official ratification of information *fiqh*, Muslims—particularly Muhammadiyah members—now have an authoritative reference for responding to various digital phenomena such as disinformation, hate speech, unverified viral culture, and the moral banality prevalent on social media. In this context, information *fiqh* functions not only as a legal instrument but also as an ethico-cultural guide grounded in Qur'anic values and the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* in addressing contemporary communication challenges. Its relevance is thus reinforced as both a digital da'wah instrument and a cultural strategy for shaping an enlightened and transformative Muslim society in the post-truth era.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the challenges of digital civility faced by Indonesian Muslims in the era of information disruption; to examine the principles of Muhammadiyah's information *fiqh* as a normative and ethical framework for fostering responsible media behavior; and to evaluate the relevance and innovative contributions of

Muhammadiyah's thought in offering religious solutions that are adaptive to the dynamics of contemporary digital communication.

1.1 *The concept of digital civility*

Digital civility refers to a set of ethical values and behaviors expected to emerge in digital interactions, whether in interpersonal communication or in information dissemination activities. This concept has become increasingly relevant amid the widespread use of social media and the rising incidence of technology misuse for destructive purposes such as hate speech, hoaxes, and cyberbullying (Gultom et al., 2024). In this context, digital civility is not limited to politeness in online communication; it also encompasses moral awareness, social responsibility, and respect for human values in the use of technology.

According to Agustin, digital civility includes mutual respect, the use of non-provocative language, and refraining from intentionally sharing content that harms others (Agustin & Najicha, 2024). This aligns with Khairunisa's view that digital civility is grounded in civic ethics, which require digital users to be aware of their rights and obligations as members of an online community (Khairunisa et al., 2024). In practice, digital civility involves the willingness to think critically before sharing information, maintaining ethical communication in public discussions, and fostering a healthy environment within virtual spaces.

The dimensions of digital civility can generally be classified into four main domains: (1) communication ethics, which include the use of polite, empathetic, and non-offensive language; (2) media responsibility, which encompasses the ability to filter and disseminate information wisely and based on proper verification; (3) digital privacy, which requires awareness of the limits of sharing personal data and respecting the privacy of others; and (4) digital security, which refers to efforts to protect oneself and the community from cyber threats such as hacking, fraud, and the spread of malware (Surbakti et al., 2021).

The implementation of digital civility is also closely linked to adequate media and digital literacy. Without the ability to critically access, analyze, and evaluate information, individuals are more likely to become victims or perpetrators of disinformation and digital manipulation. Therefore, cultivating digital civility requires a multidimensional approach—not only from technological and educational perspectives but also through cultural and spiritual approaches that address the deeper moral aspects of media users (Kenedi & Hartati, 2022).

1.2 *Information jurisprudence of Muhammadiyah*

Muhammadiyah's information *fiqh* (information jurisprudence) represents a theological and social response to the complex flow of information in the digital era, which is characterized by widespread disinformation, slander, and hate speech. Emerging from concerns over the social damage caused by the misuse of digital media, the Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid of the Muhammadiyah Central Board formulated a new *fiqh* concept centered on media ethics—namely, how Muslims should treat, convey, and disseminate information with moral and spiritual responsibility. This *fiqh* was first introduced as a form of Muhammadiyah's collective *ijtihad* to address contemporary issues that are largely absent in classical jurisprudence (Fauzi, 2019).

In its official document, Muhammadiyah's information *fiqh* outlines several key principles that serve as ethical foundations for interacting with information. First, *tabayyun*, which refers to clarifying and validating any news or information before believing in or disseminating it, as commanded in QS. al-Hujurāt: 6. Second, *tatsabbut*, which emphasizes the importance of verification and careful consideration in accepting information, especially when it originates from sources with questionable credibility. Third, *ta'awun*, the principle

of mutual cooperation in spreading beneficial information while avoiding content that fosters division. Fourth, *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, which functions as the moral orientation of media engagement—promoting good and preventing wrongdoing through digital platforms. In addition, this *fiqh* explicitly prohibits the dissemination of information that constitutes slander (*fitnah*), backbiting (*ghibah*), or any content that damages another party's reputation without valid evidence (Wahdini et al., 2023).

The primary objective of Muhammadiyah's information *fiqh* is to build a digitally civilized society—one that is not only intelligent in accessing and processing information but also spiritually aware in safeguarding its digital speech and expression. From a da'wah perspective, this *fiqh* serves as an essential instrument for preserving the dignity of Islam from distortive information that harms the Muslim community and undermines social cohesion (*ukhuwah*). The existence of information *fiqh* also demonstrates the flexibility of Muhammadiyah's *ijtihad*, which is oriented not only toward textual interpretations but also toward contextual considerations and the broader public good (Maftuhin & Muflihati, 2022).

By formulating information *fiqh*, Muhammadiyah affirms that engaging with information is not merely a technical activity but a moral act that must be governed by Islamic ethical values. In this sense, information *fiqh* functions as a bridge between religious texts and the digital reality, guiding Muslims to become not only information literate but also ethically literate in their information practices.

Furthermore, after an extensive process, information *fiqh* was officially ratified by the Muhammadiyah Central Board through the *Berita Resmi Muhammadiyah* (BRM) Number 05/2022–2027 (Zulkaidah 1446 H/May 2025). This ratification is not merely an administrative acknowledgment; it also reinforces the urgency of information *fiqh* as an ethical guideline that is structural, normative, and solution-oriented for the Muslim community in responding to the increasingly complex challenges of digital communication. In the context of digital civility, this formal endorsement strengthens the position of information *fiqh* as an instrument of da'wah and social transformation—one that addresses not only what is lawful and unlawful in media engagement but also integrates Islamic spiritual values with the realities of modern information technology (Sayuti, 2025).

Through this ratification, Muhammadiyah affirms its commitment not to remain a passive observer of digital developments but to act as a pioneer in providing ethical guidance grounded in the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. This affirmation underscores that digital civility is not merely a technical or secular matter but a religious responsibility requiring legal and ethical frameworks derived from divine revelation. With its official status, information *fiqh* is no longer optional; it becomes an authoritative reference for shaping the media behavior of Muhammadiyah members in ways that reflect noble character (*akhlak karimah*), critical reasoning, and social responsibility. Thus, this *fiqh* functions as a bridge between religious texts and the disruptive digital world, while upholding values of propriety (*adab*) and public benefit (*maslahat*) in contemporary communication.

1.3 Theory of islamic communication ethics

Communication ethics in Islam are not merely normative rules but a reflection of an integrated value system that connects *aqidah*, *akhlak*, and *shari'ah*. The communication principles taught in Islam are intended not only to ensure that messages are conveyed accurately, but also to uphold the dignity of social interactions, prevent harm, and reinforce public benefit (*maslahat*). In the digital context, these principles are highly relevant for shaping communication patterns that are civilized, responsible, and reflective of the values of monotheism (*tawhid*).

The primary foundations of communication ethics in Islam are derived from the Qur'an and Hadith. In Surah al-Hujurāt verse 6, Allah commands believers to practice *tabayyun*—verifying information received, especially from those lacking credibility—in order to avoid

errors that may lead to harmful consequences for individuals and society. This verse provides a strong basis for cultivating prudence and information verification, serving as a direct critique of the “share first, think later” culture that is prevalent in today’s social media environment (Al-Ayyubi, 2019). Meanwhile, the Prophet Muhammad SAW stated, “*It is sufficient for a person to be considered sinful that he narrates everything he hears*” (HR. Muslim), underscoring the importance of filtering information before spreading it.

Islamic communication ethics also encompass prohibitions against *ghibah* (backbiting), *namimah* (slandorous rumor-mongering), *iftira’* (false accusation), and *tajassus* (intruding into others’ faults). Although these behaviors may occur in everyday interactions, they become significantly more destructive when committed in the digital realm, where content can spread rapidly and reach vast audiences (Saggaf et al., 2021). Therefore, Islamic communication ethics serve not only as moral boundaries but also as social safeguards to preserve dignity and harmony among Muslims—both in offline and online interactions.

More than a set of technical rules, Islamic communication ethics are transformational in nature; they aim to shape the character of Muslims who remain spiritually responsible for every word and action. Communication is not a neutral act but carries profound moral consequences in Islamic teachings. For this reason, values such as *qaulan sadīdan* (truthful speech), *qaulan balighan* (clear and impactful speech), and *qaulan layyinan* (gentle speech), as exemplified in the Qur’an, serve as essential guidelines for cultivating dignified dialogue (Surbakti et al., 2021).

In the digital environment, these principles become even more relevant. Social media allows anyone to become an information producer, yet not all information is created with ethical accountability. Here, Islamic values offer a crucial framework to ensure that digital communication remains rooted in *adab* and *akhlak*. According to Dalmeri, the application of Islamic communication ethics can strengthen character education and digital civility from an early age, especially within educational institutions and Muslim public spheres (Dalmeri et al., 2025). Values such as honesty, justice, courtesy, and social concern must be instilled not only in face-to-face interactions but also in comments, posts, and the distribution of digital content.

In this regard, Muhammadiyah, through its information *fiqh*, internalizes Islamic communication ethics into formulations that are both applicable and contextually relevant. These *fiqh* principles represent the embodiment of Qur’anic communication values contextualized within the realities of the digital age (Hasrullah, 2024). Thus, Islamic communication ethics are not merely normative inheritances of the past but constitute a foundational framework for building a digitally literate yet spiritually civilized Muslim society.

2. Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach using a library research design. The research focuses on examining Muhammadiyah’s jurisprudential documents, particularly those related to information *fiqh*. In addition, the study analyzes scholarly literature concerning digital communication ethics from an Islamic perspective. The literature also includes discussions of information civility and ethical conduct in digital environments. These sources are examined to identify relevant Islamic principles concerning responsible digital communication. The qualitative approach is considered appropriate for exploring the meanings and values contained within the selected texts. This approach allows the researchers to examine the normative dimensions of digital conduct through an Islamic jurisprudential framework. The study relies primarily on textual and documentary sources as the basis for analysis.

This method is selected because the issues under investigation are conceptual and normative in nature. The data sources are divided into two categories, namely primary and

secondary sources. The primary sources consist of official documents related to Muhammadiyah's information *fiqh*. They also include decisions issued by the Muhammadiyah Congress (*Muktamar*) that are relevant to media ethics. In addition, decisions from the National Tarjih Assembly concerning ethical issues in media are examined. Other official fatwas and religious guidelines issued by Muhammadiyah are also considered as primary sources. These documents are analyzed to identify Islamic principles related to ethical conduct in digital media communication. Meanwhile, the secondary sources include scientific journals, books, articles, and other relevant academic publications. These sources address various issues related to digital civility and Islamic communication. They also discuss Muhammadiyah's socio-religious responses to the challenges emerging in the digital era. The combination of primary and secondary sources provides a comprehensive basis for analyzing digital civility from the perspective of Islamic jurisprudence and Muhammadiyah's religious thought. This technique aims to systematically identify, classify, and interpret the ethical values of digital conduct embedded in the *fiqh* documents. The analysis also seeks to relate these values to theoretical discourses on digital civility, thereby providing a deeper understanding of how *fiqh* principles can inform ethical conduct in digital environments

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 *The challenge of civility in the digital age*

The development of information technology has generated a new reality within human social life, including among Muslim communities. The digital world offers ease of access to information, expanded spaces for expression, and unprecedented global connectivity. However, beneath these benefits lies a significant challenge in the form of a digital civility crisis namely, the decline of courtesy, communication ethics, and social responsibility in media practices, particularly on social media platforms (Mabrur & Hairul, 2022).

This phenomenon can be observed in the widespread circulation of hoaxes, hate speech, cyberbullying, political provocation, and social fragmentation rooted in religious identity. Social media, initially designed as a space for interaction, has frequently transformed into a site of conflict. Gultom notes that cyberbullying and the dissemination of hate speech are the most visible manifestations of the erosion of Pancasila values and civility in digital spaces (Gultom et al., 2024). Similarly, Agustin states that many Indonesian internet users still lack a deep understanding of the importance of maintaining information integrity and ethical conduct in online environments (Agustim & Najicha, 2024).

In the context of Indonesian Muslim society, these challenges become even more complex. On one hand, Muslims face an extremely rapid and massive flow of information; on the other hand, not all possess sufficient digital literacy and ethical competence to filter such information. According to Nurasih, many millennial Muslims fail to realize that seemingly simple actions such as forwarding messages in WhatsApp groups or resharing unverified posts can constitute deviations from Islamic principles of civility (Nurasih et al., 2020). The absence of *adab* in online communication ultimately blurs the boundaries between expression and exploitation, and between freedom of speech and moral transgression.

The urgency of cultivating digital civility within Muslim communities is not only essential for preserving social harmony but also constitutes a fundamental religious responsibility. Islamic ethics require believers to safeguard their speech and writing, including in digital form. From an Islamic standpoint, every utterance, whether spoken, written, or expressed through digital posts and comments, is an entrusted act for which one will be held accountable before Allah The Most Glorified, The Most High. As emphasized by Al-Ayyubi, disseminating false information or harming others through social media

represents a clear violation of prophetic values and Islamic moral conduct (Al-Ayyubi, 2019).

Unfortunately, many Muslim social media users are more influenced by the logic of virality than by the value of truth. Emotional impulses and group validation often outweigh the principles of *tabayyun* and caution in sharing information. In this regard, Supriatna argues that the weak integration between media literacy and Islamic ethics is the primary reason behind the lack of critical awareness and spiritual responsibility in digital engagement (Supriatna & Jenuri, 2023). Therefore, promoting digital civility must become a collective movement grounded not only in technological education but also in strengthening religious values, particularly through the frameworks of *fiqh* and digital da'wah.

On a broader scale, the challenge of digital civility reflects the failure of social institutions such as educational systems, families, and religious organizations—to adequately respond to shifting communication cultures. Formal education tends to prioritize cognitive domains over digital character formation, while families often overlook the online activities of their children. This highlights the importance of religious organizations such as Muhammadiyah in providing guidance, not only through formal fatwas but also through public education and narrative-building that bridge Islamic principles with technological realities.

Thus, the crisis of digital civility arises not merely from technological transformation itself, but from humanity's failure to balance such transformation with moral maturity and spiritual depth. Addressing this crisis requires comprehensive solutions that encompass cognitive aspects (information literacy), affective dimensions (moral awareness), and spiritual foundations (religious accountability). In this context, Muhammadiyah's *fiqh al-ma'lumāt* stands as a significant and timely contribution that warrants further analysis in efforts to build a more civilized and dignified digital communication order.

3.2 Muhammadiyah information *fiqh* as a framework for digital civility

Muhammadiyah's *fiqh al-ma'lumāt* (information jurisprudence) emerges as a normative and practical response to the growing turbulence in digital spaces—turbulence that frequently undermines the ethical values of Islam. As a modern Islamic organization grounded in the principle of *tajdīd* (renewal), Muhammadiyah recognizes the urgent need to guide Muslims in remaining within the bounds of *sharī'ah* amid an era marked by informational disruption. This *fiqh* does not merely address what is permissible or impermissible in consuming information; rather, it advances a broader ethical foundation meant to cultivate propriety, responsibility, and moral consciousness in digital engagement. In this sense, information *fiqh* is not solely legalistic, but also moralistic and educational in nature (Fauzi, 2019).

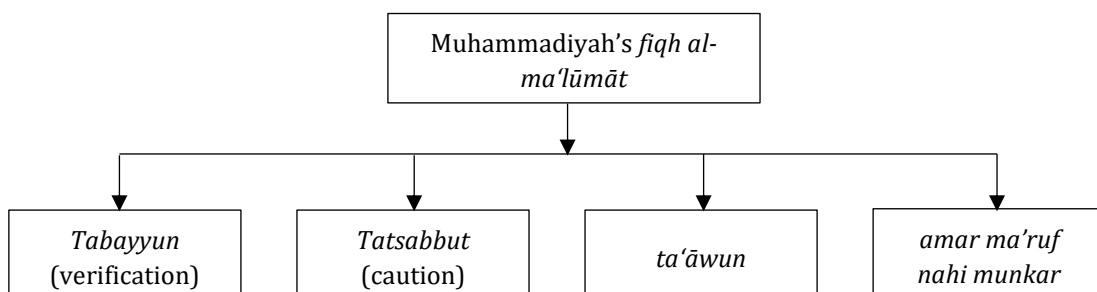


Fig. 1. Muhammadiyah information jurisprudence

Based on Figure 1, at least four core principles in Muhammadiyah's *fiqh al-ma'lumāt* serve as foundational pillars for digital civility. The first is *tabayyun* (verification), which requires every Muslim to refrain from hastily accepting or disseminating information

without first ensuring its validity. This principle is grounded in Qur'an Surah al-Ḥujurāt (49:6), a central verse in Islamic discourse on information ethics. In the context of social media, *tabayyun* translates into maintaining critical awareness toward viral content—such as verifying sources, cross-checking facts, and avoiding the careless sharing of provocative or hateful materials (Fathurrijal & Saudi, 2023).

The second principle is *tatsabbut*, or caution in accepting reports or narratives, particularly those originating from unknown sources or individuals with a history of manipulation. In practice, *tatsabbut* instructs Muslims not to easily trust screenshots, edited video clips, or fragmented narratives presented without full context. This principle is crucial amid the rise of clickbait culture and widespread information manipulation in digital spaces (Hastuti et al., 2023).

The third principle is *ta'awun*, the spirit of mutual assistance in disseminating beneficial information while refraining from spreading harmful content. This principle highlights the social function of digital communication as a means of *da'wah*, education, and community empowerment, rather than a tool for hostility or division. Fourth, Muhammadiyah's *fiqh al-ma'lūmāt* underscores the principle of *amr ma'rūf nahi munkar*, which encourages Muslims to actively voice truth and prevent wrongdoing, including within social media environments. However, the application of this principle must remain within the bounds of proper conduct, free from insults, verbal abuse, or attempts to publicly humiliate others. According to Wahdini, criticism or admonition within the framework of information *fiqh* must be delivered in a manner that promotes *maṣlaḥah*, upholding dignity and ethical communication (Wahdini et al., 2023). This indicates that *amr ma'rūf nahi munkar* in the digital context emphasizes constructive narrative engagement rather than coercive or emotional approaches.

The implementation of these principles can be illustrated through a simple example: when a social media user encounters a viral post accusing a public figure of committing blasphemy, they do not immediately share it. Instead, they seek the original source, verify it through credible news portals, and compare it with official statements. If the information remains unclear or unverifiable, the user chooses to remain silent or provide clarification to prevent further escalation. This action reflects the practical embodiment of *tabayyun* and *tathabbut*, demonstrating that digital civility is not merely a social attitude but a form of religious practice (Novanto et al., 2024).

By adopting these principles as normative references, Muhammadiyah has constructed a comprehensive framework of digital ethics that is grounded in Islamic values and attuned to contemporary challenges. Maftuhin notes that this approach affirms the inclusive and public-interest-oriented character of Muhammadiyah's *fiqh* (Maftuhin & Muflihah, 2022). While some groups respond reactively to technological advances, Muhammadiyah takes a proactive stance by developing guidelines that educate Muslims to uphold ethical character in every click and comment.

Thus, Muhammadiyah's information *fiqh* functions not only as a legal instrument but also as a means of moral cultivation within the digital ecosystem. It harmonizes revealed values with the dynamics of cyberspace, ensuring that Muslims are not uprooted from their ethical foundations despite living in an era dominated by speed and virality. This *fiqh* represents a middle path, it is neither anti-technology nor uncritically immersed in unrestrained digital pragmatism. It is through this contribution that Muhammadiyah advances an Islamic, just, and civilized digital society.

3.3 The role of social media in shaping digital character among teenagers

Social media has become an integral part of adolescents' lives in the digital era. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and Facebook significantly shape how young people interact, communicate, and even construct their personal identities. The influence of social media on adolescents can be observed from various perspectives, both positive and

negative, which collectively contribute to the formation of their digital character (Dwiyantri et al., 2023). In many cases, social media functions as a communication tool that enables adolescents to easily connect with peers, share experiences, and access a wide range of information. However, its impact is not limited to social or educational aspects; it also shapes their worldview and perceptions of their surroundings (Fitriah et al., 2024).

The positive effects of social media are evident in the realms of communication and self-expression. Social media enables adolescents to interact with individuals from diverse backgrounds, expand their social networks, and broaden their horizons through the information shared online (Rakhmaniar, 2024). According to Ahmad, social media can enhance communication patterns and social relationships among Generation Z, particularly in strengthening bonds with family, friends, and individuals who share similar interests (Ahmad et al., 2024). Moreover, social media offers a space for creative expression, allowing adolescents to produce videos, images, or written content that can reach a broader audience. Platforms such as TikTok, for instance, provide dynamic and interactive formats that support creative engagement among young users (Ilahin, 2022). In addition, social media can serve as an educational tool, giving adolescents access to accounts that share beneficial information related to academics, career development, or essential life skills (Anggraini et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, the negative impacts of social media cannot be overlooked. One of the most frequently cited concerns is the rise in anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues among adolescents. Research shows that social media use can affect adolescents' psychological well-being, contributing to increased levels of stress and depression (Cahya et al., 2023). This is often linked to pressure stemming from social media's constructed standards such as unrealistic expectations of beauty or success—which can distort adolescents' self-perception. Such pressures may worsen mental health conditions, especially when adolescents feel isolated or unable to meet these online social expectations. For instance, adolescents who constantly compare themselves with unrealistic beauty standards portrayed on Instagram or TikTok may experience dissatisfaction with their physical appearance, ultimately lowering their self-esteem (Regita et al., 2024).

In addition, social media has the potential to exacerbate consumptive behavior among adolescents, as they are often tempted to purchase products promoted online or follow shopping trends that may not be rational (Dewi, 2019). The lifestyle displayed on social media can heighten adolescents' consumerist tendencies, often centered on owning luxurious items or keeping up with the latest trends without considering their actual needs or financial capacity. This leads to unhealthy consumption patterns that may negatively affect adolescents' economic well-being in the long run (Abdullah & Suja'i, 2022).

Furthermore, the uncontrolled use of social media may contribute to other negative behaviors such as the spread of hoaxes, hate speech, and online bullying (cyberbullying). These phenomena have become serious issues in the digital sphere, as many adolescents engage in bullying or help disseminate false information without any proper verification. This highlights the need for a deep understanding of digital communication ethics grounded in moral and religious values. In this regard, the application of Muhammadiyah's information *fiqh* principles is crucial in guiding adolescents in their digital interactions.

In today's rapidly developing digital era, adolescents face significant challenges in cultivating a well-mannered digital character. Social media, as a medium for communication, information, and entertainment, has become an inseparable part of their lives. However, with the fast and often unverified flow of information, it is important for adolescents to understand and apply communication ethics aligned with Islamic values. Muhammadiyah's information *fiqh* offers practical solutions to help adolescents interact responsibly in the digital sphere. One of its key principles is *tabayyun*, the process of clarifying or verifying information before believing or disseminating it—an essential practice given the widespread circulation of hoaxes on social media that often mislead or harm others (Surwandono & Kaukab, 2021). Another relevant principle is *tatsabbut*, which

emphasizes caution when receiving information. This principle teaches adolescents not to easily trust information that lacks clear sources or cannot be accounted for (Hastuti et al., 2023).

Islamic character education based on digital ethics is essential for fostering wiser social media behavior among adolescents. According to Afifah, Islamic character education for adolescents in the digital era must include guidance on fair and ethical communication as well as a strong sense of social responsibility, both in real life and online (Afifah, 2024). Therefore, strengthening digital literacy based on religious values is key to shaping adolescents' positive digital character. Such literacy programs not only teach them how to access and process information correctly, but also instill moral and ethical values in every digital interaction (Nurhabibah et al., 2025).

Moreover, families and educational institutions play a crucial role in shaping adolescents' digital character. Education grounded in religious and moral values provides a strong foundation for adolescents in navigating the challenges of the digital world. In this context, Muhammadiyah's role is particularly strategic (Regita et al., 2024). As an Islamic organization that has developed information *fiqh*, Muhammadiyah emphasizes not only normative aspects but also serves as a model for ethical communication in digital spaces. The application of the principle of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* on social media teaches adolescents to promote goodness and prevent wrongdoing, whether through direct actions or through digital engagements conducted with wisdom and proper etiquette.³⁴ This educational approach helps adolescents understand that social media is not merely a platform for expression, but also a space for developing their potential, maintaining dignity, and taking responsibility for every word and action they produce online.

Thus, building strong digital character among adolescents requires collaboration between families, educational institutions, and religious organizations. Through Islamic character education grounded in Muhammadiyah's information *fiqh* principles, adolescents can be guided to become intelligent, responsible, and ethical social media users. This approach not only enhances their digital literacy but also instills spiritual values that help them engage in the digital world with heightened ethical and moral awareness.

3.4 The relevance and innovation of Muhammadiyah thought in the digital age

In the history of Islamic thought in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah is recognized as a progressive organization in responding to contemporary challenges. Its commitment to *tajdid* (renewal) is reflected across various aspects of Muslim life, including its efforts to formulate an ethical framework for information in the digital era. The emergence of the information *fiqh* (Information Jurisprudence) represents concrete evidence of Muhammadiyah's courage to undertake contextual thematic *ijtihad*. *Ijtihad* can be understood as interpreting social realities as a dynamic field of *da'wah* and jurisprudence. Through this approach, Muhammadiyah demonstrates that Islamic law is not merely a collection of normative propositions and fatwas, but a set of values and life guidelines that must remain relevant within the rhythm of changing times.

The information *fiqh* does not only provide rules but also constructs a new narrative about how Muslims should conduct themselves and engage in the digital sphere. In this context, Muhammadiyah's intellectual framework is highly relevant, as it successfully aligns the authoritative sources of the Sharia namely the Qur'an and the Sunnah—with contemporary realities shaped by complex social media ecosystems. According to Fauzi, this approach marks the emergence of a new paradigm in the methodology of Islamic jurisprudence, one that does not end with the textual sources (*nash*), but incorporates social contextual analysis and the needs of the community. This makes the information *fiqh* not rigid but adaptive and solution-oriented (Fauzi, 2019).

The relevance of this framework becomes even more apparent when connected to current issues such as disinformation, political polarization, digital radicalism, and the

erosion of ethical conduct in online spaces. Amid the proliferation of hate speech and the widespread culture of cancellation, Muhammadiyah offers an ethical guideline grounded in the *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*: the preservation of religion, intellect, life, lineage, and property. Each principle within the information *fiqh* essentially reflects these foundational objectives of Islamic law. Thus, Muhammadiyah positions itself not merely as an observer of digital phenomena, but as a pioneer of social transformation through a jurisprudential approach rooted in ethical and civilizational values (Wahdini et al., 2023).

Moreover, innovation within the *Information fiqh* framework does not stop at the narrative and normative levels, but also extends to institutional and educational dimensions. Muhammadiyah not only formulates written guidelines but also actively conducts public dissemination, media literacy training, and the integration of information *fiqh* values into school and pesantren curricula. Fathurrijal notes the strengthening of ethical literacy based on information *fiqh* among Muhammadiyah students as a preventive effort against digital moral deviation (Fathurrijal & Saudi, 2023). This initiative demonstrates that Muhammadiyah's innovation extends beyond discourse, reaching a systematic and structured praxis.

As a modern Islamic organization, Muhammadiyah promotes media ethics not merely as a moral imperative but as an integral part of its mission of *da'wah* and *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* in the digital age. This position distinguishes Muhammadiyah from reactive approaches that typically condemn immoral behavior without offering systemic solutions. On the contrary, Muhammadiyah presents an ethical framework that is preventive and educational in nature, built upon rigorous scholarly inquiry. Through this approach, Muhammadiyah succeeds in grounding Islamic values within the digital sphere in a rational, moderate, and inclusive manner (Naufal, 2024).

Therefore, Muhammadiyah's intellectual contribution to information *fiqh* deserves recognition as a form of contemporary *ijtihad* that not only preserves the relevance of Islam in addressing modern challenges but also demonstrates that religion can serve as a cultural force capable of shaping an ethical digital civilization. In this regard, Muhammadiyah affirms its role not only as an inheritor of Islamic scholarly tradition but also as an agent of social transformation that consistently presents Islam as a mercy for all creation, even within an increasingly digitalized world.

4. Conclusions

The digital era has brought Muslims into a new reality filled with opportunities as well as challenges, particularly in preserving the values of civility when interacting in virtual spaces. The widespread circulation of hoaxes, hate speech, and unethical digital communication practices indicates that this crisis of civility is not merely a matter of social ethics but also a crisis of spirituality in media engagement. These challenges arise not only from technological sophistication but also from the lack of critical literacy and religious values guiding the digital behavior of the Muslim community. In this context, Muhammadiyah's information *fiqh* emerges as a comprehensive and contextual ethical formulation. Through principles such as *tabayyun*, *tatsabbut*, *ta'awun*, and *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, this framework provides moral and spiritual guidance for Muslims to uphold civility amid the overwhelming flow of information. Beyond offering legal boundaries, information *fiqh* also serves as an instrument of cultural *da'wah* that emphasizes individual responsibility for every form of digital communication one engages in.

Furthermore, Muhammadiyah's intellectual contribution through information *fiqh* demonstrates its relevance and innovation in responding to contemporary dynamics. This approach affirms that Islamic values remain timely and effective in addressing the challenges of modern communication. Muhammadiyah not only constructs a theoretical framework but also implements practical actions through education, media literacy initiatives, and the strengthening of digital character rooted in Islamic principles. Thus,

information *fiqh* should be recognized as an important contribution to shaping a Muslim society that is intelligent, moderate, and digitally civil.

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The author solely carried out all stages of the research, including conceptualization, data collection, analysis, and manuscript preparation. All responsibilities and decisions related to this article were completed independently by the author.

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