

Research Article

Islamic Philosophical Perspectives on Social Cohesion: Revisiting Classical Thought to Address Fragmentation in Post Digital Muslim Communities

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Abstract: This study examines the convergence between classical Islamic philosophy and contemporary digital theory, emphasizing how foundational Islamic concepts can respond to social fragmentation in post-digital Muslim societies. As digital technologies increasingly mediate religious learning, identity formation, and communal interaction, Muslim communities face growing challenges, including the weakening of social bonds and the decentralization of religious authority. Online platforms encourage individualized interpretations of faith and pluralistic expressions of religiosity, which, while expanding participation, often contribute to fragmented identities and diminished communal cohesion. Drawing upon core classical concepts such as ummah (community), akhlaq (ethics), and asabiyya (social solidarity), this research argues that Islamic intellectual heritage offers a normative framework capable of addressing these disruptions. These concepts underscore collective responsibility, moral discipline, and the cultivation of shared values as the foundation of a stable and just society. Using a qualitative approach grounded in textual analysis of classical Islamic scholarship and contemporary digital sociology, the study recontextualizes these principles within present-day digital environments. The findings suggest that adapting traditional values to online engagement can strengthen ethical conduct, mutual accountability, and constructive dialogue in virtual spaces. The notion of a "cyber ummah" further illustrates how transnational digital networks may foster solidarity across geographic and ideological boundaries. Ultimately, this study affirms the continuing relevance of classical Islamic philosophy in guiding the development of an inclusive, morally grounded, and socially cohesive digital society.

Keywords: Digital Fragmentation; Islamic Philosophy; Moral Ethics; Online Communities; Social Cohesion

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1. Introduction

Social fragmentation in post digital Muslim communities is a multifaceted issue driven by the pervasive influence of digital culture. Digital technologies, particularly social media platforms, have redefined the traditional structures of social engagement. These platforms have enabled individuals to renegotiate their identities, both religious and cultural, often challenging traditional authorities. This shift has led to the formation of a "cyber ummah," a transnational digital Muslim community that reshapes how social relationships and religious practices are understood (Khamis, 2021). While digital platforms empower individuals by allowing diverse voices to be heard, they also create divisions within communities. This fragmented social landscape is further compounded by the diminishing role of traditional communal structures, which historically served as cohesive forces within Muslim societies (Zaid et al., 2022).

The fragmentation of post digital Muslim communities is also fueled by identity politics. The rise of movements rooted in ethnic, religious, or sectarian affiliations has contributed to heightened political polarization. Social media platforms amplify these divisions by acting as catalysts for both grassroots activism and the dissemination of misinformation (Octavianne et al., 2024). As a result, the once unifying force of shared religious identity has become

increasingly fractured, with political and ideological divides becoming more pronounced. These platforms, while democratizing access to information, also amplify the voices of extremist factions that reinforce societal divisions. The role of social media in fostering identity based political movements not only exacerbates local polarization but also extends to global dynamics, influencing international relations and regional security (Zhorabek et al., 2025).

The erosion of communal bonds within Muslim societies has been accelerated by the rise of digital technologies. Traditional forms of religious expression, such as communal prayers, mosques, and face to face social engagements, are being replaced by online interactions, often leading to a hybridization of religious practices. While digital spaces provide more access to religious content and discussion, they also foster individualistic tendencies that undermine the cohesion of traditional communities. Digital platforms often encourage personal interpretations of religion, which can diverge from established norms and authorities (Zaid et al., 2022). This shift away from communal religious practices and toward individualized digital experiences has significant implications for the maintenance of social cohesion within Muslim communities (Nisa, 2021). The sense of collective moral responsibility and shared purpose, central to Islamic thought, is diluted in the digital sphere, contributing to the fragmentation of social bonds.

Digital activism has become a central feature of contemporary Islamic politics, particularly in Muslim majority countries. Social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram serve as spaces for political mobilization and religious discourse. While these platforms have democratized participation in political movements, they have also introduced new challenges such as misinformation and the potential for radicalization (Rohid et al., 2025). Digital activism allows for greater participation in Islamic political movements, but it also perpetuates the fragmentation of communities by fostering echo chambers where like minded individuals reinforce their beliefs while isolating themselves from opposing views. The decentralization of religious authority, facilitated by digital media, has allowed for the pluralization of Islamic discourse, making it more difficult to maintain cohesive, community centered religious practices (Zafar & Blackmer, 2025). These developments highlight the paradox of digital engagement while it fosters inclusion, it also creates divisions that threaten social cohesion.

Despite the challenges presented by digital fragmentation, Islamic philosophy offers integrative concepts of community and solidarity that remain relevant in the post digital age. Classical Islamic thought emphasizes the importance of shared moral purpose and collective responsibility in fostering social cohesion. The concept of ummah is central to Islamic philosophy, and it underscores the ethical duty to maintain solidarity and support for one another (Khamis, 2024). In contrast to the individualism promoted by digital culture, Islamic philosophy prioritizes communal bonds and ethical responsibility. This approach encourages Muslims to work together for the common good, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual support. By reinterpreting these classical ideas in light of contemporary digital realities, it is possible to strengthen the social fabric of post digital Muslim communities and counter the forces of fragmentation and division.

In a rapidly digitizing world, traditional communal structures within Muslim societies are increasingly challenged by technological advancements. The digital transformation has led to significant shifts in how Islamic knowledge is produced, distributed, and consumed, resulting in the decentralization of religious authority and the rise of individualistic and pluralistic expressions of faith. This phenomenon, often termed post Islamism, reflects a tension between traditionalist and modernist interpretations of Islamic principles, which are particularly influenced by emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) (Firdaus et al., 2025). This fragmentation within Muslim communities calls for a reexamination of classical Islamic philosophical thought, which could offer solutions to the ideological and communal divisions exacerbated by digital culture.

The aim of this study is to revisit classical Islamic philosophical thought to explore its potential for offering solutions to the fragmentation observed in post digital Muslim communities. This exploration is essential because it bridges the gap between the timeless values of Islam and the challenges posed by the digital age. By engaging with classical Islamic philosophy, the study seeks to provide a cohesive framework that can address the ideological and communal fragmentation intensified by digital technologies. The integration of Islamic values into modern digital systems can play a crucial role in creating a more inclusive and just digital ecosystem, ensuring that traditional ethics are preserved in the face of technological advances (Chaudhary, 2020).

The relevance of revisiting classical Islamic philosophical thought in the digital age lies in its capacity to offer an ethical and epistemological framework for contemporary Muslim communities. Classical Islamic concepts such as *maqasid al-shari'ah* (the objectives of Islamic law) and *istihsan* (juridical preference) provide normative guidelines for addressing ethical and legal challenges within digital environments (Ritonga et al., 2025). These concepts are vital for developing a framework that balances Islamic ethical imperatives with the demands of a digitalized world, which is increasingly characterized by individualism and pluralism. As digital platforms continue to redefine how religious authority and knowledge are disseminated, revisiting classical thought can help establish a moral compass that guides contemporary Muslim communities in navigating the complexities of the digital era.

The digital transformation of Islamic knowledge has led to the creation of new forms of religious authority and interpretive practices. Digital media platforms have democratized access to religious information, allowing diverse interpretations of Islam to proliferate. This decentralization of authority, while empowering individuals, also leads to the fragmentation of religious and communal identities (Sati et al., 2025). As religious practices move online, traditional modes of religious engagement are increasingly replaced by digital platforms where individuals engage with faith on a more personal, often fragmented, level. The rise of digital *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and other online religious practices further complicates the notion of a unified Muslim community (Siregar et al., 2025). These developments highlight the need for a reevaluation of how classical Islamic philosophy can be integrated into contemporary digital practices to restore unity and coherence in Muslim communities.

The issue of ethical governance within the realm of digital Islam is also a significant concern. The increasing influence of social media and digital activism has reshaped Islamic political discourse, leading to both opportunities for engagement and challenges such as misinformation and polarization (Zhorabek et al., 2025). The proliferation of digital platforms that facilitate religious discourse has allowed for a more pluralistic interpretation of Islamic teachings, which can sometimes conflict with traditional norms. However, classical Islamic ethical principles, such as *amanah* (trust) in the context of information accessibility, can offer a foundation for building ethical governance in the digital sphere (Ritonga et al., 2025). By integrating these values, it is possible to create a more responsible and accountable digital environment, one that aligns with Islamic principles of justice and trust.

2. Literature Review

Social Fragmentation in Post Digital Contexts

Digital Post Islamism

In recent years, digital media has played a crucial role in transforming how religious authority is perceived and exercised in Muslim communities. One significant shift in this context is the rise of digital post Islamism, which reflects a movement away from political Islam toward more individualistic and pluralistic expressions of faith. This shift, which decentralizes traditional religious hierarchies, allows Muslims to curate their personalized belief systems through social media platforms. These platforms foster ideological pluralism, enabling individuals to question established religious norms and create diverse expressions of faith (Zhorabek et al., 2025). The decentralization of religious authority through digital platforms challenges traditional institutions of Islamic authority and paves the way for the rise of alternative forms of Islamic engagement, contributing to the fragmentation observed in contemporary Muslim communities (Khamis, 2021).

Networked Communities and Digital Crowds

The digital age has also facilitated the creation of networked communities, a concept that refers to decentralized and fluid religious communities that transcend geographical boundaries. These digital communities are increasingly used to mobilize people and spread ideologies, both religious and political, across global networks. Movements like Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) and Alternative for Germany (AfD) use digital spaces to merge religion with national identity, mobilizing collective action and political movements. The idea of "digital crowds" further highlights how social media has transformed mass mobilization by reshaping collective identities and political movements in the digital era (Zafar & Blackmer, 2025). The ease with which digital platforms enable such mobilization has implications for both social cohesion and fragmentation within post digital Muslim communities, as it fosters both unity among likeminded individuals and division among opposing groups.

Cyber Ummah and Transnational Digital Communities

The concept of cyber ummah refers to the formation of transnational digital Muslim communities that reshape religious authority, social relationships, and cultural identities in the global sphere. The internet has facilitated the connection of Muslims worldwide, especially those in the diaspora, to their homelands and new societies. This digital ummah redefines religious engagement by allowing Muslims to interact across borders and share interpretations of Islamic teachings, creating a more pluralistic and fragmented religious space (Khamis, 2021). As Muslims worldwide continue to turn to digital spaces for religious interaction, the concept of cyber ummah continues to evolve, influencing how Muslims experience faith and community. However, while these digital communities create connections, they also contribute to the fragmentation of traditional religious authority, as individuals increasingly engage in self-directed religious practices (Nisa, 2021).

Identity Politics and Polarization

Social media platforms play a pivotal role in shaping political engagement and identity politics in contemporary Muslim societies. These platforms provide tools for grassroots activism, allowing individuals and groups to organize, mobilize, and express their political ideologies. However, they also serve as vehicles for spreading misinformation, which deepens political polarization and societal divisions. As a result, identity politics becomes more pronounced, as individuals align with political or religious factions based on shared ethnic, sectarian, or ideological affiliations. The fragmentation caused by identity politics is not confined to national borders; it extends to global dynamics, influencing international relations and regional security. The divisive nature of social media platforms contributes to the increasing political polarization within Muslim communities, necessitating effective strategies to foster inclusive governance and reduce fragmentation (Octavianne et al., 2024).

Digital Islamophobia and Its Implications

The study of digital Islamophobia, particularly on platforms like Twitter, involves frameworks such as digital governmentality, affective alignment, and gendered lenses. These frameworks provide insight into the complex interrelationships within the experiences of Muslim diasporas and the potential for enacting meaningful change in the digital realm. Islamophobia, amplified in digital spaces, contributes to the fragmentation of Muslim communities by reinforcing negative stereotypes and marginalizing Muslim voices in online discussions. As digital spaces increasingly become the battleground for religious and ideological debates, understanding the dynamics of digital Islamophobia is crucial for fostering a more inclusive and respectful digital environment. The interplay between digital technologies and Islamophobia calls for the development of strategies that counteract the fragmentation and division caused by online hate speech and discrimination (Farokhi, 2024).

Fragmentation of Authority and Gender Dynamics

The fragmentation of religious authority in the digital age is further complicated by the rise of Islamic feminism, which has gained momentum through digital platforms. Muslim women are increasingly using digital media to voice concerns about gender inequality and challenge traditional interpretations of Islam. This has led to the creation of more segmented and fragmented public spheres, where diverse voices within Muslim communities can articulate their religious beliefs and practices outside of traditional male-dominated spaces (Nisa, 2021). Digital platforms have empowered Muslim women to engage with Islamic discourse, but this empowerment has also led to challenges in reconciling diverse interpretations of Islamic principles. The rise of Islamic feminism within digital spaces highlights the shifting dynamics of religious authority, as the internet provides a platform for both male and female voices to challenge traditional norms and offer alternative interpretations of Islam (Siregar et al., 2025).

Classical Islamic Philosophy on Community

Ummah

The concept of ummah is a fundamental idea in Islamic philosophy, referring to the collective community of Muslims bound together by their shared religious beliefs. The ummah plays a crucial role in Islamic political thought, as it emphasizes the unity and solidarity of the Muslim community. Classical Muslim thinkers such as al-Fārābī, al-Māwardī, and al-Juwaynī discussed the ummah as the foundation of the Muslim polity, which was built on shared epistemic and moral grounds. These philosophers viewed the ummah as essential for maintaining social cohesion and ensuring that the community adheres to Islamic values and principles (Usman et al., 2022). In this context, the ummah represents not only a religious community but also a political and social entity that fosters unity through common ethical commitments and mutual responsibility.

Akhlaq (Ethics)

akhlaq, or Islamic ethics, plays a significant role in fostering social cohesion and community development. It encourages moral capital, which serves as a bridge for interconnectivity and cooperation within the community. Islamic social ethics promote values such as moderation, social justice, volunteerism, and social responsibility, which are essential for creating a harmonious and cohesive society (Bensaid & Machouche, 2019). These ethical principles are rooted in the teachings of the Quran and the Hadith, and they emphasize the importance of mutual support and social justice. The concept of akhlaq ensures that individuals within the community act with a sense of moral responsibility, reinforcing social ties and fostering a culture of cooperation and solidarity (Dallou & Al-Yabroudi, 2023).

Solidarity

The concept of solidarity in Islamic philosophy is closely related to *asabiyya*, a term first described by the historian and philosopher Ibn Khaldun. *Asabiyya* refers to the social bonds and collective consciousness that hold a community together. It is considered essential for the stability and prosperity of the community. According to Ibn Khaldun, *asabiyya* is a vital force that drives social cohesion and ensures the survival of the community, particularly in the face of external challenges (Celik, 2024). In modern contexts, *asabiyya* translates into active societal participation and volunteerism, which are vital for preventing the decay of shared values and maintaining social cohesion (Bensaid & Machouche, 2019). This solidarity strengthens the fabric of the community and helps maintain a collective sense of identity and purpose.

Key Philosophical Texts and Ideas

Fazlur Rahman emphasized the importance of educational reform and independent reasoning (*ijtihad*) to shape an ideal Muslim society. He proposed that Islamic society could evolve by combining Islamic values with modern elements without compromising the core tenets of the Quran (Usman et al., 2022). Rahman's perspective emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between tradition and modernity, ensuring that the core values of Islam remain relevant in contemporary contexts. Similarly, Hasan Hanafi advocated for a new theology rooted in liberation and social justice, aimed at transforming Arab Islamic society into one that is just, prosperous, and civilized. Hanafi's focus on social solidarity and cultural revolution highlights the need for a broader vision of Islamic society that transcends traditional boundaries (Manshur, 2021).

Reinterpretation of Classical Texts

Fatima Mernissi and Mohammed Arkoun played significant roles in reinterpreting classical Islamic texts to develop contemporary principles of justice and humanism. Their work challenges patriarchal and orthodox interpretations of Islam, advocating for a more inclusive and egalitarian vision of Islamic society (Karoui, 2020). Mernissi's work, in particular, critiques the traditional exclusion of women from religious discourse and seeks to reinterpret Islamic teachings in a way that promotes gender equality and social justice. Arkoun, similarly, emphasizes the importance of intellectual and cultural reforms within Islamic thought to address the social challenges of modernity. These scholars' efforts have paved the way for a new understanding of social cohesion in Muslim communities, one that is rooted in justice, equality, and inclusivity.

Intersection with Contemporary Digital Theories***Social Cohesion and Communal Bonds***

In contemporary digital societies, fostering social cohesion and communal bonds has become a key area of focus. The development of digital citizenship and social capital plays a crucial role in enhancing inclusive and supportive online communities. Digital platforms, by enabling people to connect across geographical boundaries, promote civic engagement and ethical behavior online. These platforms contribute to a more cohesive society by strengthening social connectivity and encouraging responsibility within digital interactions (Liu, 2025). Social capital, facilitated through digital citizenship, fosters trust and cooperation among individuals, thereby enhancing collective well being and strengthening community ties. By improving online communication and collaboration, digital platforms can serve as vehicles for community building, offering new ways to maintain social relationships that transcend traditional physical spaces.

Fluid Relationships in Digital Society

One of the defining characteristics of contemporary digital societies is the concept of 'fluid' relationships, where individuals are not physically connected but maintain tight, often intense connections online. This dynamic is rooted in the psychological and sociological concept of 'imagined,' where individuals form connections and relationships based on

shared interests and virtual experiences (Neri & Cordeiro, 2025). The digital realm allows individuals to engage in relationships that are less constrained by physical proximity, enabling more diverse and fluid interactions. However, while digital spaces foster global connections, they also lead to challenges such as emotional detachment and superficial engagements. This fluidity in relationships, while offering opportunities for broader community engagement, may also contribute to the weakening of deeper, long lasting communal bonds that were traditionally formed through face to face interactions.

Ethical Implications of the Digital Society

As theorized by scholars such as Manuel Castells and Mary Chayco, the increasing connectivity and speed of digital exchanges necessitate deep ethical reflection. The rapid exchange of information and the proliferation of digital platforms give rise to ethical conflicts that are communal in nature and must be managed through compromise and flexible regulation. This requires a nuanced approach to governance in the digital age, one that acknowledges the complexity of these ethical challenges (Sunami, 2023). Ethical dilemmas in digital society ranging from data privacy concerns to online harassment are increasingly common. Castells' and Chayco's works emphasize that digital technologies need not only technological but also ethical solutions to avoid structural crises, making the governance of digital spaces a central concern in the quest for a balanced and just digital environment.

Anomie and Moral Fragmentation

The fragmentation of moral cognition, or anomie, is another significant ethical concern in digital societies. The rapid development of digital technologies has exacerbated this fragmentation, leading to the erosion of shared moral frameworks and societal norms. According to Durkheim's theory of anomie, a breakdown in social norms results in feelings of alienation and disorientation. In the digital context, this disconnection is amplified as individuals increasingly turn to online spaces for social interaction and identity formation. This shift has profound implications for social cohesion, as the absence of strong moral bonds contributes to greater societal fragmentation. Ethical research focused on technology governance, cross cultural adaptation, and institutional repair is crucial for addressing these moral crises and ensuring the sustainability of digital societies (Yan & Peng, 2025).

Digital Humanism: Balancing Technology and Humanity

In response to the chaotic growth of digital societies, the concept of digital humanism has emerged as an essential framework for understanding the relationship between technology, humanity, and sustainability. Digital humanism emphasizes the need to balance technological advancements with principles of sustainability, equity, and inclusivity. It advocates for the preservation of human dignity and ethical considerations in the design and implementation of digital systems (Monterosso, 2024). As digital technologies continue to transform social dynamics, digital humanism offers a pathway to ensure that technology serves human interests without undermining social values. This perspective calls for a more humane approach to technology, one that prioritizes collective well being over individual gain and ensures that technological development aligns with ethical norms and human rights.

Theoretical Frameworks and Methodologies

The field of digital sociology addresses the challenges posed by digital transformations to traditional sociological concepts such as interaction, agency, and social knowledge. It redefines these concepts in the context of digital spaces, offering new ways to understand social behavior and relationships in the digital age. Drawing on systems theory, digital sociology examines how digital societies function through interconnected systems of communication. This framework helps to explain complex phenomena such as content moderation and algorithmic bias by illustrating how different systems process events according to distinct criteria (Ślosarski & Wloch, 2025). By incorporating systems theory, digital sociology provides a comprehensive approach to understanding how digital technologies influence social structures, highlighting the ethical implications of digital governance and social interaction.

3. Materials and Method

This study explores the intersection of classical Islamic philosophy and contemporary digital theories to address social fragmentation in post digital Muslim communities. Key concepts such as ummah, akhlaq (ethics), and solidarity (asabiyya) are examined for their potential to foster social cohesion in the digital age. By analyzing classical Islamic texts and contemporary theories on digital citizenship and social capital, the study investigates how digital platforms, while enabling new forms of community engagement, also contribute to the

erosion of traditional communal bonds. Case studies on cyber ummah and digital activism highlight the role of social media in both uniting and fragmenting Muslim communities. Interviews and focus groups with scholars and community members will provide insights into how Islamic values can guide ethical behavior online and promote unity. Ethical considerations ensure the research respects privacy and diverse interpretations within Muslim thought, while addressing the moral implications of digital technologies in contemporary societies.

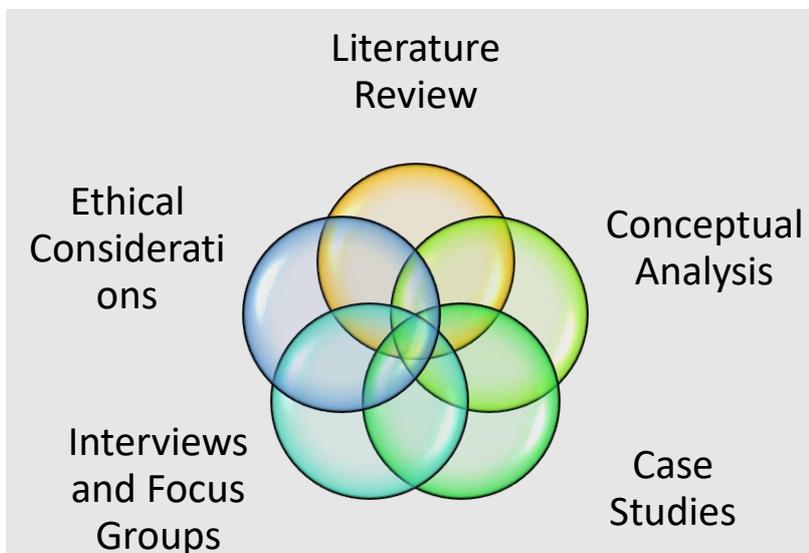


Figure 1. Research Methodology Flowchart Structure.

Literature Review

The study of social fragmentation within post digital Muslim communities has been shaped by key theories from both classical Islamic thought and contemporary digital sociology. Central to classical Islamic philosophy is the concept of ummah, which refers to the collective community of Muslims united by shared religious and moral principles. Islamic philosophers such as al-Fārābī and Ibn Khaldun emphasized the importance of solidarity and ethical conduct in maintaining a cohesive society. In contrast, digital societies are often characterized by fragmented identities and decentralized authority, which has led to the rise of post Islamism. Post Islamism challenges traditional religious authority, offering more pluralistic and individualistic interpretations of faith. This dynamic, amplified by social media platforms, highlights the tension between community centered ethics and the rise of individualistic religious expressions in the digital age. By analyzing these differing perspectives, we can explore how classical Islamic thought can provide solutions to the fragmentation in contemporary Muslim communities.

In addition to the ummah, Islamic social ethics, or akhlaq, play a significant role in maintaining social cohesion. Classical Islamic ethics emphasize moral responsibility, social justice, and mutual support, all of which are essential for creating a cohesive community. These ethical guidelines, grounded in the Quran and Hadith, encourage individuals to act with compassion, moderation, and a sense of social responsibility, all of which are crucial for fostering communal bonds. On the other hand, digital platforms have created spaces where ethical behavior often lacks regulation, contributing to moral fragmentation and online polarization. The ethics of digital citizenship, in contrast, focus on the responsibility individuals bear in online interactions, emphasizing trust, accountability, and ethical engagement in digital spaces. By revisiting classical Islamic ethics, this study aims to bridge the gap between traditional moral frameworks and the ethical challenges posed by digital technologies, offering a comprehensive approach to fostering social cohesion.

Conceptual Analysis

The conceptual analysis in this study focuses on examining how classical Islamic thought, particularly the ideas of ummah and akhlaq, can be applied to address the fragmentation of Muslim communities in the digital age. The ummah, traditionally viewed as a unified religious community, is increasingly fragmented by digital technologies that enable the formation of diverse, often competing, online identities. This shift from collective religious identity to individual expression challenges the traditional cohesion within the Muslim community. By

analyzing the concept of ummah in the context of contemporary digital spaces, the study will explore how Islamic teachings on solidarity, shared responsibility, and mutual support can be adapted to foster online communal bonds. This analysis will also consider how these traditional values can guide Muslims in navigating the complexities of digital engagement while maintaining a strong sense of community.

The second focus of the conceptual analysis is the role of akhlaq (Islamic ethics) in maintaining social harmony in a digital context. In classical Islamic philosophy, akhlaq plays a central role in fostering positive social relationships, ensuring that individuals within the community behave with respect, compassion, and justice toward one another. These ethical principles are not just limited to interpersonal relationships but extend to the collective responsibility of society as a whole. The rise of digital platforms, however, has led to new ethical dilemmas, such as the spread of misinformation, online harassment, and the erosion of trust in digital spaces. This study will analyze how the principles of akhlaq can be applied to digital environments, providing guidelines for ethical behavior and social justice online. Through this conceptual analysis, the study will aim to offer practical insights into how traditional Islamic ethics can inform modern digital practices and contribute to more cohesive and ethical online communities.

Case Studies

To gain practical insights into the impact of digital platforms on social cohesion, this study will include case studies of Muslim communities engaging with digital technologies. One case study will focus on the concept of cyber ummah, examining how transnational Muslim communities form online and engage in religious and social discourse through digital platforms. The study will explore how cyber ummah transcends geographical boundaries and redefines religious authority in the digital age. Social media platforms have allowed Muslims in the diaspora to stay connected to their homelands, participate in online religious discussions, and share diverse interpretations of Islamic teachings. However, this digital engagement also brings about challenges related to fragmentation, as individuals increasingly interact in digital spaces where diverse, often conflicting, interpretations of Islam are shared. This case study will analyze the dynamics of cyber ummah, focusing on how it fosters community while also contributing to the fragmentation of traditional communal bonds.

Another case study will explore digital activism within Muslim majority countries, with a particular focus on the role of social media in political and religious movements. Digital platforms such as Twitter and Facebook have been key tools for organizing grassroots activism and spreading political ideologies, including religiously motivated movements. The case study will focus on movements like Tehreek e Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), which leverages digital media to merge religion with national identity and mobilize collective action. The study will analyze how such movements use digital spaces to engage Muslims in political and religious discourse, emphasizing the ways in which these platforms contribute to social polarization and ideological fragmentation. By examining these case studies, the research will gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between digital media, activism, and social fragmentation in Muslim communities.

Interviews and Focus Groups

To complement the literature review and case studies, this study will conduct interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders, including scholars of Islamic philosophy, digital activists, and Muslim community leaders. The aim is to gather insights on how digital platforms are reshaping religious and communal identities and to explore how classical Islamic principles can inform responses to these changes. Interviews will be conducted with experts in both Islamic philosophy and digital sociology to explore the potential of integrating classical Islamic teachings into modern digital practices. These interviews will provide perspectives on how ummah and akhlaq can be reinterpreted in light of the ethical challenges posed by digital technologies. The interviews will also focus on the ways in which Muslim communities are navigating the digital landscape while striving to maintain unity and solidarity.

In addition to interviews, focus groups will be organized with Muslim community members to understand their experiences with digital platforms and their perspectives on maintaining a sense of community online. These focus groups will explore how individuals engage with religious content in digital spaces, how they perceive the role of technology in shaping their faith, and how they negotiate their religious identity in the digital age. Participants will also discuss their views on integrating Islamic ethics into digital interactions and the importance of maintaining traditional values in online communities. The insights gathered from these focus groups will help provide a more nuanced understanding of how

digital technologies are impacting the cohesion of Muslim communities and how classical Islamic principles can be adapted to address the challenges of the digital age.

Ethical Considerations

Given the sensitive nature of the research topic, particularly in relation to religion, ethics, and digital privacy, this study will adhere to strict ethical guidelines. All participants in interviews and focus groups will be fully informed about the research objectives and their right to confidentiality. The study will ensure that all data collected from participants is anonymized and stored securely. Additionally, the research will respect the diverse theological perspectives within the Muslim community, ensuring that the interpretations of Islamic philosophy are presented in a manner that is inclusive and representative of the diversity within Muslim thought. Ethical considerations will also extend to the digital platforms analyzed in the case studies, ensuring that the study does not inadvertently contribute to online harm or misinformation.

Furthermore, the research will take into account the ethical challenges posed by digital technologies, such as data privacy and informed consent. As digital platforms continue to evolve, it is essential that the study approaches the use of digital media in a responsible and ethical manner. The research will ensure that all online content analyzed in the case studies is publicly available and does not violate any intellectual property or privacy rights. By adhering to these ethical principles, the study will contribute to the ongoing conversation about the ethical implications of digital technologies, particularly in the context of Islamic teachings and community building in the digital age.

4. Results and Discussion

Classical Islamic philosophy, particularly the concepts of *ummah*, *akhlaq*, and *asabiyya*, offers valuable insights into addressing the fragmentation observed in post digital Muslim communities. The concept of *ummah*, emphasizing unity and collective responsibility, can be adapted to foster solidarity in digital spaces, countering the individualism and ideological fragmentation often seen online. *Akhlaq* (Islamic ethics) provides a moral framework for ethical behavior in digital interactions, promoting justice, compassion, and mutual support. Similarly, *asabiyya*, which highlights the importance of social cohesion and collective consciousness, is relevant in maintaining digital community stability, despite the transient nature of online interactions. By integrating these classical principles into digital environments, Muslim communities can rebuild cohesive, ethically guided spaces, ensuring that digital technologies contribute to social harmony rather than fragmentation.

Results

The key findings from the examination of classical Islamic philosophy highlight the enduring relevance of concepts like *ummah*, *akhlaq*, and *asabiyya* in fostering social cohesion within post digital Muslim communities. The idea of *ummah*, central to classical Islamic thought, emphasizes the unity and solidarity of the Muslim community, stressing collective responsibility and mutual support. These principles are essential in maintaining social cohesion in a fragmented world, particularly in digital environments where community bonds are often weak or fragmented. Classical Islamic thinkers like al-Fārābī and Ibn Khaldun emphasized that a cohesive society depends on shared moral and epistemic values, which remain crucial even in the digital age (Usman et al., 2022). The concept of *akhlaq* (Islamic ethics) further contributes to social harmony by promoting justice, compassion, and ethical responsibility. These values provide a moral framework for individuals to engage with one another in both physical and digital spaces, encouraging a sense of responsibility that can help bridge the gaps created by digital fragmentation.

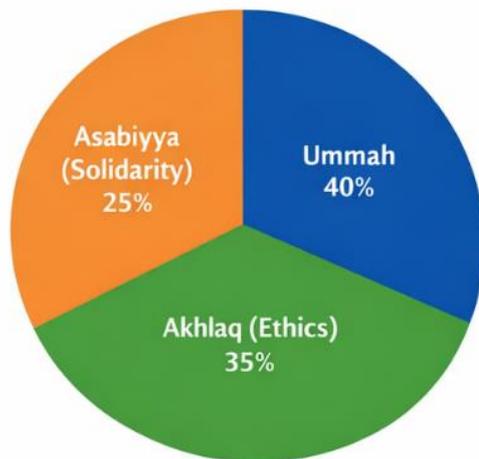


Figure 2. Key Concepts from Classical Islamic Thought.

The figure on the left illustrates the key concepts from classical Islamic thought, specifically focusing on three central ideas: Ummah, Akhlaq (Ethics), and Asabiyya (Solidarity). Ummah takes the largest segment at 40%, reflecting the concept of a unified community bound by shared religious and moral values. Akhlaq follows at 35%, emphasizing the ethical framework that guides interactions within the community. Asabiyya, at 25%, highlights the importance of social cohesion and solidarity, particularly in maintaining communal stability. These three concepts are integral to building cohesive, resilient communities in both traditional and digital contexts, ensuring social harmony and moral responsibility in society.

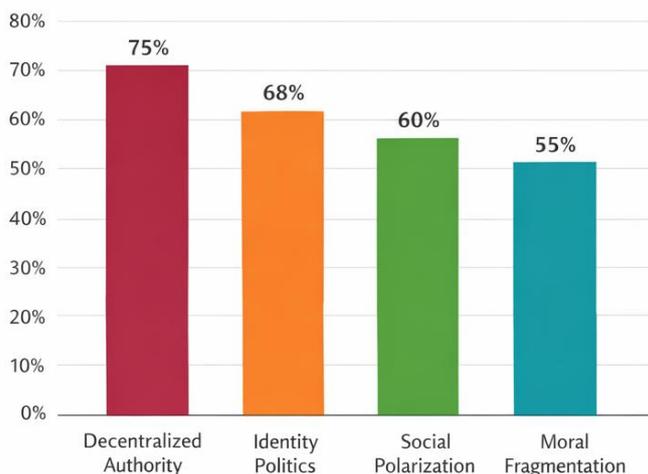


Figure 3. Challenges in Post Digital Muslim Communities.

The diagram titled "Challenges in Post Digital Muslim Communities" presents a bar graph highlighting the key issues facing Muslim communities in the digital age. The graph reveals four primary challenges, with Decentralized Authority at the forefront, representing 75%, indicating the high concern over the fragmentation of religious and social authority due to digital technologies. Identity Politics follows closely at 68%, reflecting the growing divisions based on ethnic, sectarian, or ideological identities that social media platforms often amplify. Social Polarization comes in at 60%, illustrating how digital platforms contribute to societal divisions by fostering echo chambers where individuals engage only with like minded perspectives. Lastly, Moral Fragmentation, at 55%, shows the erosion of shared moral values in digital spaces, where anonymity and individualism often undermine communal ethics. Together, these challenges highlight the complex social and ethical issues digital transformation presents to Muslim communities.

Another key finding is the relevance of *asabiyya*, or social solidarity, as described by Ibn Khaldun, which holds a community together through a collective consciousness and social bonds. *Asabiyya* is critical for the stability and prosperity of a community, and in the digital context, this principle can help mitigate the isolation and individualism promoted by digital technologies. The principles of *asabiyya* can be interpreted as a call for stronger online community engagement, where solidarity and mutual aid are prioritized. The rise of digital communities, or *cyber ummah*, has proven that solidarity can extend beyond geographical boundaries, yet it often results in fragmented identities and competing ideological factions. These findings suggest that classical Islamic concepts provide a foundation for addressing the fragmentation seen in post digital Muslim communities, offering ways to rebuild cohesive digital spaces centered on shared values and ethical conduct.

Discussion

The discussion of the findings reveals how classical Islamic thought can be adapted to address the fragmentation within post digital Muslim communities. One of the primary challenges in the digital age is the decentralization of religious authority, which allows for a more pluralistic and individualistic interpretation of faith. While digital platforms enable greater access to religious content, they also fragment traditional communal bonds, as individuals curate personalized beliefs often without a common ethical framework. The concept of *ummah*, traditionally focused on unity, provides a valuable perspective for building solidarity in digital communities. By emphasizing collective responsibility and mutual support, the idea of *ummah* can be adapted to ensure that digital spaces remain cohesive and ethically guided. *Akhlaq* also plays a crucial role in this adaptation, as its focus on justice and social responsibility can inform ethical behavior in digital interactions, encouraging individuals to engage with each other respectfully and responsibly online.

In contrast to the fragmented nature of online communities, the classical concept of *asabiyya* provides a solution to the challenge of maintaining social cohesion. While digital platforms create fluid and sometimes transient connections, *asabiyya* emphasizes the importance of collective consciousness and solidarity in ensuring the stability of a community. This concept is especially relevant in a world where digital platforms encourage a form of social interaction that can often be superficial or isolated. The idea of *asabiyya* suggests that stronger community bonds, even in digital spaces, are crucial for long term stability. The challenge, however, lies in translating this traditional concept into a digital context where interactions are mediated by technology, and where individualism often takes precedence over communal unity. Nevertheless, by fostering digital solidarity rooted in shared ethical values, *asabiyya* can help bridge the fragmentation of online communities.

Finally, the integration of classical Islamic ethics into digital society can offer a framework for addressing moral fragmentation and the ethical challenges of digital technologies. Classical Islamic ethics, as exemplified by *akhlaq*, provides a normative basis for ensuring that digital interactions align with broader moral and social values. In the digital age, where ethical conflicts are common and often magnified by anonymity and distance, the principles of *akhlaq* can guide individuals toward responsible and compassionate digital engagement. Furthermore, the ethical implications of digital interactions such as the spread of misinformation or the erosion of trust are deeply connected to the broader concept of *amanah* (trust), which plays a significant role in Islamic thought. By embracing these ethical principles, Muslim communities can build digital spaces that prioritize justice, inclusivity, and mutual respect, ensuring that digital technologies contribute positively to social cohesion rather than exacerbating fragmentation. This discussion highlights the enduring relevance of classical Islamic thought in the face of contemporary challenges and its potential to foster ethical, cohesive digital communities.

5. Comparison

Islamic philosophy on social cohesion, particularly through concepts like *ummah* and *akhlaq*, emphasizes the collective responsibility, shared moral values, and solidarity within a community. These principles advocate for a strong sense of belonging and interconnectedness, which are fundamental in maintaining social cohesion. In contrast, modern, technology driven models of social cohesion are often more fragmented and individualistic, focusing on technological solutions such as digital platforms that aim to create online communities. While digital platforms enable global connectivity, they also encourage the rise of personalized and individualistic beliefs and behaviors. This is in stark contrast to the Islamic perspective, which sees the individual as part of a collective whole with moral and

social obligations to others. The Islamic approach emphasizes ethical intentionality, where every action within the community is guided by shared principles of justice, responsibility, and care for one another. Technologically deterministic models, however, often lack such ethical grounding, relying more on technological solutions than on moral frameworks to achieve social cohesion.

Islamic philosophy strongly prioritizes communal bonds and moral solidarity over individualism, which is prevalent in digital culture. The concept of ummah places the community at the center, emphasizing that individual actions should align with the collective welfare. Akhlaq further supports this by promoting ethics that consider the well being of others, advocating for compassion, justice, and social responsibility. In contrast, digital culture often fosters individualism by allowing people to curate their identities and beliefs in isolation, leading to fragmented social interactions. The anonymity provided by digital platforms can encourage self interest, and individuals are often more concerned with personal gain or validation than with the collective good. This shift towards individualism is one of the significant challenges in maintaining social cohesion in the digital age. Islamic philosophy, however, continually reaffirms that true community can only be achieved through mutual respect, cooperation, and a shared moral vision, which counterbalances the isolation inherent in digital interactions.

Adopting Islamic philosophical concepts in contemporary post digital Muslim communities offers pragmatic solutions to address the fragmentation seen in digital spaces. By applying the principles of ummah and asabiyya, Muslim communities can build a sense of solidarity that transcends geographical and ideological divides. These concepts provide a moral and ethical foundation for digital engagement, ensuring that online interactions are grounded in values such as trust, justice, and collective responsibility. The practical implications of integrating these traditional values into modern digital practices are significant. For instance, the application of akhlaq in digital platforms can guide ethical behavior, promoting inclusivity and mutual respect online. This can help mitigate issues such as online harassment, misinformation, and the erosion of trust in digital spaces. Furthermore, by fostering community centered digital engagement, Islamic thought can help counter the atomizing effects of individualism in digital culture. While technology driven models focus primarily on facilitating communication and connectivity, Islamic philosophy offers a deeper, value based approach to ensuring that these connections lead to meaningful, cohesive interactions that enhance social unity.

6. Conclusion

This study revisits classical Islamic philosophical concepts, such as ummah, akhlaq, and asabiyya, and demonstrates their enduring relevance in addressing the fragmentation of post digital Muslim communities. The concept of ummah, traditionally emphasizing unity, offers a solution to the decentralization and individualism seen in digital platforms, where online spaces often foster isolated, fragmented identities. In contrast to the individualistic nature of modern digital culture, Islamic thought prioritizes community solidarity and shared moral purpose. Akhlaq (Islamic ethics) provides a normative framework for ethical digital engagement, promoting justice, responsibility, and mutual respect. Furthermore, the idea of asabiyya (social cohesion) plays a crucial role in fostering solidarity, even in digital spaces, helping to bridge the divisions exacerbated by digital culture. By revisiting these classical concepts, the study reveals their potential to rebuild cohesion in Muslim communities facing the challenges of the digital age.

Future research should explore how classical Islamic thought can be integrated into contemporary digital society, particularly in fostering community building and ethical solidarity. One area of potential study is the adaptation of the concept of ummah to digital platforms, focusing on how shared moral values can guide online communities toward greater solidarity. Additionally, further research could examine the role of akhlaq in shaping ethical behavior online, particularly in the context of issues like online harassment, misinformation, and digital exclusion. Investigating how these ethical frameworks can mitigate the negative effects of individualism and online polarization is another important avenue for exploration. Another key area for future research is the practical application of asabiyya in digital communities, exploring how collective consciousness and solidarity can be maintained in virtual environments where interactions are often less personal and more fragmented.

The study highlights the continued relevance of classical Islamic philosophical thought in navigating the ethical challenges posed by digital technologies. While digital platforms have revolutionized communication and access to information, they have also contributed to the fragmentation of communities and the erosion of shared moral values. Islamic philosophical concepts, such as *ummah* and *akhlaq*, offer a valuable moral framework for addressing these challenges. The idea of a digital *ummah*, underpinned by ethical principles and collective responsibility, can counter the individualism often fostered by online platforms. By applying these classical concepts to contemporary digital practices, Muslim communities can build more cohesive, responsible, and ethical online spaces. The integration of Islamic ethics into digital citizenship can guide individuals in navigating online interactions with respect and fairness, ensuring that the digital age does not undermine the core values that bind Muslim communities together.

To fully leverage the potential of classical Islamic thought in the digital age, future research should focus on practical applications that bridge traditional teachings with modern digital needs. Exploring how Islamic ethics can inform the design and regulation of digital platforms would provide a valuable contribution to the ethical governance of digital spaces. Research could investigate how principles like *akhlaq* can guide the development of more inclusive, just, and equitable digital ecosystems. Additionally, a deeper understanding of how *asabiyya* can be adapted to the digital context would be valuable in strengthening social bonds in online communities. Finally, research should explore the intersection of Islamic philosophy and emerging digital challenges, such as artificial intelligence and digital activism. By bridging traditional Islamic values with modern technological realities, future studies can help create a more ethical, cohesive digital society that is grounded in principles of solidarity, justice, and moral responsibility.

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