

# Hyperconnectivity and Spiritual Alienation: An Islamic Epistemological Approach to Cyberspace Ethics

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DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.47134/villages.v7i2.517>

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Received: 16-04-2026

Accepted: 16-05-2026

Published: 16-06-2026



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**Abstract:** This study examines the ethical crisis of hyperconnectivity and its implications for spiritual alienation within contemporary cyberspace. It argues that digital platforms are not neutral communication channels, but socio-technical environments shaped by algorithms, visibility, speed, and symbolic power. Through a qualitative library research design, this article analyzes recent national and international scholarship on digital ethics, Islamic epistemology, cyberculture, intrapersonal communication, and spiritual well-being. The study employs reflexive content analysis, critical discourse analysis, and philosophical hermeneutics to interpret the relationship between digital overload, post-truth communication, and the weakening of the *qalb*. The findings indicate that hyperconnectivity produces cognitive fragmentation, dependence on external validation, and a reduction of reflective practices such as tafakkur, muhasabah, and dhikr. To address this crisis, the article reconstructs Islamic communication ethics through the integrated lenses of Bayani, Burhani, and Irfani epistemology. Bayani ethics strengthens verification and truthful speech; Burhani ethics cultivates critical algorithmic literacy; and Irfani ethics protects spiritual intention and self-discipline. The study proposes a Theocentric-Anthropocentric model of cyberspace ethics, positioning digital interaction as a moral responsibility before God, the self, and society. This framework offers a spiritually grounded alternative to secular digital ethics by prioritizing truth, dignity, wisdom, and public benefit in online life today.

**Keywords:** Hyperconnectivity, Spiritual Alienation, Islamic Epistemology, Cyberspace Ethics, Hyperreality.

## Introduction

The twenty-first century has transformed human life into a condition of permanent digital connectedness, where communication is no longer limited by physical distance, social boundaries, or conventional time structures. Digital platforms now mediate daily interaction, learning, work, religious expression, and self-presentation, making cyberspace an inseparable part of contemporary existence. However, this expansion of connectivity does not automatically produce deeper human meaning. Digital well-being studies show that the relationship between digital practices and human flourishing is complex because online activities may generate both benefits and harms depending on their social, psychological, and technological conditions (Buchi, 2024). In this sense, hyperconnectivity creates an ethical paradox: it allows humans to communicate more frequently, yet it may weaken reflective awareness, spiritual focus, and authentic interpersonal presence.

This paradox becomes clearer when cyberspace is understood not as a neutral channel, but as a socio-technical environment shaped by algorithms, platform design, and user habits. Algorithmic media systems do not merely distribute information; they also influence what users see, how they respond, and how collective attention is organized ([Metzler & Garcia, 2024](#)). As a result, the digital subject can become dependent on external stimulation, comparison, and continuous visibility, leading to a subtle form of alienation from the self. In the Indonesian Muslim context, religious activities have also increasingly moved into digital environments, where students and young users often strengthen religious understanding through electronic media rather than direct traditional learning ([Chamadi et al., 2023](#)). Although this shift opens access to Islamic knowledge, it also requires ethical caution because spiritual learning mediated by screens can easily be mixed with emotional spectacle, fragmented authority, and performative religiosity.

The ethical crisis of hyperconnectivity is also intensified by the post-truth condition, where information is often accepted based on emotional attraction, repetition, popularity, or algorithmic visibility rather than truthfulness. In digital religion, social media has changed how Indonesian Muslims understand and practice religion, particularly through mediatization and hypermediation that reshape religious authority, community identity, and public expressions of piety ([Rohmawati et al., 2025](#)). This condition requires more than ordinary digital etiquette because the problem is not only rude communication, but also the weakening of epistemic discipline in verifying truth. Therefore, Islamic communication ethics must be directed toward the restoration of moral awareness, responsible information practices, and spiritual self-control in digital interaction, especially when online spaces are vulnerable to manipulation, exaggeration, and disinformation. In this framework, the ethical demand of digital communication is not merely to speak politely, but to preserve truth, dignity, and public benefit.

From an Islamic epistemological perspective, the crisis of hyperconnectivity can be addressed by reconnecting digital communication with knowledge, reason, and spiritual purification. Bayani epistemology emphasizes scriptural guidance and normative truth; Burhani epistemology strengthens rational and critical analysis; while Irfani epistemology restores inner awareness, sincerity, and spiritual self-discipline. This integration is relevant because social media overuse, Fear of Missing Out, and digital comparison can disturb Muslim mental health when spiritual dimensions are neglected ([Irawan et al., 2025](#)). Thus, cyberspace ethics in Islam should not be reduced to legal permissibility or technical regulation alone. It must become a holistic framework that protects the intellect, heart, dignity, and social order by transforming digital participation into a conscious act of truth-seeking, self-restraint, and moral responsibility before God.

## Methodology

This study applies a qualitative library research design to examine the relationship between hyperconnectivity, spiritual alienation, and Islamic communication ethics. Library research is appropriate because the focus of the study is not to measure user behavior

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statistically, but to interpret, compare, and synthesize conceptual arguments from authoritative academic sources. Recent methodological literature emphasizes that qualitative inquiry is suitable for exploring complex social phenomena because it produces contextual, reflective, and human-centered understanding rather than reducing reality to numerical indicators ([Lim, 2025](#)). In this research, the corpus consists of peer-reviewed national and international journal articles, books, and scholarly works published mainly between 2020 and 2026, selected based on relevance, academic credibility, and direct connection to digital ethics, Islamic epistemology, cyberculture, and communication philosophy. Library research is treated not merely as the collection of written materials, but as a systematic process of searching, evaluating, classifying, and synthesizing literature in order to construct new theoretical insight ([Jamaluddin et al., 2025](#)).

The data analysis was conducted through three complementary techniques: reflexive content analysis, critical discourse analysis, and philosophical hermeneutics. Reflexive content analysis was used to identify recurring concepts related to hyperconnectivity, digital alienation, post-truth communication, and Islamic moral responsibility, while maintaining the researcher's awareness of interpretive positioning during coding and categorization ([Nicmanis, 2024](#)). Critical discourse analysis was then employed to examine how digital platforms, algorithmic visibility, and online communication structures produce power relations, ideological framing, and symbolic domination within cyberspace ([Nurohmah & Sundasewu, 2024](#)). Finally, philosophical hermeneutics was used to reinterpret Islamic epistemological concepts such as Bayani, Burhani, Irfani, Qalb, Tafakkur, and Muhasabah within the contemporary context of digital life, allowing classical Islamic thought to be dialogically connected with modern digital sociology ([Gillo, 2021](#)). Through this methodological combination, the study develops a conceptual framework that is both critically grounded and spiritually oriented.

## Result and Discussion

### The Anatomy of Hyperconnectivity and the Simulacra of Cyberspace

To diagnose the ethical and spiritual crisis of the modern digital era, cyberspace must be understood not merely as a channel of communication, but as a complex discursive arena where power, ideology, visual symbols, algorithms, and user behavior intersect. Hyperconnectivity no longer refers only to the increasing speed or quantity of communication; it represents a deeper transformation in the way human cognition, social identity, and moral perception are constructed. In the contemporary digital landscape, users are continuously attached to algorithmic platforms that organize attention, shape visibility, and normalize constant online presence. Through the lens of multimodal critical discourse analysis, digital communication can be examined as a layered system in which texts, images, symbols, and platform structures produce meaning and influence social consciousness ([Nurohmah & Sundasewu, 2024](#)). Therefore, silence, solitude, and reflective distance are increasingly displaced by the demand for continuous interaction, making the human subject vulnerable to distraction, comparison, and symbolic domination within the digital environment.

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Viewed from a postmodern and Islamic philosophical perspective, cyberspace also functions as a field of hyperreality, where curated identities, viral narratives, and digital performances often replace authentic human presence. Social media users do not always encounter reality directly; rather, they engage with representations shaped by algorithmic preference, emotional intensity, and public validation. This condition weakens the epistemological foundation of truth because information is frequently accepted not through careful verification or rational reflection, but through repetition, visibility, and affective attraction. In Islamic thought, such a condition may be understood as a contemporary form of *ghurur*, or deceptive illusion, because the digital world promises connection and knowledge while often producing fragmentation, superficiality, and spiritual distraction. Consequently, the ethical challenge of hyperconnectivity is not only the misuse of technology, but the replacement of *Al-Haqq* with unstable digital appearances that compromise human moral agency, intellectual clarity, and spiritual awareness.

### **Intrapersonal Communication and the Crisis of Spiritual Alienation (*Al-Ightirab*)**

The most serious consequence of the hyperconnected digital era is not limited to social disruption, but extends to the weakening of intrapersonal communication, namely the inner dialogue through which a person evaluates the self, forms moral judgment, and searches for existential meaning. In Islamic psychology, this inner process is closely related to the *qalb*, which is not merely an emotional organ but a center of cognitive, moral, and spiritual awareness. Nugraha (2022) explains that the concept of *qalb* can be developed as a central construct in Islamic psychology because it connects human perception, ethical orientation, and spiritual receptivity. When digital life is dominated by constant notifications, algorithmic feeds, and compulsive visibility, the reflective space needed for *tafakkur*, *muhasabah*, and *dhikr* becomes increasingly disrupted. Recent studies on digital distraction show that the attention economy does not affect all users equally, but it does create serious challenges for attention regulation and self-control (Karki, 2024). This condition indicates that hyperconnectivity may weaken the capacity of the self to listen inwardly, making individuals more responsive to external digital stimuli than to their own spiritual conscience.

This disruption may develop into spiritual alienation because the individual begins to seek identity, worth, and emotional security from digital validation rather than from a stable relationship with God, the self, and moral truth. Alimour and Alrabeei (2025) argue that digital overload produces cognitive fragmentation, digital anxiety, and distorted self-concepts, showing that excessive digital exposure can reshape mental health beyond ordinary distraction. In Indonesian Islamic educational contexts, Nisa et al. (2024) also found that high engagement with visual social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok is associated with increased psychological stress, while Islamic concepts such as *fitrah*, *ihsan*, and *maqashid syariah* are important for building culturally and spiritually sensitive resilience. From the perspective of Islamic psychology, faith, *taqwa*, and the health of the *qalb* function as foundations for mental balance because the heart is understood as the center that influences the moral quality of human life (Mildaeni & Huda, 2024). Therefore,

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spiritual alienation in the digital age should be read not only as psychological exhaustion, but also as a crisis of the *qalb*, in which the human being becomes increasingly connected to digital networks while becoming increasingly distant from inner clarity, divine remembrance, and authentic selfhood.

### **Reconstructing Epistemology: The Tripartite Islamic Lens on Digital Ethics**

To respond to the epistemological crisis produced by hyperconnectivity, Islamic communication ethics must be built upon an integrative model that combines Bayani, Burhani, and Irfani orientations. The Bayani framework emphasizes textual authority, linguistic clarity, and normative guidance; therefore, it becomes a foundation for digital verification, ethical speech, and responsible information circulation. In cyberspace, this framework can be operationalized through *tabayyun*, *shiddiq*, *amanah*, and *qaulan sadida*, requiring users to examine the source, content, and moral consequences of every message before accepting or sharing it. Qur'anic communication ethics such as *qaulan sadida* remain relevant for Generation Z because they encourage clarity, verification, empathy, and responsibility in facing rapid information flows, online aggression, and digital misunderstanding ([Ependi & Adenan, 2025](#)). Thus, the Bayani approach does not merely preserve scriptural norms, but also slows down the impulsive logic of digital virality by placing truth and accountability above speed, popularity, and emotional reaction.

The Burhani framework complements Bayani ethics by cultivating rational critique, analytical literacy, and awareness of algorithmic power. Since social media algorithms shape what users see, how they interpret reality, and how they respond emotionally, digital ethics must include the ability to recognize platform mechanisms and resist passive consumption. Research on algorithmic awareness shows that users' understanding of algorithmic filtering influences their attitudes and behavioral responses toward social media content, making algorithmic literacy an important element of contemporary digital responsibility ([Oeldorf-Hirsch & Neubaum, 2023](#)). Meanwhile, the Irfani framework safeguards the inner dimension of digital life by restoring spiritual intention, self-restraint, and the purification of the *qalb*. This dimension is important because excessive internet use is not only a technical habit, but also relates to emotion regulation, self-control, and spiritual coping ([Hafizah & Uyun, 2023](#)). Therefore, a spiritually sound ethics of cyberspace must verify information, critique algorithms, and discipline the heart so that digital participation becomes an act of truth seeking rather than a submission to distraction.

### **Formulating a Theocentric-Anthropocentric Model of Cyberspace Ethics**

The synthesis of Islamic epistemological critique leads to the need for a Theocentric-Anthropocentric model of cyberspace ethics. Contemporary secular technology ethics remains important because it highlights privacy, fairness, accountability, transparency, and harm reduction; however, it often becomes insufficient when ethical responsibility is reduced to procedural regulation or human-to-human interaction alone. Green (2021) argues that technology ethics must be understood as a sociotechnical practice because ethical discourse can lose its transformative force when absorbed by corporate, technical, or

institutional interests. From an Islamic perspective, this limitation shows the need for an ethical model that connects digital responsibility with spiritual accountability before God. Cyberspace is not a morally empty space, but a field where human beings exercise their role as servants of God and responsible moral agents; therefore, every digital action must be evaluated through truth, justice, trust, human dignity, and the spiritual quality of the user's inner life.

In this model, digital *adab* becomes the practical expression of the user's moral and spiritual balance in online interaction. Islamic cyberspace ethics requires more than technical compliance or polite communication; it demands self-restraint, responsibility, wisdom, protection of human dignity, and refusal to participate in digital hostility, manipulation, or the commodification of outrage. Herdiana et al. (2025) explain that *tauhid* based digital civility connects online behavior with spiritual consciousness, respect for others, and human responsibility as *khalifah*. Similarly, Gunawan et al. (2025) emphasize that Islamic digital ethics should be grounded in *tauḥīd*, *'adl*, *ḥikmah*, *amānah*, and moral responsibility in responding to technological challenges. Ghaly (2024) also shows that Islamic ethics in the age of artificial intelligence requires Muslims to rethink technological practice through moral accountability and human flourishing. Thus, a Theocentric-Anthropocentric model enables Muslim users to engage modern digital networks without being enslaved by virality, spectacle, or algorithmic desire, because cyberspace becomes a medium for *ḥikmah*, public benefit, and accountability before God.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that hyperconnectivity has reshaped human communication into a digital condition marked by speed, visibility, algorithmic influence, and constant interaction. Although digital platforms expand access to knowledge, social connection, and religious expression, they also create ethical and spiritual risks when human attention becomes dependent on external validation, emotional stimulation, and algorithmic repetition. Cyberspace, therefore, cannot be understood as a neutral medium. It functions as a socio-technical environment that shapes perception, identity, truth, and moral behavior. In this context, the crisis of digital life is not only technological but also epistemological and spiritual, because it weakens reflective awareness, reduces the discipline of verification, and distances the human self from inner clarity and divine remembrance.

The study also affirms that Islamic communication ethics offers a holistic response to this crisis through the integration of Bayani, Burhani, and Irfani epistemology. Bayani strengthens truthful speech, verification, and normative responsibility; Burhani develops rational critique and awareness of algorithmic power; while Irfani restores spiritual intention, self-restraint, and the purification of the qalb. These three orientations form the foundation for a Theocentric Anthropocentric model of cyberspace ethics, in which digital interaction is viewed as a moral responsibility before God, the self, and society. Through this model, Muslims are encouraged to use digital technology without becoming controlled by virality, distraction, or symbolic performance. Thus, ethical digital participation must be directed toward truth, dignity, wisdom, public benefit, and spiritual accountability.

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