

# Reconstructing Digital Uzlah as an Intrapersonal Communication Strategy: An Islamic Ethical Response to the Pathology of Hyperconnectivity

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**Abstract:** This article examines digital *uzlah* as an Islamic communication ethic for responding to hyperconnectivity, algorithmic distraction, and the weakening of intrapersonal communication in contemporary society. Using qualitative library research, the study analyzes classical Islamic ethical thought, communication theory, critical media studies, and recent literature on digital detox, social media addiction, phubbing, echo chambers, self-control, and digital well-being. The analysis applies qualitative content analysis, critical discourse analysis, and philosophical hermeneutics to reinterpret *uzlah* from a classical practice of withdrawal into a selective, conscious, and spiritually oriented strategy of digital self-restraint. The findings show that hyperconnectivity converts attention into an economic resource, intensifies dependence on notifications and social validation, and reduces the reflective space needed for self-awareness, moral judgment, and remembrance of God. Digital *uzlah* is therefore proposed as a practical framework consisting of temporary disconnection, digital spatial curation, and cognitive curation. These practices help users filter harmful content, resist algorithmic pressure, reclaim time, and restore inner dialogue. The study concludes that digital *uzlah* is not technological rejection, but an ethical discipline that enables Muslims to use digital media with awareness, self-control, truthfulness, and spiritual responsibility in the post-truth era. It contributes to communication studies by linking spirituality, media ethics, and resilience.

**Keywords:** Digital *Uzlah*, Intrapersonal Communication, Islamic Ethics, Hyperconnectivity, Communication Pathology

## Introduction

The landscape of twenty-first-century communication is marked by a condition in which human beings are no longer merely connected, but continuously surrounded by digital signals, notifications, social media flows, and algorithmic stimulation. This hyperconnected environment changes the boundary between private reflection and public exposure, making silence and solitude increasingly difficult to maintain. In such a situation, intrapersonal communication becomes one of the most affected dimensions of human life because the self is constantly pulled outward by comparison, visibility, and fear of being left behind. Recent research shows that Fear of Missing Out is closely related to problematic social media use through social comparison and self-esteem, indicating that digital life can shape how individuals evaluate themselves ([Servidio et al., 2024](#)). Therefore, the crisis of

hyperconnectivity is not only technological, but also existential, because it weakens the inner space where self-awareness, moral evaluation, and spiritual orientation should develop.

In response to this problem, the idea of digital disconnection has emerged as an effort to limit digital connectivity in order to support well-being. However, recent communication studies emphasize that disconnection is not automatically beneficial for everyone; its effectiveness depends on why, how, when, and for whom it is practiced ([Vanden Abeele, 2024](#)). A systematic review and meta-analysis also shows that digital social media detox can reduce depressive symptoms, although its effects on broader well-being indicators remain complex ([Ramadhan et al., 2024](#)). This means that digital detox should not be understood merely as reducing screen time, but as an intentional practice that reorganizes the relationship between the self, technology, and meaning. In this context, Islamic communication ethics can enrich the discussion by moving beyond productivity-based detox toward spiritually grounded self-regulation.

The concept of *uzlah* provides a relevant Islamic foundation for this reconstruction. In classical Islamic spirituality, *uzlah* is associated with withdrawal for purification, contemplation, and self-discipline; in the digital era, it can be reinterpreted as a selective and mindful distance from algorithmic domination. Hamdani and Muslim HD (2025) propose Qur'anic-based digital *uzlah* as a paradigm that integrates *tazkiyatun nafs*, *tafakkur*, and *mujahadah an-nafs* into digital detox practices. Similarly, Qur'anic responses to brain rot and doomscrolling emphasize self-control, time awareness, and spiritual purification as ways to restore mental and moral balance ([Arsyad & Hasanah, 2025](#)). Thus, digital *uzlah* does not mean rejecting technology completely, but creating sacred pauses within digital life so that the human being can recover inner clarity, rebuild intrapersonal communication, and use technology with ethical and spiritual consciousness.

## Methodology

This study applies a qualitative library research design to examine digital *uzlah* as a conceptual response to hyperconnectivity, digital overload, and the weakening of intrapersonal communication. This design is appropriate because the research focuses on textual interpretation, philosophical reconstruction, and theoretical synthesis rather than field-based statistical measurement. The data consist of primary and secondary sources, including classical Islamic ethical texts, contemporary communication theory, critical media studies, and journal articles published mainly between 2020 and 2026. The literature is selected through documentation techniques by tracing relevant works in scholarly databases and journal portals using keywords such as “digital *uzlah*,” “digital detox,” “hyperconnectivity,” “intrapersonal communication,” and “Islamic ethics.” The analysis combines qualitative content analysis, critical discourse analysis, and philosophical hermeneutics. Content analysis is used to classify major themes, discourse analysis examines how digital platforms shape human consciousness, and hermeneutics reinterprets *uzlah* from classical Sufi practice into a contemporary strategy of ethical digital self-restraint. Through this procedure, the study synthesizes Western digital media criticism and Islamic

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epistemology to formulate digital *uzlah* as a spiritually grounded model for restoring self-awareness, moral reflection, and inner communication.

## Result and Discussion

### The Pathology of Hyperconnectivity and Algorithmic Hegemony in Contemporary Communication

The contemporary communication ecosystem has moved beyond ordinary connectivity into a condition of hyperconnectivity, where smartphones, social media, and digital platforms are embedded in almost every part of daily life. This condition promises faster communication and wider access to information, yet it also turns human attention into a valuable economic resource. Social media platforms are designed to maintain user engagement, making attention, time, and emotional response part of the logic of the digital economy ([Bhargava & Velasquez, 2021](#)). As a result, communication is no longer only a process of exchanging meaning, but also a system that captures, directs, and monetizes human awareness. The stronger the dependence on notifications, likes, and continuous updates, the weaker the space for silence, reflection, and critical judgment becomes.

This hyperconnected environment also produces communication pathologies in both personal and social life. At the interpersonal level, high intensity and addiction to social media may encourage phubbing behavior, where individuals are physically present but psychologically absorbed by their devices ([Gouwtama, 2024](#)). At the collective level, social media can strengthen echo chambers by repeatedly exposing users to similar narratives and separating them from alternative perspectives ([Cinelli et al., 2021](#)). Therefore, hyperconnectivity creates a problematic communication environment when the number of digital connections increases, but the depth of meaning, empathy, attention, and rational verification decreases.

### Disruption of Intrapersonal Communication: The Collapse of Inner Dialogue

Digital *uzlah* may be understood as a contemporary Islamic strategy for restoring inner communication in an age of excessive connectivity. It does not require total rejection of technology, but encourages selective distance from digital platforms so that the self can regain attention, silence, and reflective awareness. Recent studies on digital detox show that temporary reduction of digital media use can support psychological well-being, especially when it is practiced intentionally rather than as a forced separation from technology ([Afsyari & Hastuti, 2026](#); [Marciano et al., 2024](#)). In this sense, digital *uzlah* becomes more than screen-time management; it is a conscious effort to rebuild the relationship between the self, technology, and spiritual purpose.

This strategy is also relevant because hyperconnectivity often weakens self-control and increases dependence on continuous digital stimulation. Research on adolescents in Padang shows that stronger self-control is associated with lower social media addiction, indicating that ethical digital behavior requires internal discipline ([Pratiwi et al., 2024](#)). Similarly, international research on university students found that mindfulness is

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negatively associated with smartphone addiction and positively related to digital life balance, suggesting that awareness and self-regulation are important for healthier technology use ([Aldbyani et al., 2025](#)). Therefore, digital *uzlah* can be positioned as an Islamic communication ethic that protects intrapersonal dialogue, strengthens moral autonomy, and transforms digital disconnection into a path of self-purification.

### **Genealogy and Epistemological Evolution of Uzlah in Islamic Tradition**

In response to the existential crisis created by hyperconnectivity, the Islamic concept of *uzlah* may be reinterpreted as a disciplined effort to protect the inner self from excessive digital noise. Classical *uzlah* does not mean hatred of society or permanent withdrawal from human responsibility; rather, it is a contextual practice of temporary separation for preserving faith, recovering moral clarity, and avoiding harmful environments. Recent hadith-based research explains that *uzlah* becomes meaningful when it is used to protect religion, restore spiritual balance, and avoid morally corrupt surroundings without neglecting social obligations ([Azahary, 2025](#)). In the digital age, such harmful surroundings are not limited to physical crowds, but also appear through endless scrolling, toxic comments, public shaming, hate speech, and unverified online narratives.

Therefore, digital *uzlah* should be understood as cognitive and behavioral distance from algorithmic pressure, not as total rejection of technology. It requires users to pause, filter information, reduce harmful interaction, and restore the practices of reflection, self-control, and remembrance of God. Studies on social media ethics show that online ghibah may appear as mocking comments, cyberbullying, public humiliation, and the circulation of unverified information, making *tabayyun* and digital literacy necessary moral safeguards ([Abas & Nasrulloh, 2025](#)). At the same time, research on digital and social media detox indicates that taking temporary breaks from digital platforms can support well-being, although its effects depend on how disconnection is practiced ([Liu et al., 2025](#); [Radtke et al., 2022](#)). Thus, digital *uzlah* becomes an Islamic intrapersonal communication strategy that combines ethical media restraint, mindful technology use, and spiritual self-protection.

### **Reconstructing Digital Deprivation as an Intrapersonal Defense Mechanism**

Digital deprivation may be understood as a conscious, selective, and structured withdrawal from excessive digital connectivity in order to restore inner awareness, ethical self-control, and spiritual orientation. Unlike ordinary digital detox, which is often discussed as a practical method for reducing stress or improving productivity, digital deprivation carries a transcendental aim: it creates space for intrapersonal communication, self-evaluation, and renewed closeness to God. This practice can operate through temporal deprivation, such as turning off devices before sleep, during worship, or at certain reflective moments, so that the self is not continuously dominated by notifications and algorithmic stimulation. Digital detox research shows that limiting digital exposure can be designed through different intervals, levels of intervention, and forms of technological assistance, while mental health studies suggest that detox strategies must be applied contextually rather than mechanically ([Mirbabaie et al., 2022](#); [Setia et al., 2025](#)).

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Digital deprivation also requires digital spatial curation and cognitive curation. Digital spatial curation means intentionally cleaning one's online environment by avoiding accounts, feeds, and conversations that produce envy, slander, hoaxes, hostility, or spiritual emptiness. Cognitive curation is deeper: the user may remain active online, but refuses to let digital metrics such as likes, followers, and viral visibility define personal worth. Studies on digital self-control tools show that users need strategies to reduce distraction and regain agency over their digital habits ([Biedermann et al., 2024](#)). From an Islamic perspective, this inner discipline is strengthened by *muraqabah*, because awareness of God's supervision is significantly related to self-control in social media use ([Cholili et al., 2025](#)). In addition, *qaulan sadida* provides an ethical foundation for truthful, responsible, and beneficial communication in the digital era ([Hulawa & Kasmiati, 2025](#)). Thus, digital deprivation becomes a positive internal echo chamber where the conscience can be heard again, enabling users to practice *tabayyun*, speak truthfully, and engage technology without surrendering their spiritual autonomy.

### **Synthesis of Islamic Ethics: Maintaining Socio-Communicative Sanity in the Post-Truth Era**

The implementation of digital *uzlah* implies a new orientation in Islamic communication ethics. Previously, ethical discussion often focused on the external form of communication, such as polite speech, avoidance of slander, and prohibition of harmful expression. Digital *uzlah* expands this concern by emphasizing the condition of the inner self before communication occurs. A person cannot consistently produce truthful and responsible messages if their attention, emotions, and judgment are already polluted by excessive digital stimulation. Therefore, Islamic communication ethics must address not only what people say online, but also what they consume, how they process information, and how they discipline their awareness.

Digital *uzlah* also functions as an ethical filter in the post-truth era. When artificial intelligence, synthetic media, and automated misinformation increase the speed and scale of false narratives, digital literacy alone may not be sufficient. Human beings also need self-control, reflective distance, and careful judgment to distinguish truth from manipulation. In this sense, digital *uzlah* strengthens moral discernment by creating a pause before reacting, sharing, commenting, or believing digital information. It allows users to resist impulsive communication and to evaluate online content with greater responsibility.

Furthermore, digital *uzlah* reconstructs the meaning of time in Islamic communication ethics. In the digital economy, time is often captured by endless scrolling, notifications, and engagement metrics. From an Islamic perspective, time is a moral trust that must be directed toward worship, reflection, family, knowledge, and social benefit. By practicing digital *uzlah*, Muslims reclaim sovereignty over their time and attention. This practice is not a rejection of technology, but a disciplined way to ensure that technology remains a tool for human flourishing rather than a force that weakens the soul, intellect, and ethical communication.

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## Conclusion

This study concludes that hyperconnectivity has created a serious disruption in contemporary communication by weakening the human capacity for silence, reflection, self-control, and meaningful intrapersonal dialogue. Digital platforms do not merely connect people; they also shape attention, emotion, perception, and behavior through notifications, algorithmic stimulation, social comparison, and endless information flows. As a result, individuals may become more responsive to digital signals than to their own conscience, moral awareness, and spiritual orientation. In this condition, the crisis of communication is not only external, but also internal, because the self gradually loses the space needed for reflection, ethical judgment, and remembrance of God.

The study also affirms that digital *uzlah* offers a relevant Islamic ethical response to this crisis. Digital *uzlah* does not mean rejecting technology completely, but practicing selective, conscious, and disciplined distance from digital excess. Through temporary disconnection, digital spatial curation, cognitive curation, and ethical self-restraint, individuals can regain control over attention, time, and online behavior. This practice enables Muslims to protect themselves from distraction, toxic interaction, misinformation, and spiritually empty digital consumption. Therefore, digital *uzlah* can be understood as an Islamic intrapersonal communication strategy that restores inner clarity, strengthens moral autonomy, and transforms digital media use into a more mindful, truthful, and spiritually responsible practice in the post-truth era.

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