

## Women's Digital Activities During The 'Iddah Period: A Perspective Of Islamic Law And Social Media Reality

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### Abstract

Digital transformation has significantly reshaped social interaction patterns, including how Muslim women express themselves after divorce. The period of *'iddah*, which is traditionally understood in Islamic law as a waiting period that restricts women's public presence and activity, now confronts new realities: women's virtual presence through digital platforms such as Instagram. This study aims to examine the digital activities of Muslim women during *'iddah* by analyzing the cases of content creators Ria Ricis and Natalie Holscher, and to compare these practices with the classical jurisprudential views of the four major Sunni schools of thought. Employing a qualitative approach, this research uses literature analysis and case study methods, framed by the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and Islamic gender justice. The findings reveal that classical Islamic jurisprudence generally emphasizes restrictions on women's mobility and appearance during *'iddah*, yet offers no explicit guidance on digital behavior in modern contexts. Meanwhile, the digital practices of the selected figures do not necessarily contradict Islamic ethical values, especially when driven by productive motives and conducted within the bounds of modesty. Therefore, this study argues for a contextual and gender-sensitive reinterpretation of Islamic law to respond to the evolving digital realities faced by contemporary Muslim women.

**Keywords:** *'Iddah, Social Media, Content Creator, Islamic Law.*

## Introduction

Social media has transformed from a mere communication platform to a social space that mediates human life experiences, including personal matters such as divorce and the transition period afterwards. (Doni, 2017) In the digital era, private and public spaces no longer have strict boundaries, especially on platforms such as Instagram that display visual and personal narratives in one package consumed by millions of people. Instagram has become a medium of expression, imaging, as well as an economic tool for many women, including those who are undergoing the 'iddah period after divorce. (Muhsin, Muhammad Najib Daud, 2023)

Activities such as sharing daily life, promoting products, or simply greeting followers are now considered part of social existence. (Bengtsson & Johansson, 2022) One interesting example is Ria Ricis, a content creator and celebrity who remained active on social media shortly after her divorce. She often uploads daily vlogs, shares moments with her child, and engages in high-value endorsement cooperation activities. (Savitri Hartono, 2018) This activity shows that for some women, social media is not just a place to interact, but also part of work and self-expression, including in the 'iddah phase, which is an obligation in Islamic law.

Similarly, Natalie Holscher, after her divorce from comedian Sule, continues to actively share her activities, including promotional content, life with children, and physical appearance that continues to attract public attention. (Lee et al., 2019) This phenomenon shows how women's identities during the 'iddah period are no longer pulled towards isolation, but instead get space and even demand to continue to exist digitally. (Ghazali, 2022) This raises a critical question: how does Islamic law respond to women's digital activities during the 'iddah period? Can digital space be equated with leaving the house physically, as discussed in classical fiqh literature?

Islamic law provides meaning. The 'iddah period is not just a waiting time after divorce or the death of the husband, but has deep theological and social values. The main purpose of the 'iddah period is to ensure clarity of lineage, as a form of respect for the marriage bond, and to provide psychological recovery space for women. (Supriyadi, 2020) In a spiritual context, 'iddah is also an opportunity for women to reflect, reorganize life, and maintain the sanctity of relationships between the sexes (Sunarto, 2021).

Scholars agree that during the 'iddah period, women are required to maintain adab, both in appearance, social activities, and in maintaining interactions with non-mahram men. (Sunarto & Liana, 2021) In general, activities such as leaving the house without an urgent need, dressing up flashy, or preening are considered incompatible with the principle of prudence in the 'iddah period. However, this limitation is generally discussed in the context of the physical space of leaving the house to work, travel, or attend social events. Meanwhile, technological developments are expanding forms of social interaction into virtual ones, which have not been explicitly studied in the classical fiqh literature. (Hafidz Syuhud, 2020)

When women such as Ria Ricis or Natalie Holscher continue to actively appear with makeup and fashionable clothing in digital content during the post-divorce period, the question arises whether such actions violate 'iddah norms. Although there is no direct physical interaction, public exposure to their appearance and activities through social media still gives the impression of an active social presence. This points to the need to re-elaborate on the meaning of "staying at home" and "maintaining modesty" in a more contextualized Islamic legal framework.

In the Islamic jurisprudential tradition, scholars from the four main schools of thought have different views on women's activities during the 'iddah period. The Hanafi school, for example, allows women to leave the house during the day to work, provided they return before nightfall. The Maliki and Shafi'i schools are stricter, prohibiting women from leaving the house during the 'iddah period except in emergencies, including avoiding unnecessary social interactions. The Hanbali school has a similar position, emphasizing the importance of maintaining honor and not going out without need. (Hidayat, 2018)

However, the entire discussion in this classical school is generally based on the assumption of physical social activity. Women who "go out" are literally the center of attention, and restrictions are aimed at preventing slander and maintaining dignity. There has been no in-depth discussion of social activity that takes place digitally, where women remain at home but are socially "visible" to thousands or millions of people in the media. This is a gray area in classical Islamic law. (Ahmad Khoiri, 2020)

Rapid social transformation due to digitalization demands a reinterpretation of classical Islamic legal texts. (Riwayi, 2021) In traditional societies, women undergoing 'iddah are assumed to be in a closed domestic space with minimal social activity. But today, women

can still be physically at home, but very active in digital social spaces. In other words, the boundaries between silence and appearance, between private and public, have fundamentally shifted. This requires a review of fiqh norms that have been based on physical space and direct interaction. (Jannah & Firdaus, 2023)

This shift also has an impact on the way Muslim women are perceived and live their religious values. If in the traditional context, women who undergo 'iddah are considered to show piety by being alone and limiting their activities, then in the digital era, this form of piety may appear in different forms: sharing motivation, da'wah, or even testimonies of personal experiences that provide lessons for others. But on the other hand, digital existence can also provoke comments, slander, or even visual exploitation, which is contrary to the purpose of 'iddah itself. (Jannah & Mahmudi, 2021)

The distance between classical fiqh views and contemporary social practices of women in the 'iddah period raises the need to conduct serious comparative studies. This study is important not to contradict the text and context, but instead to find an epistemological bridge so that Islamic law remains alive and relevant. In this context, the maqashid al-shari'ah approach can be an analytical tool that balances the demands of the text with contemporary social realities. (Magfuroh, 2021)

This study is also important to prevent the dichotomy between "pious women" according to classical texts and "active women" in digital reality. By understanding the practices of such content creators, we can capture the emotional, economic, and social dynamics that surround women after divorce. Thus, the law cannot stand on text alone, but must be brought to life through the real experiences faced by Muslims, especially women, in this very open era.

Through this research, it is hoped that a re-reading of Islamic legal texts on 'iddah will emerge, as well as the formation of an interpretation methodology that is inclusive of changing times. (Tanuri, 2024) This study will not only enrich the treasures of Islamic law but also provide a safe and just space for Muslim women undergoing the 'iddah period amid the era of information openness and digital media.

The phenomenon of digital activities of Muslim women who remain active on social media during the 'iddah period, as seen in public figures such as Ria Ricis and Natalie Holscher, raises critical questions in the realm of Islamic law. Although they do not physically leave their homes, their existence and social interactions remain present in the digital public sphere. This creates tension between classical fiqh norms that emphasize restrictions on women's activities during the 'iddah period and

contemporary social realities that demand women to remain productive and exist digitally. Therefore, the formulation of the problem in this study is how the views of scholars from various schools of fiqh on women's activities during the 'iddah period, and how contemporary practices on social media, especially on Instagram, show a shift in norms that need to be studied critically and comparatively.

This study aims to analyze and compare the views of the scholars of the fiqh madhhab regarding women's activities during the 'iddah period with contemporary practices carried out by Muslimah content creators on social media, especially Instagram. Through a comparative approach, this research aims to reveal the tension between traditional norms and modern practices and evaluate the extent to which Islamic law can respond to digital dynamics in maintaining Sharia values without ignoring the social context. Thus, this research is expected to contribute to the development of contextualized, gender-just, and relevant fiqh discourse in the era of social media.

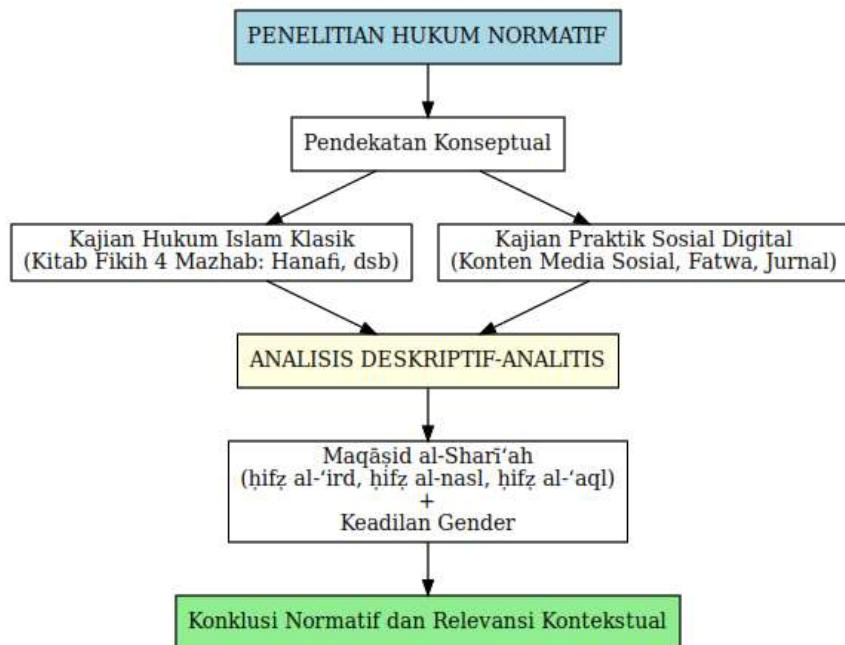
## **Research Method**

This research is a normative legal research with a comparative approach. (Muhaimin, 2020) The focus is on examining Islamic legal norms related to women's activities during the 'iddah period, as well as their interpretation in the context of digital social life. A conceptual approach is used to parse and analyze basic concepts in Islamic fiqh, such as 'iddah, *tabarruj*, *ḥifẓ al-'ird*, and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, which are then contextualized with social dynamics in the digital media era. This research does not involve respondents or empirical subjects directly, but relies on a literature review as the main source of data construction.

Data collection was conducted through *library research*, (Abdulkadir, 2004) By tracing primary legal sources in the form of classical fiqh books from the four madhhab (Hanafi, Maliki, Syafi'i, and Hanbali). In addition, secondary data was obtained from various modern literatures such as scientific journals, legal articles, fatwas, works of contemporary Islamic legal thinkers, and digital documentation related to the practices of Muslim women on social media, especially in the post-divorce period. Content from platforms such as Instagram is used as illustrative material to see the actual dynamics between legal texts and the social reality of Muslim women. (Marzuki, 2011)

Data analysis is carried out descriptively-analytically, (Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, 2020) Namely, by describing and elaborating Islamic legal norms based on primary and secondary sources, then comparing them with the social reality observed in the practice of

women's digital activities during the *'iddah* period. This research uses the maqāsid al-sharī'ah analysis knife, especially in the aspects of *ḥifẓ al-nasl* (protection of lineage), *ḥifẓ al-'ird* (protection of honor), and *ḥifẓ al-'aql* (social awareness), to examine the relevance, flexibility, and responsiveness of fiqh norms in the face of changing times. The gender justice approach is also used as a normative consideration in assessing the extent to which Islamic law provides space for women to remain socially and economically active without losing the value of spirituality during the *'iddah* period.



**Figure 1.** Normative Research Design of Iddah Activities in the Digital Age

## Results and Discussion

### 1. *Description of Women's Digital Practices after Divorce: Case Studies of Ria Ricis and Natalie Holscher*

In the context of social transformation influenced by advances in communication technology, social media has become the main instrument in shaping identity, building social relations, and maintaining economic existence. Post-divorce Muslim women no longer place themselves in a passive private space, but actively form

self-narratives in the digital space. (Savitri Hartono, 2018) This phenomenon is evident in two Indonesian public figures, Ria Ricis and Natalie Holscher, who both maintain the intensity of digital activities through Instagram despite being in a period which, according to classical Islamic law, is referred to as the 'iddah period. Ria Ricis, for example, continues to upload daily content in the form of vlogs, product promotions, and aesthetic photos of herself with her child. (Husein & Slama, 2018) She even continues to do endorsements and product reviews in a format that requires her to look neat, fashionable, and sometimes full of cheerful expressions. Similarly, Natalie Holscher, who, after her divorce from comedian Sule, continues to share entertainment videos, including musical performances and beauty product promotions, in a visually appealing style. Both figures illustrate how the digital space has become an extension of women's personal and professional lives.

Interestingly, although they do not explicitly mention being in the 'iddah period, the public is aware that these times coincide with the post-divorce period, (Himmah et al., 2022) In Islamic law, women are required to undergo a certain waiting period. (Handini et al., 2021) This opens up room for debate: can their activities be considered as a form of violation of the ethics of the 'iddah period, or instead as a form of adaptation to the demands of contemporary socio-economic life? When referring to the classical fiqh tradition, women's activities during the 'iddah period, especially in the context of raj'i divorce, are often restricted, including the prohibition of leaving the house, adorning, and interacting freely with the opposite sex. (Hidayat, 2018) However, in the contemporary context, the boundaries between private and public spaces are blurred. Ria Ricis, although physically staying at home, can reach millions of people through a single upload. She is socially present in the digital public space, not as a passive figure, but as an active actor who organizes the rhythm of discourse, values, and even norms.

From the perspective of Islamic law, this kind of activity certainly requires an assessment that is not solely based on literal text, but also through a contextual approach. (Firdausi, 2019) In this case, it is necessary to see the motivation and substance of the digital activity: whether it is merely to show joy and public consumption, or whether there are educational, inspirational, and economic fulfillment elements. In many cases, women's active involvement in social media after divorce is not only an expression of personal freedom but also part of a strategy to survive and maintain economic stability, especially

for those who become single mothers. (Ridgway, 2024) If so, then the reading of the law of 'iddah cannot only stop at formalistic prohibitions, but must move on to deeper ethical questions: how can Islamic law still maintain the value of women's honor while not restricting their life force in the midst of a digital world that demands active involvement? The case of Ria Ricis and Natalie Holscher is an important window to understand the shifting values in contemporary Muslim society, as well as a serious challenge for fiqh to adapt wisely without losing the spirit of sharia.

## 2. *The views of the schools of jurisprudence on women's activities during the 'Iddah period*

In classical Islamic jurisprudence, the 'iddah period is a time that is explicitly regulated by several restrictions aimed specifically at women after divorce or the death of the husband. (Saputera & Lamunte, 2020) The main purpose is to maintain the benefit, both in terms of clarity of lineage, moral protection, and as a form of respect for the marriage bond that has ended. (Hayati, 2017) However, in the course of the history of Islamic law, the interpretation of the space for women's movement during the 'iddah period shows quite striking variations between the schools of fiqh. For example, according to the Hanafi school, a woman who is in 'iddah due to divorce is allowed to leave the house during the day for urgent needs or work, as long as she returns home before nightfall. In contrast, the Maliki and Shafi'i madhhabs have a more restrictive view: women are obliged to stay at home throughout the 'iddah period and are not allowed to go out except in emergencies such as earning a living or the absence of those who support them. The Hanbali school also emphasizes that women should remain in their husband's house or the house where they live during the 'iddah period, with strict restrictions on social mobility. (Lestari, 2018)

At the center of all these prohibitions are two main aspects: *khurūj al-mar'ah min al-bayt* (going out of a woman's house) and *al-tabarruj* (adorning or appearing conspicuously in public) (Magfuroh, 2021). Both are considered to have the potential to cause fitnah (social moral disruption) and contradict the value of tranquility and contemplation, which is the essence of the 'iddah period. This view is formed in the context of a traditional communal and patriarchal society, where women's activities are highly oriented towards the domestic sphere. In that framework, staying at home means being safe, being invisible means maintaining honor. However, social, economic and technological changes have made these principles less simple in



application. Does the prohibition on leaving the house also apply to women who remain physically at home but are present in the digital public sphere? Can appearing in visual form through social media be categorized as *tabarruj* which is prohibited by classical texts? (Ahmad Khoiri, 2020)

The absence of explicit discussion of digital activities in the fiqh literature shows that the classical fiqh discourse has not yet reached the new phenomena that arise from the development of modern communication technology. Therefore, classical fiqh texts cannot be directly used to answer contemporary issues without first going through a contextualization process. If digital activities are considered as a form of social participation, then it must be seen whether the participation contains elements that damage the maqāṣid of the 'iddah period such as causing slander, playing on the emotions of ex-spouses, or lowering the value of women's spirituality. However, if the activity actually maintains survival, provides education, or becomes a means of da'wah, then it is possible to interpret it as part of a justified benefit. Therefore, it is necessary to study contemporary fiqh that is more adaptive, critical, and not trapped in rigid legal formalism. Dynamic interpretation is a necessity so that Islamic law is not alienated from the reality of its people, especially women who are in the vortex of changing times.

### 3. *A Comparison between Classical Texts and Contemporary Practice*

The encounter between classical fiqh texts and contemporary practices of Muslim women in the 'iddah period reveals a deep epistemological tension between norms and reality. (Asghar Ali Engineer, 2022) On the one hand, classical fiqh contains strict normative statements such as the prohibition of leaving the house, the prohibition of adornment, the prohibition of accepting proposals, and the recommendation to stay more silent as a form of spiritual introspection (Wahyudi, 2016). On the other hand, in a contemporary reality that is highly digitally connected, the boundaries between private and public spaces are no longer linear. (Mandjarreki, 2018) Figures like Ria Ricis and Natalie Holscher do not physically leave the house, but their presence in digital space through uploading photos, promotional videos, and interacting with audiences is a very real form of public participation. This phenomenon shows that women today are able to reach out to the wider community from within their homes, a possibility that was unimaginable to the classical fuqaha.

In fiqh texts, the permissibility of leaving the house for women who are performing 'iddah or *ihdād* becomes a problem in the

community, especially when it is related to the needs of life and daily social activities. The differences of opinion among the four schools of fiqh show the diversity of scholarly views on the limits of women's mobility in the transition period after divorce or the death of a husband. Three schools of thought, namely Hanafi, Maliki, and Hanbali, allow women in the *'iddah* period to leave the house during the day to fulfill their needs, as long as they return home before nightfall and do not stay overnight elsewhere. In contrast, the Shafi'i school of thought strictly prohibits women in *'iddah* from leaving the house, both during the day and at night, as a form of prudence in maintaining honor and the principle of *habsu nafs* (self-restraint). On the other hand, in classical fiqh texts, there are also different views regarding the calculation of the *'iddah* period itself. (Mansyur, 2012)

As for the *iddah* count for women, according to 4 madhhabs, namely Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali. The four madhhabs differ in opinion regarding the *iddah* count (Al-Juzairi, 2017), where what is done by content creators does not pay attention to the *iddah* count. The following is an explanation of the *iddah* count according to the four madhhabs:

**Table 1.** Iddah Counts According to the Four Madhhabs

No.	Type of Iddah	Hanafi Madhha	Madzhab Maliki	Shafi'I Madhhab	Hambali Madhhab
1	Iddah of death	Iddah of death: a. If she is not pregnant, then her <i>iddah</i> is 4 months and 10 days. b. If she is pregnant, then the <i>iddah</i> is until she gives	Iddah of death: a. If she is not pregnant, then her <i>iddah</i> is 4 months and 10 days. b. If she is pregnant, then the <i>iddah</i> is until she gives	A woman's <i>'iddah</i> due to the death of her husband, whether she is pregnant or not, is four months and ten days.	A woman's <i>'iddah</i> due to the death of her husband, whether she is pregnant or not, is four months and ten days.

No.	Type of Iddah	Hanafi Madhhab	Madzhab Maliki	Shafi'I Madhhab	Hambali Madhhab
		birth.			
2	Iddah of a Pregnant Woman	The Iddah of a pregnant woman is until she gives birth (whether divorced, alive, or dead).	The Iddah of a pregnant woman is until she gives birth (whether divorced, alive, or dead).	The Iddah of a pregnant woman is until she gives birth (whether divorced, alive, or dead).	The Iddah of a pregnant woman is until she gives birth (whether divorced, alive, or dead).
3	Iddah of a woman who is still menstruating	'Iddah of women which is still menstruation that divorced by her husband 'iddah period for 3 (three) times haidh.	Iddah for women which is still menstruation Women who has divorced by her husband time 'iddah for 3 (three) quru'.	iddah women that have not Related body Then, no has 'iddah. And 'Iddah women which is still haidh Women who has divorced by her husband time 'iddah for 3 (three) quru'.	Iddah women which is still haidh Women who has divorced by her husband time 'iddah for 3 (three) times haidh.
4	Iddah of a woman who no longer menstruating	'Iddah of women that don't haidh Women	'Iddah of women that don't haidh Women who	'Iddah of women that don't haidh Women who	'Iddah of women that don't haidh Women

No.	Type of Iddah	Hanafi Madhhab	Madzhab Maliki	Shafi'I Madhhab	Hambali Madhhab
tes	who divorced in state no menstruation 'Iddah of women The for 3 months.	divorced in state not menstruating 'Iddah of women The for 3 months.	divorced in state no menstruating 'Iddah of women The for 3 months.	divorced in state no menstruating 'Iddah of women The for 3 months.	who divorced in state not menstruating 'Iddah of women The for 3 months.

In the face of this tension, it is important to remember the basic principles of Islamic law, namely justice, benefit, and *taysir* (convenience). In QS. At-Thalaq: 1, Allah commands:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ لِعَدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ لَا تُخْرِجُوهُنَّ مِنْ بُيُوتِهِنَّ وَلَا يَخْرُجْنَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيِّنَةٍ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ لَا تَدْرِي لَعَلَّ اللَّهَ يُحْدِثُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ أَمْرًا

*Meaning: O Prophet, when you divorce your wives, divorce them at a time when they can bear their (reasonable) waiting period, and reckon the time of the waiting period, and fear Allah your Lord. And do not put them out of their houses, nor let them go out except when they have committed a clear abomination. These are the laws of Allah. Whoever violates the laws of Allah, then indeed, he has done wrong to himself. You do not know whether Allah may thereafter make a new ruling.*

Surah At-Talaq verse 1 contains basic principles that are very important in the implementation of divorce according to Islamic law. Quraish Shihab in *Tafsir Al-Misbah* explains that although this verse opens with an appeal to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, its content applies generally to all Muslims, especially husbands who have the authority to divorce. This verse commands that divorce be carried out

*"li 'li'iddatihinna"*, namely at the right time when the wife is in a period of chastity and there has been no intercourse between husband and wife during the chastity period. This provision is not only technical but also ethical, as it gives the husband and wife time to reconsider their decision and keeps the divorce process from being carried out in a hasty or emotional manner. Furthermore, this verse also commands that the iddah period be calculated carefully (*wa ahshuu al-'iddah*). Quraish Shihab emphasizes that calculating the iddah period carefully is a form of responsibility for the rights of women after divorce, because during this period, women are entitled to maintenance and shelter, and have the possibility of being reconciled. Therefore, the iddah period should not be ignored or considered a meaningless transition period. Another important part of this verse is the prohibition for husbands to expel their wives from the house during the iddah period, unless the wife commits an obvious heinous act (*fāḥisyah mubayyinah*). In this regard, Quraish Shihab emphasizes that Islam regulates divorce not to humiliate or get rid of women, but rather to provide space and time for a process of reflection and the possibility of reconciliation. The wife's stay at home during iddah is also a form of social and psychological protection for women in facing the impact of divorce. (Shihab, 2002)

In addition, this verse is used as a basis by Ibn Qudamah, who said that "for wives who are undergoing the iddah period, it is permissible to leave the house during the day to fulfill their needs, whether it is caused by divorce (divorce) or the death of their husband". (Mansyur, 2012)

In contrast to Ibn Qudamah's opinion, Syafiq Hashim argues that this prohibition on leaving the house is a form of domestication for women. In addition to being prohibited from leaving the house, they are also not allowed to decorate or take care of themselves, especially for those whose partners have died. Syafiq Hasyim interpreted QS. Al-Baqarah: 234 is not a restriction on women's freedom of movement but rather an ethic that prohibits husbands from taking their wives out of the house during the iddah period because it causes more harm to women. (Sumiati, 2019)

In Indonesia, the permissibility of leaving the house for women during the iddah and ihdad periods has relevance in the context of modern Islamic law that recognizes women's rights more inclusively. (Jannah & Firdaus, 2023) In this modern era, the Indonesian government has adopted various policies that support women's participation in various sectors, including the economy. By taking into

account Islamic law, the government is trying to create a supportive environment for women to earn a living and fulfill their family's needs, without violating the applicable provisions of Islamic law. Therefore, a thoughtful understanding of the permissibility of going out for women during the iddah and ihdad periods can make a positive contribution to developing Islamic law that suits Indonesia's evolving social and economic context.

Many Indonesian women have careers in the public sector. If a woman works in the public sector and has to divorce her husband, either through death or divorce, and she is consistent in following the rules of fiqh, then she must observe an iddah of three quru' or an iddah of four months and ten days, with the condition that she is prohibited from adorning herself and leaving the house. Events such as this damage careers and may result in the termination of employment. In this situation, it is necessary to find legal studies that can provide a solution to this problem, namely the permissibility of leaving the house for women who are still in the iddah period. (Nurdin, 2021)

However, while carrying out iddah by continuing to do activities outside the home, women must also pay attention to prohibitions during the iddah period, such as accepting proposals, getting married, and adorning themselves. (Susilo, 2016) Because together professionalism in the workplace also ensures that women fulfill their work obligations and complete their iddah time. The limitations of women who are doing iddah or not must be examined, because women today must leave the house to carry out their responsibilities as parents, but they have their own limits, especially for those who are doing iddah. (Pribadi et al., 2022)

Because Islam actually regulates the obligation of iddah not without reason, women are special creatures from a biological point of view that is different from men. So that this difference results in different biological things too, such as women experiencing menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding, which cannot be done by men; for this reason, Allah gives a special law to women after divorce, namely the iddah law. (Chaidaroh, 2013)

Scientific studies of the iddah law have been conducted by Robert Guilhem, an expert in genetics (the study of genes and all their aspects) at Albert Einstein College, who converted to Islam after discovering the essence of scientific empirical research and the miracle of the Qur'an regarding the factors that affect the calculation of the iddah period for women whose husbands divorce with a period of three months as stipulated in the Qur'an. Robert Guilhem is one of the

individuals who dedicated his life to researching the male track record on women after sexual intercourse. His findings show that a man's track record will disappear after three months. The track record left on the woman by the husband after sex will slowly decrease by 25 to 30 percent every month and will disappear completely after three months, and at that time, the divorced woman is willing to accept the track record of another man. (Abdurrahman, 2013)

Her research findings inspired her to investigate a Muslim region in Africa. According to her research, each woman only had the imprint of her partner. Meanwhile, her research in non-Muslim areas of America showed that many women's records belonged to several men. This suggested that non-Muslim women in the region were having romantic relationships outside of legal marriage. The most shocking finding that led to his conversion to Islam was that, while conducting research on his own wife, he discovered that only one of his three children was his offspring and that she had three male fingerprints. His research showed that only Islam truly upholds the integrity of social life and defends the honor and dignity of women. (Istikomah & Zubir, 2019)

Guilhem's research results were corroborated by a toxicology expert from the University of California, who served as director of the living research laboratory in America, Dr. Jamal Eidin Ibrahim. Dr. Jamal's research findings state that women have a special immune system that is able to remember foreign objects that enter their bodies. These different foreign objects that enter a woman's body before 120 days are proven to reduce the body's natural immune system and have an impact on increasing the potential for uterine and breast cancer. Therefore, the findings of this modern biological research make it clear that iddah is not a form of gender injustice. Because the implementation of iddah aims to preserve the female body, meaning that iddah can be said to have the same position as giving birth and breastfeeding, so iddah cannot be applied to men, because this is related to nature. (Kamil, 2022)

However, leniency in the form of permitting women to leave the house during the iddah and ihdad periods must be in accordance with the needs, norms, and values that apply to community life. (Huzaimah, 2019) So that the permissibility of leaving the house does not make women take advantage of this opportunity without paying attention to the principles contained in the iddah and ihdad commands in Islam.

#### 4. *A Critical Analysis from the Perspective of Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah and Gender*

The *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* approach becomes crucial in re-reading classical fiqh norms related to the 'iddah period, especially when these norms are faced with the social reality of modern women who are very dynamic and actively involved in the digital space. As is known, the main purpose of the 'iddah period is to protect offspring (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*), personal honor (*ḥifẓ al-'ird*), and provide contemplative space for women in the emotional transition after divorce or the death of the husband. These principles are an expression of Sharia protection of family stability and women's dignity. However, when the law of 'iddah is understood textually and rigidly, it is often unable to accommodate the needs of contemporary women's lives, especially those who must continue to work, interact, and convey social expression through digital media. (Saniah & Nasution, 2024) In this context, an important question arises: will Islamic law, especially regarding 'iddah, maintain the formal form of prohibition, or instead adapt its substantive objectives in a new context?

If we look at the digital practices of content creators such as Ria Ricis, who continue to appear on social media for economic needs and personal communication, it becomes clear that not all digital expressions must be interpreted as a form of violation of the principle of 'iddah. In fact, if these activities are carried out while maintaining polite values, not causing slander, and aiming to maintain livelihoods, then these activities can be seen as part of *ḥifẓ al-māl* (protecting property) and *ḥifẓ al-naḥs* (maintaining survival). (Kurniawan & Hudafi, 2021) Similarly, Natalie Holscher, who in her various uploads shows efforts to build positive narratives after divorce as a form of emotional and spiritual healing. When considered through the lens of *maqāṣid*, it appears that such digital activities may better reflect the objectives of Shari'ah than simply requiring women to remain silent without social activity during 'iddah.

Furthermore, the gender approach in Islamic law also emphasizes the importance of substantive justice over mere symbolic compliance. (Putri, 2024) Contemporary studies in gender jurisprudence show that many classical jurisprudence texts contain the bias of past social constructions, where women are constructed as beings who must be overprotected. (Bajuri, 2025) In fact, in contemporary society, women not only play a role in the domestic sphere but also become value producers, opinion leaders, and main breadwinners. Demanding women to be silent on social media during the 'iddah period without considering the context of their real lives is a



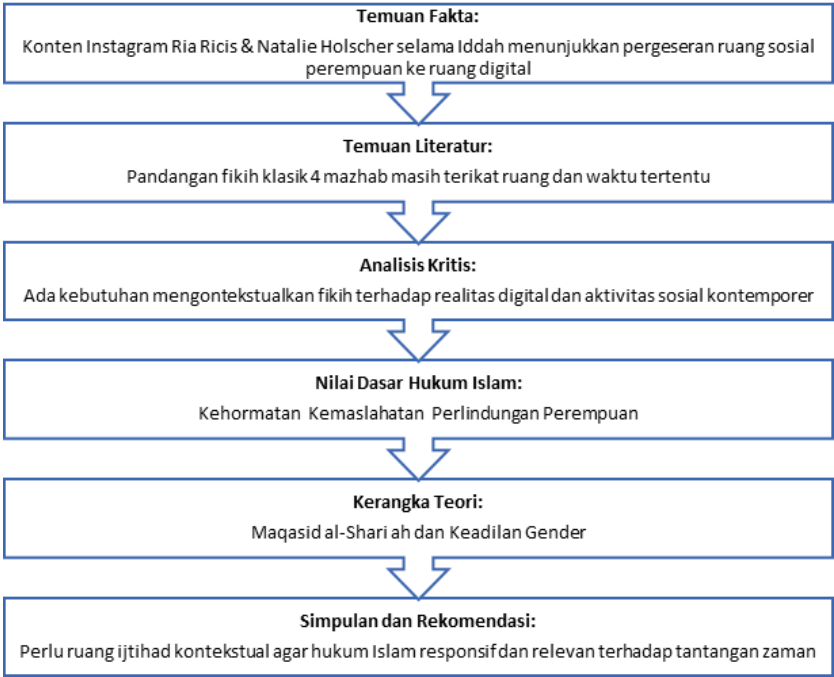
form of structural injustice. Thus, there is a need for reinterpretation that does not revoke the spirit of Islamic law, but instead emphasizes it in a more just and humane way. In this context, an integrative reading of the law between *maqāṣid* and gender justice becomes very important to ensure that Islamic law remains alive and becomes a blessing for all people, including women who live in the digital era. (Nuroniya, 2018)

Formulating an Islamic legal response to women's digital activities during the 'iddah period cannot be separated from the dynamics of social, economic, and technological changes that redefine the space for contemporary Muslim women. (Sakai & Fauzia, 2016) This response does not simply refer to the *textuality* of classical fiqh, but needs to pay attention to the *substance of the values and objectives of the Shari'ah (maqāṣid al-sharī'ah)* contextually. While traditional fiqh law focuses on physical prohibitions such as *going out* or *dressing conspicuously*, in the digital era, the form of "going out" is no longer literal, but virtual. Social media such as Instagram is not just a space for expression, but also a workspace, a space for *da'wah*, a space for community, and even a means of inner healing. Therefore, it is important for scholars and academics to reconstruct the understanding of the law of 'iddah by taking into account that women today are no longer solely dependent on the domestic world, but are active social and digital actors. (Hatim, 2018)

In that framework, the legal response needed is an *ijtihadiy* response, not *taqlidi*. This means that the legal approach must be contextual, progressive, and participatory towards new realities. For example, activities such as product promotion, creating educational content, or simply sharing post-divorce life narratives can be considered *permissible* and even *maslahah* if they meet three conditions: (1) it does not violate the values of modesty and honor (*ḥifẓ al-'ird*), (2) it does not play on emotions or build destructive narratives against other parties, and (3) it is done with the intention of survival, sharing experiences, or providing inspiration. This response will show that Islamic law is transformative and adaptive, not repressive or reality-rejecting.

Briefly, the research results are described in the flow chart of findings and analysis in the research on the activities of Muslim women content creators during the 'iddah period in the context of social media, as well as their relevance to classical fiqh views. Starting from the observation of Ria Ricis and Natalie Holscher's Instagram content, which shows the shift of women's social space to the digital

realm, and then compared with the views of the four madhhabs of fiqh, which are still bound by traditional time and space constructions. From the critical analysis, there is an urgency to contextualize Islamic law to remain relevant to contemporary digital realities. Basic values such as honor, benefit, and protection of women remain as the normative footing. By integrating the maqāṣid al-sharī'ah framework and the gender justice approach, this research recommends that there is room for contextual ijtihad so that Islamic law continues to be alive, adaptive, and provide fair solutions in facing the challenges of the times, including in important transitional periods such as 'iddah.



**Figure 2.** Research results

**Conclusion**

From a series of analyses of Muslim women content creators' practices during the 'iddah period and the views of the classical fiqh schools, there is an urgent need to contextualize Islamic law for contemporary digital realities. Activities such as those of Ria Ricis and Natalie Holscher on Instagram show that women's social space has shifted, from physical space to virtual space, which equally has social, emotional, and economic functions. Meanwhile, the views of classical

scholars are still very limited by the construction of a certain time and space that is no longer fully applicable in the current era. Nevertheless, the basic values of Islamic law remain important to maintain: honor, benefit, and protection of women.

By considering the principles of *maqāsid al-sharī'ah* and the gender justice approach, it is possible to formulate responsive and solutive Islamic law to answer this new reality. There needs to be room for *ijtihād* that not only relies on the authority of the text, but also on sensitivity to the context. Thus, Islamic law will remain alive and relevant in assisting Muslim women to face the challenges of the times, including in important transitional periods such as 'iddah.

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