

## **Future Technology and the Evolution of Student Spirituality in Sufi Contexts**

**Boy Arief Rochman**

Department Islamic Education, Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Al-Falah Cicalengka, Bandung, Indonesia

E-mail: [boyarief@staialfalah.ac.id](mailto:boyarief@staialfalah.ac.id)

### **Abstract**

The research aims to explore how future technology influences the evolution of student spirituality within the Sufi context, particularly in the practice of the Naqshbandi Tariqah. The findings indicate that future technology has significant potential to enhance accessibility to spiritual or tasawuf resources, such as classical texts, lectures, and educational materials. Additionally, virtual communities play a crucial role in supporting interaction and sharing spiritual experiences among students. Technology also enriches spiritual experiences through meditation apps, lecture videos, and online discussion forums. However, the study also identifies several risks associated with the use of technology, such as distractions from irrelevant content, the selection of inappropriate content, and limitations in facilitating direct meetings with spiritual communities and mentors. Therefore, it is important to develop well-curated digital platforms, digital education programs, and safe and supportive virtual communities, while continuing to facilitate face-to-face meetings for deeper and more authentic spiritual experiences. The study concludes that future technology can be a powerful tool in developing the spirituality of STAI Al-Falah Cicalengka Bandung students who follow the Naqshbandi Tariqah, provided there is awareness of its risks and limitations.

Keywords: Technology, Internet, Students' Spirituality, Sufi Order.

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana teknologi masa depan mempengaruhi evolusi spiritualitas mahasiswa dalam konteks Sufi, khususnya dalam praktik Tariqah Naqshabandiyah. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa teknologi masa depan memiliki potensi besar untuk meningkatkan aksesibilitas terhadap sumber daya spiritual atau tasawuf, seperti teks klasik, ceramah, dan materi pendidikan lainnya. Selain itu, komunitas virtual memainkan peran penting dalam mendukung interaksi dan berbagi pengalaman spiritual di antara mahasiswa. Teknologi juga memperkaya pengalaman spiritual melalui aplikasi meditasi, video ceramah, dan forum diskusi online. Namun, penelitian ini juga mengidentifikasi beberapa risiko yang terkait dengan penggunaan teknologi, seperti gangguan dari konten yang tidak relevan, pemilihan konten yang tidak sesuai, dan keterbatasan dalam memfasilitasi pertemuan langsung dengan komunitas spiritual dan mentor. Oleh karena itu, penting untuk mengembangkan platform digital yang terkurasi dengan baik, program pendidikan digital, dan komunitas virtual yang aman dan suportif, serta tetap memfasilitasi pertemuan tatap muka untuk pengalaman spiritual yang lebih mendalam dan autentik. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa teknologi masa depan dapat menjadi alat yang kuat dalam mengembangkan spiritualitas mahasiswa STAI Al-Falah Cicalengka Bandung pengikut Tariqah Naqshabandiyah, dengan syarat adanya kesadaran akan risiko dan keterbatasannya.

Kata Kunci: Teknologi, Internet, Spiritual Mahasiswa, Tasawuf.

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## **BACKGROUND**

The rapid development of technology has brought significant changes in various aspects of life (Ardiansyah, 2023; Danuri, 2019; Farwati et al., 2023; Fricticarani et al., 2023; Muttaqin et al., 2021;

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Received: January 31, 2025; Revised : March 23, 2025; Accepted: April 16, 2025

Rahayu et al., 2023), including education (Dewi et al., 2023; Rambe et al., 2024; Saumantri et al., 2024; Zein, 2023) and spirituality (Akib, 2024; Arivianto et al., 2022; Ilham et al., 2024). In this digital era, technology not only affects how we communicate and learn but also how we live and understand spirituality.

Spirituality is a crucial aspect of human life that encompasses values, beliefs, and practices that provide meaning and purpose of life (Ardian, 2016; Nuraeni et al., 2024; Sadam & Muhammad, 2024). In the context of education, spirituality can help students develop strong emotional, mental, and moral balance. A good understanding of spirituality can support students' personal and academic development, helping them face life's challenges more wisely and meaningfully. Spirituality is not limited to formal religious practices but also includes aspects of mental and emotional well-being (Ibrahim, 2024; Sahroni et al., 2024; Sudirman, 2022). Students with a good understanding of spirituality tend to have lower stress levels, better coping abilities, and more positive interpersonal relationships.

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, a leading figure in the Naqshbandi Haqqani Order, emphasized the deep connection between spirituality and Sufism. According to him, Sufism is a path to purify the heart and soul, with the aim of achieving a direct and personal experience with Allah through mystical practices. He taught that spirituality in Islam is about bringing individuals closer to Allah with a focus on purity of heart and purification of soul. He believes that the heart is a manifestation of the Divine Presence, and through practices such as muraqabah (spiritual meditation) and salawat (praise to the Prophet Muhammad), one can strengthen their spiritual connection (Gazali, 2015; Kabbani & Kabbani, 2004).

Sufism as a continuation of Islam and Faith has great potential to adapt to modern technology. Technology can be used to enrich students' spiritual experiences (M. Arif et al., 2024), such as through meditation apps, spiritual podcasts, and virtual communities that support Sufi practices (Abusharif, 2023; Hasibuan et al., 2024; Isetti et al., 2020; Laird et al., 2024). By using online platforms, students can share their experiences, ideas, and perspectives on spirituality and tasawuf (Muvid et al., 2024; Nofita et al., 2023; Manan, 2023; Waluyoati & Swari, 2024), thereby enriching their collective understanding. With the internet and online platforms, students can quickly find references, articles, and discussions related to spirituality that can deepen their understanding. This also helps students stay connected with a broader spiritual community, both locally and globally. Therefore, technology not only enriches individual understanding but also expands social networks and connections in the context of spirituality.

Furthermore, technology facilitates open and honest discussions (Irani, 2022; Istriyani & Widiana, 2016; Wibowo, 2023; Zunaidi, 2024), where students feel comfortable sharing and learning from one another. This can help create a supportive community that strengthens spiritual values in students' daily lives. Thus, integrating technology into spiritual education can be an effective means of enhancing students' spiritual awareness and understanding in this digital era (H. M. Arif et al., 2024; Musyafak & Subhi, 2023; Ulfa, 2024).

Several studies have explored the relationship between technology and spirituality. Firnando in his research on "Spirituality in the Digital Era" found that digital technology has changed how society interprets and experiences religious practices. This research shows that although technology can support spiritual development, there are ethical challenges that need to be considered in its use (Firnando, 2023). Another study shows that globalization and digital technology have a significant influence on students' level of spiritual understanding. The results of this study indicate that social media is also important in conveying spiritual education messages (Erwahyudin, 2024).

On the other hand, technology also has negative impacts that need to be considered. One of the main negative impacts is distraction. Several studies indicate that excessive use of technology can disrupt the balance between spiritual activities and daily activities (Faiz et al., 2022; Waluyoati & Swari, 2024). For

instance, students who spend too much time on social media may have less time to participate in spiritual activities such as worship and dhikr. Furthermore, technology can reduce the quality of social interactions, which are crucial for healthy spiritual development.

STAI Al-Falah solemnly handed over the bayat of Tarekat Naqshabandiyah Haqqani to Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, a leading murshid in the tariqah. The handover of this bayat marks STAI Al-Falah's commitment in supporting the development of spirituality and in-depth religious education for students. Has a vision to produce graduates who are not only excellent in academic knowledge but also possess strong spiritual depth. Therefore, it is important to explore how technology can be used to support this vision. This research aims to explore how future technology and the Evolution of Student Spirituality in Sufi Contexts at STAI Al-Falah Cicalengka Bandung. The results of this research are expected to provide significant contributions to understanding how technology can be used to support and enrich student spirituality. Additionally, this research is also expected to provide practical recommendations for STAI Al-Falah Cicalengka Bandung in integrating technology into their spiritual education curriculum.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using observation and in-depth interview methods. The subjects of the research are students from various study programs at Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Al-Falah Cicalengka who actively use technology in both academic and non-academic activities. Data were collected through direct observation and in-depth interviews with randomly selected students. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis techniques to identify patterns and relationships between the use of technology and students' understanding of spirituality. For in-depth interviews, researchers used the interview guide presented in the following table 1.

**Table 1. Interview Guide**

| No | Aspect   |
|----|--|
| 1  | Definition and understanding of spirituality                                       |
| 2  | Enhanced accessibility to spiritual or tasawuf resources                           |
| 3  | Virtual Communities  |
| 4  | Enhance students's spiritual or tasawuf experiences                                |
| 5  | Distraction  |
| 6  | Chooses the wrong content  |
| 7  | Limitations in facilitating direct meetings with spiritual communities and mentors |

This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive-analytical methods. This approach was chosen to understand the phenomenon in depth and provide a comprehensive picture of the relationship between technology and spirituality in Sufi contexts. The research was conducted at STAI Al-Falah Cicalengka Bandung, an educational institution with a strong commitment to developing students' spirituality. The research subjects consist of students, lectures who has involved in the spiritual education program at STAI Al-Falah.

This research is also anticipated to provide insights for other researchers interested in current issues surrounding the complex interaction between technology and the dimension of spirituality. Furthermore, this study will actively involve students as research subjects. They will be asked to share their experiences and views regarding the relationship between technology and spirituality. Thus, it is

hoped that the data obtained will be more accurate and representative. Additionally, content analysis will be conducted to explore the main themes that emerge in the interviews and observations.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Definition and Understanding of Spirituality**

Most respondents defined spirituality as a connection with God, inner peace, meaning, values, and higher life balance. They consider spirituality an important aspect of life that helps them face challenges and provides meaning and purpose. The spiritual activities performed by the respondents include worship, meditation, self-reflection, and participation in spiritual communities.

Spirituality is a broad concept that involves a search for meaning, purpose, and connection with something greater than oneself. It can manifest in various forms, such as religious beliefs, meditation practices, personal reflection, or connections with nature and other people. For many, spirituality is a deeply personal journey that provides a sense of inner peace, balance, and fulfillment. At its core, spirituality often involves exploring fundamental questions about existence, purpose, and the nature of reality. It encourages individuals to reflect on their values, beliefs, and experiences, fostering a deeper understanding of themselves and their place in the world. This journey can lead to a greater sense of compassion, empathy, and interconnectedness with others.

Spirituality can also be a source of strength and resilience, helping individuals navigate life's challenges and uncertainties. It offers a framework for finding meaning in difficult times and can inspire a sense of hope and optimism. Whether through prayer, meditation, or other practices, spirituality provides a way to connect with a higher power or the universe, offering comfort and guidance. Ultimately, spirituality is a unique and personal experience that varies greatly from person to person. It is about seeking and embracing the profound aspects of life, fostering a sense of purpose, and cultivating a deeper connection with oneself and the world around us.

One respondent stated: *"For me, spirituality is about how I feel connected to God and find peace within myself. I often meditate and reflect to maintain my life balance."* Another respondent mentioned that "Spirituality is a concept that refers to aspects of humanity related to meaning, values, and higher purposes."

This study aligns with those who mentioned that spirituality involves a personal relationship with God as well as interpersonal relationships. According to individuals with spirituality, they also experience emotions related to this relationship, such as love, hope, and faith (Hanif & Widiyastuti, 2024). Research can also be strengthened by the study titled *Spirituality through the Lens of Students in Higher Education: The study involved 88 undergraduate and graduate students from George Mason University (GMU). The findings indicate that spirituality is an abstract reality that is difficult to define, serving as a moral compass that provides direction and meaning for individuals. While spirituality and religion are not the same, they are interconnected. The article recommends that higher education institutions integrate mechanisms into the curriculum that allow for creative expression of experiential, critical, and reflective learning, including opportunities for holistic growth through open dialogue and experiential learning such as community immersion and cross-cultural exchange programs (Fuentes & Dugan, 2021).*

### **Enhanced accessibility to spiritual or tasawuf resources**

Most respondents feel that technology has a positive influence on their understanding of spirituality. Technology has had a significant positive impact by making it easier for students to access

spiritual resources. With the internet, students can easily access a wide range of information about spirituality. They can read articles, watch videos, and listen to podcasts that discuss various aspects of spirituality from different traditions and perspectives. This allows them to broaden their understanding and knowledge of spirituality.

Students enrich their understanding of spirituality and Sufism by utilizing various digital resources. They can read articles, watch videos on YouTube, and listen to podcasts that discuss different aspects of spirituality from different traditions and perspectives of Sufism. The articles available online are often written by prominent Sufi scholars and practitioners, providing deep insights into the teachings and practices of Sufism. YouTube videos from channels such as Sufi Live feature lectures and dhikr led by renowned shaykhs, helping students better understand and practice Sufism. In addition, podcasts covering topics in spirituality and Sufism allow students to listen to discussions and interviews with experts, providing a broader and deeper perspective.

By utilising these resources, students can develop a more comprehensive understanding of Sufism and spirituality, and apply these teachings in their daily lives. Are there any other aspects Students use spiritual podcasts and videos as sources of inspiration and learning. This is consistent with findings from research showed that multisensory approaches, including the use of audio-visual media, can increase emotional engagement and information retention in spiritual learning (Gulo & Tapilaha, 2024). Additionally, research emphasizes the importance of digital literacy in religious education to address the challenges of educational technology in the Society 5.0 era (Heluka & Mbelanggedo, 2025).

A student explained: *"I use my smartphone almost all day, both for college purposes and to seek information about spirituality and thariqah, I often watch lecture videos on YouTube and use meditation apps to help me relax."*

YouTube videos and podcasts play a significant role in instilling spirituality in students. These platforms provide easy access to a variety of content that can help students explore and deepen their understanding of spirituality. YouTube videos offer engaging visual and audio content, allowing students to learn through lectures, guided meditations, and panel discussions on spiritual topics. This content is available anytime, giving students the flexibility to learn according to their schedules. Additionally, videos often feature renowned spiritual figures who can provide insights and inspiration.

But on the one hand, there is a risk of commercialization of spirituality when technology is used to spread the teachings of Sufism. Digital platforms often have profit-orientated business models, which can obscure the spiritual purpose of Sufism practice. For example, meditation apps or websites that offer paid services for access to spiritual content can shift the focus from spiritual learning and practice to financial gain. It is important to ensure that the primary purpose of using technology is to support spiritual learning and practice, not for commercial gain. Ulama and dhikr mentors should provide guidance on how to choose platforms that are ethical and in line with the values of Sufism. In addition, the Sufism community should endeavor to provide spiritual resources free of charge or at an affordable cost, so that more people can benefit from the teachings of Sufism without being burdened by costs. Research shows that commercialization in religious education can reduce the focus on spiritual and ethical goals (Uroko, 2024).

### **Virtual Communities**

Technology enables students to join online spiritual communities. Through forums, social media groups, and discussion platforms, they can interact with like-minded individuals, share experiences, and receive support. This creates a sense of belonging and connection that is important in their spiritual journey. Many spiritual organizations and teachers offer online classes and webinars. Students can attend

these sessions from anywhere, allowing them to learn from experts and receive guidance in their spiritual practices. This also provides flexibility for those with busy schedules. Technology also makes it easy to access spiritual books in digital formats. Students can read e-books or listen to audiobooks on various spiritual topics anytime and anywhere. This allows them to continue learning and reflecting, even while on the go.

A student said: *"Technology allows me to connect with online spiritual communities, attend spiritual courses and seminars, and access various texts and spiritual resources, such as wirid and manaqib readings that might be difficult to reach in person, so I follow them online."*

Virtual communities provide important social support, especially for students who feel isolated. Research shows that technology can support collaboration and communication within spiritual communities, strengthening social and spiritual support (Wyche et al., 2009). Additionally, research emphasizes the importance of digital literacy in building strong spiritual communities in the digital era (Heluka & Mbelanggedo, 2025).

A spiritual community plays a crucial role in the development of students' spirituality. Through the interaction and support provided by these communities, students can deepen their understanding of spirituality and strengthen their connection to spiritual values. Spiritual communities provide a supportive environment where students can share their experiences, challenges, and achievements. This helps them feel heard and understood, which is essential for their emotional and spiritual well-being. Support from community members can offer strength and motivation to continue exploring and developing their spirituality. Through group discussions, lectures, and shared activities, students can learn from the experiences and perspectives of others. This enriches their understanding of various aspects of spirituality and encourages personal growth. Spiritual communities often organize events such as retreats, group meditations, and workshops that provide opportunities for students to deepen their spiritual practices.

Virtual communities provide important social and spiritual support for students. Research by Wyche et al. also found that virtual communities can support collaboration and communication between religious leaders and their congregations, strengthening spiritual community bonds (Wyche et al., 2009). Virtual communities can be a vital source of spiritual support, which is an important aspect of holistic well-being. These platforms help students by online forums and groups allow students to discuss their spiritual beliefs and practices, providing a space for reflection and growth. Students can share their spiritual struggles and receive encouragement and advice from others who share similar beliefs or experiences. Being part of a spiritual community, even virtually, helps students feel connected to something larger than themselves, which can be comforting and grounding. Virtual communities often share resources such as articles, videos, and events related to spiritual development, helping students deepen their understanding and practice (Smith et al., 2021).

The use of digital technology for Sufism learning also raises concerns regarding privacy and data security (Stahl & Karger, 2016). Personal information shared in online dhikr sessions or virtual communities must be properly protected to prevent misuse. The digital platforms used should have clear privacy policies and strong security mechanisms to protect users' data. In addition, it is important for users to understand the risks associated with sharing personal information online and take steps to protect their privacy. For example, using pseudonyms or avoiding sharing sensitive information. Supervision from religious scholars and dhikr mentors is also necessary to ensure that practices undertaken in virtual communities remain safe and in accordance with the ethics of Sufism. Research shows that data security and privacy are important aspects to be considered in the use of technology for religious education. With

the right approach, technology can be used to support tasawwuf learning without compromising users' privacy and data security.

### **Enhance students's spiritual or tasawuf experiences**

#### ***Dhzikr***

According to Sheikh Hisham Kabbani, dhikr is the essence of Sufism and is a very important practice in the life of a Sufi. Zikr, or remembrance of Allah, is a way to cleanse the heart and soul of all forms of despicable behaviour and draw closer to Allah (Kabbani & Kabbani, 2004). Sheikh Hisham emphasises that remembrance is not just the mere uttering of words, but also involves full awareness and the presence of the heart in every uttered phrase. Sheikh Hisham Kabbani also explains that dhikr has the power to transform negative energy into positive, helping a person achieve inner peace and tranquillity. Through dhikr, a Sufi can achieve a state of fana, where the ego and worldly desires vanish, and only the presence of Allah is felt. He also emphasised the importance of consistency in dhikr. The practice of dhikr done regularly and mindfully can bring one closer to Allah and help them live a more meaningful and blessed life.

Students who wish to learn and practice Naqshabandi dhikr can utilise various online resources available. One very useful resource is YouTube videos from the Sufi Live channel. This channel provides various videos featuring dhikr and lectures from prominent shaykhs in the Naqshabandi tariqah. These videos can help students better understand the techniques and procedures of dhikr.

In addition, the eShaykh website is also a very useful resource. On this site, students can find various articles and guides on the practice of Naqshabandi dhikr, as well as get answers to their questions from experienced scholars. The site also provides information on various aspects of Islamic spirituality that can deepen students' understanding of the Naqshabandi order.

Sufi Live's Instagram is also a very useful platform. There, students can find posts containing inspirational quotes, short videos of dhikr, and announcements of events related to the Naqshabandi order. The Instagram account is managed by followers of the order who actively share content that can help students stay connected to their spiritual community.

In addition, students can also join online community groups that focus on Naqshabandi dhikr. These groups often provide virtual group dhikr sessions, where students can participate and get direct guidance from experienced dhikr mentors. Through these community groups, students can exchange experiences, get support and deepen their spiritual practice in a supportive environment. By utilising all these resources, students can learn and practice Naqshabandi dhikr independently. They can follow the guidance provided in the videos and articles, and ask questions if needed. This allows them to stay connected to this rich spiritual tradition despite not always being able to attend dhikr gatherings in person.

#### ***Muraqabah***

In the Naqshabandi Haqqani Order, muraqabah is a meditative practice that is essential for achieving constant presence in the sheikh's reality and getting closer to the Divine Presence. Muraqabah helps one to acquire positive energies and reject negative energies through deep self-awareness and surveillance (Kabbani & Kabbani, 2004).

Sheikh Hisham Kabbani explains that through muraqabah, one can achieve a state of mortality in the presence of the sheikh, which ultimately brings them closer to Allah. The practice involves deep reflection and concentration of the mind on Allah, which can help overcome pain, sorrow, and difficulties

in life. Muraqabah is also considered a bridge between worldly illusions and spiritual reality, enabling one to reach higher levels of spiritual enlightenment.

In the Naqshabandi Haqqani Order, muraqabah is performed in a structured manner and guided by experienced dhikr mentors. Students are taught to focus on their hearts and remember Allah with full awareness. Muraqabah sessions are often conducted in groups, either in person or virtually, to provide the necessary support and guidance.

By continuously practising muraqabah, the benefits will become increasingly visible in daily life, helping one to live in a more peaceful and connected state with God. In the Naqshabandi Haqqani Order muraqabah is a meditative practice that is essential for achieving constant presence in the sheikh's reality and getting closer to the Divine Presence. Muraqabah helps one to gain positive energy and reject negative energy through deep awareness and self-surveillance.

To do muraqabah virtually, students can follow these steps:

Online Zikr Session, many Naqshabandi Haqqani communities organise online dhikr and muraqabah sessions through platforms such as Zoom or Google Meet. Students can join these sessions to get direct guidance from experienced dhikr mentors.

Video Guides, students can access muraqabah guidance videos available on YouTube channels such as Sufi Live. These videos provide step-by-step instructions on how to properly perform muraqabah.

Online Community Groups, joining an online community group that focuses on Islamic dhikr and meditation can provide the necessary support and guidance. These groups often organise virtual dhikr sessions, where students can participate and receive direct guidance from experienced dhikr mentors.

By utilising this technology, students can practice muraqabah effectively and consistently, so as to achieve greater peace and spiritual awareness in daily life, in accordance with the teachings of Sheikh Hisham Kabbani.

## **Negative Impact of Technology**

### ***Distraction***

While technology has many benefits, it can also cause distractions that hinder the spiritual development of students. Here are some ways technology can be distracting. Social media can be a significant source of distraction. Students often spend a lot of time scrolling through feeds, interacting on social platforms, and keeping up with the latest trends. This can divert their attention from spiritual practices and personal reflection, reducing the time they should spend on meditation or other spiritual activities.

Easy access to information can lead to confusion and information overload. Students may feel overwhelmed by the abundance of available spiritual resources, which can hinder them from finding a suitable spiritual path. Too much information can also disrupt their focus and concentration. The use of electronic devices like smartphones, tablets, and computers can interfere with time meant for spiritual practices. Constant notifications, instant messages, and emails can divert students' attention and disturb their inner peace.

Over-reliance on technology for spiritual practices, such as meditation apps or online videos, can reduce students' ability to practice independently. They may become too dependent on external guidance and less capable of developing introspection and self-reflection skills.



While online communities can provide support, the lack of face-to-face interaction can diminish the depth of relationships and spiritual connections. Students may feel less emotionally and spiritually connected to others if they only interact through screens.

A student admitted: *"I am often distracted by social media. When I intend to watch a religious lecture, I end up endlessly scrolling through social media."* Some students also experience distractions in using technology, as expressed by one student: *"Yes, some negative aspects of technology that hinder my spiritual understanding include misleading lectures, unclear sources of spiritual information, and addiction to technology, which often makes me neglect improving my spiritual quality."*

Social media platforms, while offering opportunities for connection and inspiration, can also lead to distractions. The constant barrage of notifications and the pressure to keep up with the curated lives of others can pull students away from their spiritual practices. Instead of engaging in prayer, meditation, or scripture reading, students may find themselves endlessly scrolling through social media feeds. This distraction can dilute their focus on spiritual growth and lead to a superficial engagement with spirituality.

Excessive use of technology can disrupt students' concentration and focus in spiritual practices. Research found that notifications and digital distractions can divert users' attention from spiritual practices, reducing the quality of their spiritual experiences (Wyche et al., 2009). Additionally, research by Heotis (2020) shows that digital fatigue can disrupt concentration and focus in spiritual practices.

Over-reliance on technology can detract from the essence of the practice of Sufism itself. Sufism emphasizes direct experience and a personal relationship with Allah, which may be difficult to achieve if overly reliant on technology. While technology can facilitate access to spiritual resources and communities, it is important to maintain a balance between the use of technology and traditional spiritual practices (Kumowal, 2024). Students should be taught to use technology as a tool, not as a substitute for actual Sufism practices. For example, they can use meditation apps to guide dhikr and muraqabah, but should still strive to feel the presence of Allah in their hearts without depending on digital devices. Scholars and dhikr mentors should also provide guidance on how to maintain this balance and ensure that technology is used wisely in the learning of tasawwuf. The research shows that the use of technology in religious education must be accompanied by a balanced approach to maintain the essence of spirituality.

### **Chooses the wrong content**

While technology provides broad access to various spiritual resources, it can also lead to mistakes in selecting the right content for students. Here are some ways technology can cause errors in choosing spiritual content. The internet is filled with information that is not always verified or accurate. Students might come across spiritual content that is not based on facts or authentic teachings, which can mislead them in their spiritual journey. Incorrect information can hinder spiritual development and cause confusion.

Not all spiritual content available online is suitable for everyone. Students might find practices or teachings that do not align with their personal values or needs. Choosing inappropriate content can result in discomfort or even emotional and mental harm. Many online spiritual contents are created with commercial purposes in mind. Students might be tempted by advertisements or promotions promising instant results or extraordinary benefits, but these are often aimed at financial gain. This can divert focus from genuine and deep spiritual exploration.

Online spiritual content is often presented without adequate cultural or historical context. Students might not understand the background or true meaning of certain practices or teachings, which can reduce the effectiveness and significance of the spirituality. With so much content available, students can feel

overwhelmed and struggle to choose the right sources. Information overload can hinder their ability to focus and consistently delve into one spiritual path. Overall, it is important for students to be cautious and critical when selecting spiritual content. They should seek trustworthy sources, verify information, and ensure that the content aligns with their personal values and needs. How do you ensure that you choose the right spiritual content?

Additionally, dependence on technology also hinders students' spiritual understanding. A student stated: *"Yes, there are definitely obstacles if one becomes negligent and chooses the wrong content. This can hinder spiritual understanding. Content that is not beneficial and unrelated to God, or even encourages sinful behavior, can be detrimental."*

According to a Pew Research Center survey, many teens are as digitally connected as ever, with nearly half saying they are online almost constantly. This constant connectivity can lead to exposure to content that may not align with their spiritual values, potentially impacting their mental health and spiritual well-being (Ariefdjohan et al., 2024).

One of the main challenges in using digital technology for the study of Sufism is ensuring the authenticity and authenticity of the information being transmitted. In the context of Sufism, it is important to keep the teachings and practices in line with tradition and not deviate from the original sources. Technology allows for the rapid and widespread dissemination of information, but it also opens up opportunities for inaccurate or misleading information to spread (Nurhayati et al., 2023).

Therefore, rigorous verification and supervision from experienced scholars is necessary. Digital platforms must have a mechanism to ensure that the content presented has gone through a rigorous validation process. In addition, users should also be critical in choosing sources of information and always refer to trusted scholars or dhikr mentors to ensure that they are getting the correct teachings that are in line with the tradition of Sufism. Research shows that the use of technology in religious education must be accompanied by strict quality control to maintain the integrity of the teachings. Thus, technology can be used as an effective tool to spread the teachings of Sufism without compromising its authenticity.

### **Limitations in facilitating direct meetings with spiritual communities and mentors**

While technology offers many conveniences, it can also limit face-to-face meetings between students and their spiritual communities and mentors. Here are some negative impacts of this limitation. In-person meetings allow for deep and meaningful face-to-face interactions. Students can feel the physical presence and energy of their community and spiritual mentors, which often cannot be replaced by virtual communication. The loss of this interaction can reduce the depth of relationships and spiritual connections. Meetings with the community and spiritual mentors provide stronger emotional support. Students can feel empathy, attention, and support directly, which is crucial for their emotional and spiritual well-being. Virtual communication may not always convey emotional nuances in the same way.

Many spiritual practices, such as group meditation, collective prayer, and rituals, are more effective when done in person. Face-to-face meetings allow students to experience the sense of togetherness and collective energy that can deepen their spiritual experiences. The limitation of in-person meetings can reduce the effectiveness of these practices. Students may feel disconnected from their community and lack the social support they need. This can negatively impact their emotional and spiritual well-being.

Moreover, technology has limitations in facilitating direct meetings with spiritual communities and mentors. A student explained: *"Technology indeed influences our spirituality in obtaining information or knowledge, but spirituality requires direct interaction with a teacher, meeting in person. It is not enough to just listen, read, or watch through platforms."*

Although there are many benefits, technology also has negative impacts on students' spirituality. Some respondents reported that technology can be a distraction that reduces time for worship and other spiritual activities. Social media, in particular, is often cited as a source of distraction that disrupts concentration and focus on spiritual practices. Additionally, some students feel that dependence on technology can reduce direct interaction with their spiritual communities.

The use of technology in tasawwuf learning should be accompanied by ethical supervision and guidance from licensed scholars and dhikr mentors (Gazali, 2015; Hasan, 2022). They can help ensure that the practices are in line with the teachings of Sufism and provide the necessary guidance to overcome any ethical challenges that arise. This oversight is important to maintain the integrity and quality of Sufism learning in a digital environment. Scholars and dhikr mentors should actively engage in online communities and provide regular guidance to students. In addition, they should develop ethical guidelines for the use of technology in Sufism learning and ensure that these guidelines are followed by all members of the community. Research shows that ethical supervision and guidance are key to ensuring that technology is used in a way that is compatible with the values and goals of religious education. With proper supervision and guidance, technology can be used to enrich spiritual experiences without compromising Sufism values.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, several significant conclusions and recommendations can be formulated. Firstly, it is important to develop well-curated digital platforms. These platforms should provide access to reliable and high-quality spiritual or tasawuf resources, allowing students to learn and deepen their spirituality effectively. Secondly, digital education programs need to be developed to teach students how to use technology wisely. This includes how to deepen their spirituality without being distracted by irrelevant content or spending excessive time on social media. Thirdly, the formation of safe and supportive virtual communities is highly recommended. These communities enable students to share experiences and receive guidance from experienced mentors, helping them feel supported in their spiritual journey. Fourthly, content monitoring and curation are crucial. By providing guidance and curated content, students can be ensured access to accurate and beneficial information, avoiding misleading or inappropriate content. Lastly, although technology is very helpful, it is important to continue facilitating face-to-face meetings with spiritual communities and mentors. Direct interaction provides a deeper and more authentic experience, which often cannot be replaced by technology. These recommendations aim to maximize the benefits of technology in the development of students' spirituality while minimizing potential risks.

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