

EXPLORING DIGITAL TA'ARUF THROUGH THE LENS OF MAQASHID AL-SHARI'AH

A Case Study of Hifz al-Din at Biro Jodoh Rumaysho

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Abstract

The digitalization of social interactions has transformed various aspects of life, including the practice of finding a partner. One emerging phenomenon is the practice of digital ta'aruf, a process of introducing matchmaking between men and women conducted through digital platforms and online. This study aims to provide an empirical analysis of how hifz al-din is implemented in the digital ta'aruf system. Using a qualitative case study approach, the study specifically discusses the gaps in digital ta'aruf practices from the perspective of Hifz Al-din at the Rumaysho Matchmaking Bureau (BJR), a digital matchmaking agency based in Gunung Kidul, Yogyakarta. Data were collected through two months of in-depth interviews with matchmaking agency managers and other personnel. The results show that, first, the digital ta'aruf process at BJR is carried out in a structured manner in several stages supported by religious education, supervised interactions, and ethical communication guidelines. Not only does this mechanism serve as a matchmaking facilitator, it also serves to maintain religious values by guiding pre-marital interactions within the boundaries of Islamic law. Second, from the perspective of maqashid al-shari'ah, hifz al-din in this context is not limited to protecting faith, but also includes preserving moral behavior and social interaction patterns to prevent practices that lead to moral decay. Finally, the

findings show that digital technology, when properly regulated, can serve as a means of protecting religion and not a threat, and can provide a reference for the development of a maqashid-based digital ta'aruf platform.

Keywords: Digital Ta'aruf, Hifz al-Din, Matchmaking Bureau, Maqashid al-Shari'ah

INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, information and communication technologies have become an inseparable part of everyday life. The access and distribution of information now occur rapidly through digital devices such as smartphones and computers, which are connected to the internet and social media. This digital transformation not only affects social and economic relations but also influences how individuals practice their religious values in daily life. Access to the internet and social media has opened new spaces for religious communities to learn, discuss, and participate in religious activities without the limitations of space and time (Iskandar et al., 2025). This phenomenon has become part of a new dynamic in religious practice in the digital era, where spiritual and social activities are increasingly intertwined through digital media.

Within this wave of religious practices in digital spaces, the phenomenon of digital *ta'aruf* has emerged, a contemporary adaptation of the conventional *ta'aruf* process integrated into digital platforms. *Ta'aruf* refers to a pre-marital introduction process based on Islamic law, in which unmarried couples are not allowed to interact privately without a *mahram*'s supervision. Hence, *ta'aruf* typically involves intermediaries who facilitate communication between potential partners. In the internet era, this concept has evolved beyond in-person intermediaries and can now take place online through websites or social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp (Hildawati & Lestari, 2019). This digital adaptation is

carefully designed to preserve and promote the foundational principles of Islamic ethics, particularly the values of modesty, respectful conduct, and supervised interaction between individuals. By embedding these values into the structure and operation of online engagement, the adaptation ensures that participants are able to interact in a manner consistent with religious and cultural expectations, even within the virtual environment (Nisa, 2021). The increased accessibility of such platforms, as noted by various studies, demonstrates a broader trend of Muslims leveraging digital tools to align with religious doctrines in their search for a spouse (Rooij, 2023). In doing so, it bridges the gap between traditional modes of supervised social and educational interaction and the modern demands of online communication, thereby creating a space that is both faithful to Islamic norms and responsive to the opportunities of technological advancement. Ultimately, this approach demonstrates how digital tools can be harmonized with religious values to foster inclusive participation, broaden educational and social outreach, and maintain integrity in virtual interactions. However, previous research indicates that many digital behaviors among Muslims do not fully align with Islamic ethical principles, necessitating a reconstruction of digital ethics rooted in Islamic values (Fatah et al., 2022). This phenomenon shows that religious values can adapt to technological developments, while still requiring clear boundaries and ethical guidelines in digital religious practices.

Indonesia has experienced a significant rise in digital *ta'aruf* practices, largely influenced by religious movements and the *hijrah* trend, which encourages Muslims to seek faith-based marriage introductions through technology (Rahman & Zulhaqqi, 2020). Similar developments have also occurred globally, where Muslim communities in countries such as Saudi

Arabia, Malaysia, and Western nations have adopted digital matchmaking platforms to balance traditional Islamic values with modern communication tools (Firnando & Setiawati, 2025). The increasing use of online matchmaking platforms by young Muslims across Europe and the US increasingly demonstrates the modern adaptation of traditional cultural values to meet contemporary needs, so the emergence of online matchmaking platforms is not something new, but developing countries have also done it (Rooij, 2023). This global phenomenon highlights a broader trend in marriage where technology is playing a role in challenging and transforming cultural-religious concepts related to male-female relationships, such as in the practices of introduction and betrothal, while still maintaining the implicit and deeply rooted core of Islamic values (Sohrabi-Haghighat, 2011). This adaptation often involves a re-evaluation of established social norms and adolescent behavior in a digital context, highlighting the tension between traditional religious values and modern freedom of expression. Consequently, this phenomenon continues to generate controversy in certain circles and requires extensive discussion regarding acceptance (Zaini & Hamidah, 2023).

These global practices demonstrate that digital *ta'aruf* is not an isolated phenomenon but part of a broader trend of religious adaptation to technological change. At the same time, local cultural, religious, and technological factors shape how it is practiced in each context, creating diverse yet interconnected models of Islamic matchmaking. Despite these developments, the practice of digital *ta'aruf* also presents new challenges. Interactions through digital media can raise issues of ethics, privacy, and intentions that may conflict with Islamic values. In practice, digital *ta'aruf* is not immune to negative implications, such as exposure to cybercrime or

the falsification of personal information (Azwinda, 2022). These concerns require careful consideration of the mechanisms needed to ensure authenticity and ethical behavior in online matchmaking platforms, especially given the traditional preference for family-controlled offline matchmaking processes in many conservative societies. This means that, in previous practices, families could participate in vetting prospective partners, while online matchmaking platforms do not, making this a serious issue (Al-Dawood et al., 2017). In this context, a need arises for a normative framework capable of assessing and guiding digital *ta'aruf* practices to ensure they remain in line with Islamic values. Rigid legal approaches often fail to address the complexities of interactions in today's digital space, necessitating a more dynamic and goal-focused paradigm. In this context, the *maqāshid al-sharī'ah* (objectives of Islamic law) is expected to offer relevance, as it emphasizes not only formal compliance with the rules but also broader protection and well-being.

The concept of *maqāshid al-sharī'ah* is widely recognized as a flexible and evolving framework that enables Islamic law to respond constructively to the challenges of modernity. First, contemporary scholars have expanded beyond *maqāshid al-sharī'ah*, its classical focus (protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property), to include new domains like environmental protection, human rights, social welfare, and state governance, reflecting the needs of a globalized world (Tahir & Hamid, 2024). Second, *maqāshid al-sharī'ah* is used as a guiding framework for addressing modern humanitarian crises, technological advancements, promoting justice, and equity (Fitria & Arsyi, 2022). Third, *maqāshid al-sharī'ah* to develop inclusive laws and policies, especially in multicultural

societies, to foster harmony, protect minority rights, and align with universal human rights standards (Adrian, 2025).

In this context, the concept of *maqasid al-shariah* becomes a relevant normative framework to guide digital *ta'aruf* practices so that they remain aligned with the ultimate objectives of Islamic law. Specifically, the dimension of *hifz al-din* (preservation of religion) serves as the central foundation to assess how digital *ta'aruf* can maintain *maslahah* (benefit) and prevent *mafsadah* (harm). This means that *hifz al-din* not only maintains the continuity of formal worship but also ensures that values of honesty, politeness, and good intentions are maintained in online interactions. In the context of digital matchmaking, religious preservation includes avoiding manipulative practices, identity misuse, and communication that violates Islamic etiquette. Therefore, this principle requires a monitoring and education mechanism that emphasizes that technology is merely a tool, while the ultimate goal remains to maintain the purity of marital intentions and religious honor (Encep et al., 2025).

The focus on *hifz al-din* is particularly essential because the core of the *ta'aruf* process lies in safeguarding religious integrity, ensuring that every interaction between prospective partners occurs within the boundaries of Islamic ethics. In the digital sphere, where anonymity, visual exposure, and unrestricted communication often blur moral limits, the principle of *hifz al-din* provides a critical lens for evaluating how technology can be used without compromising religious values. Through this perspective, digital *ta'aruf* is not merely viewed as a technological innovation for Muslim matchmaking but as a conscious effort to realize the objectives of the shariah in preserving faith, modesty, and moral discipline within online interactions. This attitude is then in line with the emphasis of the *maqāsid*

framework as an effort to promote benefits (*maṣlaḥa*) and prevent harm (*mafsadah*) in the context of a dynamic society, especially in the phenomenon of online matchmaking practices (Muda et al., 2023).

One platform that embodies Islamic-based digital *ta'aruf* practices is Biro Jodoh Rumaysbo (BJR), an online *ta'aruf* institution established in 2017 under the guidance of Ustadz Muhammad Abduh Tuasikal, M.Sc. The platform offers services through its website, integrating pre- and post-marital education with an online *ta'aruf* system managed by the BJR team. Based on an interview with Ummu Hijaz, the coordinator of BJR, more than 14,000 users have registered and participated in the *ta'aruf* process through this platform. BJR's strength lies in its rigorous selection and supervision mechanisms, which help minimize potential violations of shari'a principles. Moreover, according to her, BJR can be regarded as one of the pioneering shariah-compliant digital *ta'aruf* platforms in Indonesia, as few similar platforms existed at the time of its establishment.

With these characteristics, Biro Jodoh Rumaysbo (BJR) serves as a relevant locus for examining how the principles of *maqasid al-shariah*, particularly *hifz al-din* (preservation of religion), are applied in digital *ta'aruf* practices. This study aims to analyze how digital *ta'aruf* is implemented at BJR and how its system aligns with the *maqasid al-shariah* dimension of *hifz al-din*. The analysis focuses on how shari'a principles are applied throughout the digital *ta'aruf* process and how the system maintains religious values within a technology-based setting. By exploring BJR's mechanisms, this study explains how Islamic law interacts with digital technology in guiding pre-marital relationships. Therefore, this research contributes to discussions on Islamic law and digitalization and offers practical insights for institutions providing digital *ta'aruf* services.

The findings are expected to serve as a reference for developing digital *ta'aruf* systems that are more aligned with the objectives of shariah, particularly in preserving religious values in the modern context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous studies have discussed the digital *ta'aruf* phenomenon from various perspectives. Some research focuses on the experiences of users, examining their motivations, challenges, and perceptions of online matchmaking platforms (Irfan & Abidin, 2020). Other studies delve into the jurisprudential aspects, evaluating how contemporary digital platforms align with Islamic legal principles, particularly regarding issues like consent, privacy, and gender interaction (Dahlan et al., 2023; Putri & Nur, 2024). For instance, some research highlights the potential for abuse and misrepresentation on platforms that claim to be 'halal' but may facilitate activities contrary to Islamic principles, such as secret or child marriages (Kurnia & Nurbaity, 2024; Rahmi, 2025). Firnando & Setiawati (2025) examined the role of *ta'aruf* applications such as Ta'aruf ID, Salams, and Hawaya in promoting Islamic marriage ethics and functioning as a medium for digital *da'wah*, despite challenges related to commercialization and user authenticity (Hasan, 2021; Rahmi, 2025).

Handayani (2022) explored online *ta'aruf* practices facilitated by Biro Jodoh Rumaysho and found that the process effectively adhered to Islamic guidelines through team supervision and the use of social media. Meanwhile, Rahman & Zulhaqqi (2020) highlighted how the rise of online *ta'aruf* was influenced by the *hijrah* movement among Muslims, though its development later experienced commodification due to market interests. Another study identified that many individuals engaged in online *ta'aruf*

deviated from Islamic relational boundaries, illustrating the challenges of maintaining religious integrity in digital contexts (Kamal & Baadilla, 2024). Furthermore, research that has been conducted collectively reveals tensions in practice, namely between the opportunities offered by digital platforms for Sharia-compliant matchmaking and the risks experienced within the limits of platform use in a virtual environment (Musarrofa & Rohman, 2023; Nisa, 2021).

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design. This approach is used to gain an in-depth understanding of digital *ta'aruf* practices implemented by Biro Jodoh Rumaysho (BJR) and to examine how the principle of *ḥifẓ al-dīn* is applied within its institutional mechanisms. The research was conducted at the digital *ta'aruf* platform of Biro Jodoh Rumaysho (BJR) as the case study site. A purposive sampling strategy was applied, with the following participant criteria: 1) BJR coordinator directly involved in designing and implementing the *ta'aruf* mechanisms, 2) mentor or facilitator responsible for education and supervision during the *ta'aruf* process, and 3) participants who have undergone the digital *ta'aruf* process at BJR. These participants were selected because they possess relevant experience and knowledge related to the focus of the study.

Data collection was carried out over a period of approximately two weeks. The primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with selected participants. The interviews were conducted online using an interview guide. Each interview lasted around 30–60 minutes, except for the interview with BJR coordinator, which lasted approximately 120

minutes. The interviews focused on participants' experiences, perspectives, and understanding of the digital *ta'aruf* process at BJR. Supporting data were collected through observation of BJR's website and social media channels, as well as document analysis, including *ta'aruf* guidelines, internal policies, and sample participant CVs. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis through the following steps:

1. Data familiarization by reading and reviewing all interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents.
2. Coding by identifying and labeling data segments relevant to the principle of *hifz al-din* and digital *ta'aruf* practices.
3. Theme development by grouping codes into key themes such as intention safeguarding, interaction supervision, data honesty, and *da'wah* orientation.
4. Interpretation by relating the findings to the framework of *maqāsid al-sharī'ah*, particularly *hifz al-din*.

To ensure research credibility, source triangulation was applied by comparing data from the BJR coordinator, mentor, and *ta'aruf* participants. In addition, member checking was conducted by confirming interview results with participants to ensure accuracy and shared understanding. Through these methods, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of digital *ta'aruf* mechanisms and their relevance to the principle of *hifz al-din*.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Digital *Ta'aruf* Process: Mechanisms in Biro Jodoh Rumaysho

Since its establishment, Biro Jodoh Rumaysho (BJR) has refined its *ta'aruf* mechanism from a simple manual system to a fully digitalized

platform. In its early phase (around 2017), the process was conducted through WhatsApp, where participants submitted their CVs directly to the team. As public engagement grew, BJR experimented with separate WhatsApp groups for male and female participants, though this model raised concerns about data privacy due to the wide exposure of personal information. Responding to these limitations, BJR shifted in 2021 to a web-based digital system. Through individual accounts, participants can independently complete their profiles, filter potential partners, and proceed to *ta'aruf* only when mutual interest is established. This transition marks BJR's move toward a more structured, secure, and technology-integrated approach, setting the foundation for understanding the mechanisms and safeguards implemented in its current digital *ta'aruf* process.

The mechanism of the *ta'aruf* process is explained as follows:

1. Pre-Marital Education

The initial stage in the *ta'aruf* mechanism at Biro Jodoh Rumaysho (BJR) is pre-marital education. This stage serves as an entry point before participants proceed to the partner-search phase. This stage aims to strengthen their understanding of the essence of marriage in Islam. The learning materials are delivered through audio lectures by Ustadz Muhammad Abduh Tuasikal and e-books that cover a variety of topics, including the rights and responsibilities of spouses, the proper etiquette of the *ta'aruf* process, and guidance on building a family in accordance with Islamic law. After completing the pre-marital education, participants are required to take an evaluation test to ensure their readiness and understanding of the material. Only those who pass the evaluation are allowed to proceed to the spouse-selection phase.

2. Partner Selection

In this stage, participants begin searching for a potential spouse who matches their stated criteria. Before entering this phase, each participant is required to complete a detailed personal profile during registration. The information provided is processed into a standardized Curriculum Vitae (CV), which serves as the foundation for compatibility matching and initial verification. Participants can browse potential candidates through their personal accounts by filtering criteria such as age, domicile, educational background, and other relevant aspects. The system then displays a list of recommended profiles that align with the participant's preferences.

3. *Ta'aruf* (Question and Answer Session)

If both participants show initial compatibility based on their CVs, they proceed to a moderated *ta'aruf* session conducted through WhatsApp. Communication does not occur directly between the male and female participants; instead, a BJR moderator acts as an intermediary, delivering questions, clarifications, and responses from each side to maintain proper Islamic etiquette. During this stage, participants may also request photos of their potential partners. BJR encourages this to reduce the risk of mismatch before the *nazhor* meeting.

4. *Nazhor* and *Khitbah*

If both participants remain compatible after the *ta'aruf* stage, they proceed to *nazhor*, a direct meeting conducted with the presence of a guardian (*wali/mahram*) and a BJR representative. This session serves to confirm personal compatibility beyond written communication, allowing participants to assess aspects such as physical appearance, personality, and religious preparedness. *Nazhor* may be held offline or online, but the attendance of a guardian and BJR facilitator is required in both settings. If both parties feel confident, they proceed; if not, they

may withdraw or take up to two days for *istikharah* before making a final decision.

Once mutual agreement is reached, the process transitions to *khitbah* (engagement proposal). At this stage, the BJR team facilitates the exchange of contact information, but communication must still occur through the guardian to maintain proper boundaries. Subsequent arrangements, such as family meetings, engagement planning, and wedding discussions, continue under the supervision of guardians.

5. Marriage

After *khitbah* and mutual agreement between both families, the couple typically proceeds to marriage, usually within three to six months after the *nazhor*. The timing of the wedding is fully determined by each family, as BJR does not intervene in setting the date. Although the process can extend up to a year, such cases are rare; periods of engagement longer than one to two years are discouraged because prolonged interaction may begin to resemble a dating relationship.

How BJR safeguards participants during digital *ta'aruf*

In practice, digital *ta'aruf* does not always operate in an ideal manner as prescribed in Islamic law. The ease of access and communication offered by digital platforms often creates vulnerabilities, such as interactions that exceed *syar'i* boundaries, identity falsification, and the commercialization of *ta'aruf* practices (Rahman & Zulhaqqi, 2020). These conditions indicate the need for a structured supervisory mechanism to ensure that digital *ta'aruf* remains aligned with Islamic principles and protects participants from potential harm. Responding to these challenges, BJR implements several mechanisms to safeguard participants during the digital *ta'aruf* process, including:

1. Pre-marital Education as a Foundational Stage

Pre-marital education provided within BJR's services serves as a fundamental foundation that distinguishes BJR from other digital *ta'aruf* platforms. Married life inevitably involves various challenges, including psychological, financial, educational, and other aspects. Therefore, prospective husbands and wives require pre-marital education as a preventive measure to maintain the noble goals of family life (Karimullah, 2021). This educational stage is very important to ensure that the participants in the matchmaking agency fully understand the responsibilities and expectations that they want to get in the future of their marriage practice, so that in future marriages, it can reduce the potential for conflict and misunderstanding between husband and wife (Rahmawati & Adhim, 2023). By emphasizing this basic education, the existence of BJR aims to foster a deeper understanding of the roles and obligations of husband and wife that will be carried out in marriage, thus encouraging the creation of a more stable and lasting marriage bond, including being able to resolve ongoing conflicts.

This basic stage is very important to equip participants with the knowledge and skills needed to face the complexities of life in marriage, so that the marriage that is formed can be realized in the context of *sakinah mawaadah warahmah*. The goal of this value internalization is to help participants view marriage as an act of worship that requires sufficient knowledge to be carried out properly. In Islam, a Muslim must possess a foundation of knowledge before performing any righteous deed; actions carried out without adequate understanding can lead to errors in both comprehension and practice. Without strong knowledge, a person may act

in ways that contradict the true values of Islam (Khoir et al., 2024). One BJR participant who is now married, Abu Hanafi, shared his experience:

“Before we went through *ta'aruf*, there was a learning process about marriage matters, so we were equipped first. A person who intends to marry, as part of worship, must at least understand the knowledge about it. So, we already had the foundation. Simply put, it's not like buying a cat in a sack, because we already knew what we were getting into.”

In addition to serving as a foundation of basic knowledge prior to entering marriage, this pre-marital education also indirectly filters participants who are genuinely committed to the process. Normatively, this indicates that prospective participants are expected to commit to completing the pre-marital education materials before initiating the partner-matching process.

2. Verification and Protection of Participants' Personal Data

At the partner selection stage, BJR combines a web-based system with manual verification conducted by the internal team. As explained by Ummu Hijaz, the coordinator of BJR, although the platform utilizes a digital system to facilitate partner matching, the team's assessment remains crucial. For instance, if there are indications that a participant is not genuinely serious about the process, the BJR team may recommend that the process not be continued.

BJR places strong emphasis on protecting participants' privacy. In the earlier system, when *akhwat* CVs were shared with *ikhwan* groups (and vice versa), the information was deliberately limited by excluding names, photographs, and phone numbers, while only the city of residence was disclosed. In the current BJR digital system, this principle of privacy remains intact. Participant photographs are not displayed on the website's CVs and are only shared when both parties express genuine interest in

proceeding with the *ta'aruf* process. Ummu Hijaz emphasized that this mechanism safeguards both participants' dignity and confidentiality.

Honesty and transparency in personal data are also essential aspects of the *ta'aruf* process. Every participant is required to provide accurate and truthful information when completing their biodata. During photo exchanges, the use of heavily edited images is strictly prohibited, and the photos must be recent. When prospective partners are introduced, participants are advised to describe themselves honestly. Usman, the BJR *ta'aruf* participant who is now married, shared his experience that the process was transparent. He explained that complete CVs were shared with each party and that the *ta'aruf* process was closely supervised, allowing any dishonesty among participants to be detected at an early stage.

3. Mediated Q&A and continuous mentoring

BJR strives to provide a *ta'aruf* process that aligns closely with Islamic law, particularly in regulating interactions between men and women. Ummu Hijaz explained that BJR's vision is to facilitate Muslim men and women who seek righteous spouses through a *syar'i* (Islamically compliant) process. Therefore, from the outset, BJR's mechanism is designed with strong Islamic values and strict regulations to minimize the presence of participants who are merely curious or unserious.

The question-and-answer *ta'aruf* stage is facilitated by a mediator via WhatsApp. At this stage, communication between *ikhwan* (male) and *akhwat* (female) participants does not occur directly; rather, a *ta'aruf* moderator from the BJR team acts as an intermediary, relaying questions, clarifications, and responses between both sides. This mechanism aims to maintain proper etiquette, prevent unrestricted interaction, and ensure that communication remains within Islamic guidelines. All communication

between potential partners is mediated by the *ta'aruf* team, with no direct contact permitted until the *nazhor* stage. Every message is facilitated through a moderator, ensuring that interactions remain within the boundaries of *syariah*. In BJR's digital *ta'aruf* process, communication through mediators serves as a preventive measure against inappropriate interactions with non-*mahram* individuals. Ummu Hijaz emphasized, "according to *syar'i* boundaries, during the *ta'aruf* Q&A process, both participants are 100 percent unable to communicate directly."

The *nazhor* stage then becomes the opportunity for prospective partners to confirm mutual attraction in person. This practice is explicitly sanctioned in Islam, as reflected in the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) instruction to Al-Mughira bin Shu'bah, who wished to propose to a woman. The Prophet advised him to look at her, so that their marriage might endure in harmony (Dodi Yarli R, 2018). In BJR's procedure, this stage remains strictly supervised, whether conducted via Zoom or in person, with the presence of a *wali*, family members, and the BJR team as observers. Another safeguard in interpersonal interaction is the mandatory involvement of *wali* or *mahram* during both the *nazhor* and *khitbah* stages. Their presence not only signifies the seriousness of the prospective partners but also helps preserve the propriety of their interactions. Even after mutual agreement to proceed, communication continues through the *wali* or family, never directly between the couple.

Throughout the process, the *ta'aruf* team remains available to receive consultations and respond to participants' inquiries. In addition to the team's assistance, participants have the privilege of consulting directly with Ustadz Muhammad Abduh Tuasikal. Umi Asih shared, "sometimes even after marriage, they still reach out for consultation. Recently,

someone from Cempaka Putih asked, ‘*Um, why haven’t I been blessed with children yet?*’ I reminded them to remain patient. So yes, sometimes they still consult with us.”

One of the BJR participants stated: “because the platform is highly trustworthy and finding a life partner is a once-in-a-lifetime journey, I was accompanied by competent *ummu* mentors. The process focused not on lust, but on Islamic principles.” Similarly, another participant remarked: “the *ta’aruf* process feels more safeguarded because there is someone accompanying it. Having an *ummu* as a mediator helps direct the process toward a serious, marriage-oriented path. If communication were conducted directly, it could lead to unnecessary small talk and distractions.”

***Ta’aruf* platform as a *da’wah*-oriented medium**

Another essential feature of BJR’s structure is its use of digitalization as a medium of *da’wah*, not merely a matchmaking tool. Digital *da’wah* plays a significant role in expanding the reach of Islamic education beyond spatial and temporal boundaries, enabling preachers to connect with audiences worldwide, something that conventional *da’wah* methods, limited by time and geography, cannot achieve (Nawaffani, 2023).

The function of the BJR platform as a form of *da’wah* aligns with its founding mission to assist young Muslims in finding life partners through Islamic means. Accordingly, in BJR’s digital *ta’aruf* process, educational elements are embedded at every stage, including pre-marital classes, consultations led by *ustadz*, and continuous mentorship provided by the team. In this regard, BJR’s website and social media channels also function as platforms for disseminating Islamic perspectives on marriage. *Ummu*

Hijaz explained: “we strive to spread understanding in accordance with *syariah*. If participants are not yet open-hearted, we facilitate and guide them. We cannot force them, but we continue to nurture their awareness.”

While maintaining its primary orientation toward *da'wah*, BJR sets a registration fee as part of its operational system. Ummu Hijaz explained that the development and maintenance of a digital platform, particularly with continuous feature updates, requires substantial resources. Consequently, after transitioning from an initially free system to a web-based platform, BJR began implementing a registration fee. In addition, the team assistance, educational programs, and ongoing mentorship throughout the *ta'aruf* process also entail material support.

Therefore, although *da'wah* remains BJR's central orientation, its operations cannot be fully separated from the commodification of online *ta'aruf* practices. However, in principle, commodification, including that related to religious values and symbols, such as online *ta'aruf*, does not necessarily have a negative meaning. As long as these practices remain within the framework of Islamic law and Indonesian positive law, they are not considered problematic. The development and commodification of online *ta'aruf* can be understood as a response to public interest and market demand (Rahman & Zulhaqqi, 2020).

The Integration of *Hifz al-Din* in BJR's Digital *Ta'aruf*

Imam al-Syatibi states that safeguarding religion (*hifz al-din*) is one of the five essential needs (*al-dharuriyyat al-khams*) that must be maintained, as neglecting it would lead to the total collapse of human life (Kurniawan & Hudafi, 2021). Gazalba outlines five reasons religion holds vital significance for global society: (1) it ensures salvation in the Hereafter, as

the only path to salvation lies in sincere worship and seeking Allah's pleasure; (2) it provides inner fortitude, allowing individuals to turn to Allah in times of distress; (3) it functions as a moral safeguard, setting boundaries for human behavior unlike that of wild or greedy animals; (4) it prevents the misuse of public wealth; and (5) it preserves global peace (Wahid, 2019).

In the pre-marital context, *ḥifẓ al-dīn* functions as a primary dimension within the framework of *al-ḍarūriyyāt al-khams*. The safeguarding of religion in the pre-marital stage is not limited to matters of belief alone, but also encompasses religious and moral values, particularly in the system of interaction between men and women. This is relevant given the prevalence of deviations in pre-marital relationships that may undermine a Muslim's religious morality.

Interactions between men and women, if not guided by religious boundaries, have the potential to lead to prohibited acts, such as seclusion (*khalwah*), gazing, and flirtatious behavior, and ultimately adultery. This risk arises because men and women are, by nature, created with mutual attraction. On this basis, Islamic law adopts a preventive approach (*sadd al-dharī'ah*), as reflected in the words of Allah in the Qur'an, Surah al-Isrā' (17:32): "*And do not approach adultery. Indeed, it is an immoral act and an evil way.*"

As a response to the potential deviations in pre-marital interactions, Islamic law offers the concept of *ta'aruf* between men and women as a structured and ethical pre-marital introduction process. In the context of digital *ta'aruf*, BJR seeks to apply the values of *ḥifẓ al-dīn* through various institutional mechanisms that regulate the process.

One of the most fundamental forms of *hifẓ al-dīn* in the *ta'aruf* process is the safeguarding of marital intention as an act of worship. The pre-marital education program organized by BJR plays an important role in internalizing religious values from the outset, enabling participants to understand *ta'aruf* as a *shar'i* effort toward the longest form of worship, namely marriage.

The most crucial aspect of *hifẓ al-dīn* in *ta'aruf* lies in the regulation of interaction, which represents the most vulnerable space for violations of Islamic norms. BJR's mechanisms demonstrate strict limitations in this regard. The question-and-answer process is not allowed to take place privately between the two parties but must be mediated by an intermediary team. In addition, the involvement of a guardian (*wali*) or *mahram* in the *ta'aruf* process further reinforces the seriousness of the interaction's objective, namely marriage, rather than a personal relationship without clear direction.

This approach reflects the principle of *hifzu ad-din* through the application of *sadd adz-dzari'ah*, the act of blocking all means that may lead to moral harm. Ibn al-Qayyim defined *adz-dzari'ah* as anything that could serve as a means or pathway to another action (Fawaid, 2019), while *sadd adz-dzari'ah* refers to closing all avenues that may lead to corruption or wrongdoing (Azizah, 2024).

In the *ta'aruf* process, there is an exchange of personal information between individuals. In this context, Islam places strong emphasis on honesty and strictly prohibits all forms of lying and deception. This principle is reflected in the saying of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

“You must be truthful, for truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. ... Beware of lying, for lying leads to wickedness, and wickedness leads to Hellfire.”

Deception in digital *ta'aruf* carries serious implications. In Islamic law, certain forms of deception may serve as grounds for the annulment of marriage, while others may affect the validity of the marriage contract itself. From the perspective of the Indonesian Civil Code, intentional deception carried out to obtain a benefit and remaining undisclosed until the marriage contract is concluded may provide legal grounds for seeking the annulment of the marriage (Musthofa & Laily, 2022). The principle of *ḥifẓ al-dīn*, manifested through the safeguarding of honesty, is applied in BJR's *ta'aruf* process. This is reflected in institutional mechanisms that emphasize transparency and the accuracy of personal data. From the outset, participants are required to complete their biodata honestly and are prohibited from manipulating personal information or photographs that could cause harm to either party in the future.

The *da'wah* orientation in BJR's digital *ta'aruf* platform further shows the application of the principle of *ḥifẓ al-dīn*. *Da'wah* is not positioned as an activity separate from the *ta'aruf* process; rather, it is integrally embedded throughout all stages, ranging from premarital education to continuous mentoring by the institutional team and supervising religious scholars. In this regard, *da'wah* is understood as a systematic and sustainable mechanism for safeguarding religion. This approach aligns with the Islamic principle that the preservation of religious teachings requires the continuous transmission of values through individuals and institutions responsible for conveying religious guidance.

Based on the discussion above, it can be understood that the digital *ta'aruf* practices implemented by BJR serve as a form of safeguarding

religion within a contemporary context. Digital technology is utilized as a medium for premarital introduction while maintaining *ta'aruf* mechanisms that emphasize compliance with Islamic principles. These findings provide a conceptual foundation suggesting that the development of digital *ta'aruf* platforms should not be limited to matchmaking functions alone, but also substantively integrate the principle of *hifz al-din* in their application.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that. First, *hifz al-din* should not be understood narrowly as merely protecting religious beliefs but also encompasses safeguarding morality and patterns of social interaction to ensure they remain in accordance with Islamic guidelines. Second, in the premarital context, *hifz al-din* carries the meaning of guiding the introduction process between men and women to prevent practices that could undermine religious values, such as seclusion (*khalwah*), uncontrolled interactions, and behavior that could lead to adultery.

Relationship with empirical practice. First, BJR demonstrates that technology does not necessarily threaten Islamic values but can instead serve as a means to protect religion. The integration of *hifz al-din* values into the *ta'aruf* mechanism through premarital education, personal data protection, third-party monitoring of interactions, and a continuous *da'wah* orientation demonstrates that the principles of *maqashid al-shari'ah* can be implemented in the digital space. Second, the *ta'aruf* mechanism implemented by the Rumaysho Matchmaking Agency can serve as a model for developing a digital *ta'aruf* platform based on the *maqashid al-shari'ah* (the principles of Islamic law). Finally, this study is limited by its focus solely on the aspect of *hifz al-din* (protection of life). Therefore, further

research is recommended to examine the dimension of *hifz al-nafs* (protection of life), particularly as it relates to the psychological and emotional well-being of prospective married couples.

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