

DIGITAL ACTIVISM AS A NEW ARENA OF HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY IN MUSLIM SOCIETY: THE #METOO MOVEMENT IN EGYPT

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Abstract

The expansion of digital technology has significantly transformed the landscape of human rights advocacy, particularly in socio-political contexts where public discourse is constrained. This study examines how digital activism constitutes a new arena of human rights advocacy within Muslim society, with a specific focus on the #MeToo movement in Egypt. While discussions on sexual violence in Egypt have historically been limited by patriarchal norms, cultural stigma, and political restrictions, digital platforms have enabled survivors to articulate their experiences and challenge dominant social narratives. Using a qualitative case study approach and the Transnational Advocacy Network (TAN) framework, this research analyses how digital activists employ strategies such as information politics, symbolic politics, leverage politics, and accountability politics in advancing gender-related human rights claims. The findings reveal that digital activism not only amplifies marginalized voices but also reconfigures the space of advocacy by transforming private experiences into collective public discourse. Importantly, the study demonstrates that

digital activism in Egypt operates within a Muslim socio-religious context, where advocacy efforts are shaped by Islamic ethical principles. Activists strategically integrate values such as justice (adl), human dignity (karamah), and the protection of honor (hifz al-'ird) to legitimize their claims and enhance social acceptance. This process reflects what the study conceptualizes as Islamic ethical adaptation, where global human rights norms are localized within religious framework.

Keywords: Digital Activism, Human Rights Advocacy, #MeToo Movement, Muslim Society, Egypt, Islamic Ethics.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of digital technology has fundamentally transformed the dynamics of political participation and human rights advocacy across the globe. Social media platforms, in particular, have enabled individuals and civil society actors to disseminate information, mobilize collective action, and challenge established power structures in unprecedented ways. In contexts where civic space is restricted and public discourse is tightly controlled, digital platforms often emerge as alternative arenas through which marginalized voices can articulate their experiences and advocate for social change (Castells, 2015). In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, digital activism has played a significant role in reshaping the relationship between citizens and authority, particularly in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. Egypt represents a critical case in this regard, as it embodies both the transformative potential of digital activism and the persistent limitations imposed by political control and social norms. Despite the increasing accessibility of digital platforms, discussions

surrounding sensitive issues such as sexual violence and women's rights remain highly constrained by patriarchal structures, cultural stigma, and moral expectations space by the state (Howard & Hussain, 2013). Sexual harassment and gender-based violence in Egypt are often treated as private or taboo subjects, leading to the marginalization of victims and the perpetuation of a "culture of silence". Victims frequently face social blame, reputational risks, and institutional barriers when attempting to report abuse. As a result, many cases remain unaddressed, reinforcing systemic inequalities and limiting the visibility of gender-related human rights issues within public discourse.

The emergence of the global #MeToo movement in 2017 marked a significant turning point in challenging such silences. While initially gaining prominence in Western societies, the movement soon expanded across different cultural contexts, including Muslim-majority countries. In Egypt, the movement gained significant visibility in 2020 through the creation of the Instagram account @assaultpolice, which became a platform for victims to share anonymous testimonies of sexual harassment and assault (Al-Najjar, 2019). These digital spaces facilitated the transformation of individual experiences into collective narratives, thereby reframing sexual violence as a public issue requiring social and institutional response. However, the diffusion of global movements such as #MeToo into Muslim societies raises important analytical questions. Existing literature on human rights advocacy has largely focused on transnational processes and institutional actors, often overlooking how advocacy is

shaped within specific socio-religious contexts. In particular, there remains limited scholarly attention to how Muslim society functions not merely as a setting, but as an active arena in which human rights norms are negotiated, contested, and reinterpreted (Abdelmonem, 2023).

In Muslim-majority contexts such as Egypt, public discourse is deeply influenced by Islamic ethical values, which shape perceptions of morality, justice, and social responsibility. Issues related to gender, sexuality, and public expression are often embedded within religious and cultural frameworks, making advocacy efforts both sensitive and complex. While some perspectives assume a tension between human rights and religion, Islamic teachings themselves emphasize principles such as justice (*adl*), human dignity (*karamah*), and the protection of honor (*hifz al-'ird*), all of which are directly relevant to the issue of sexual violence (An-Na'im, 2008). In this context, digital activists are required to navigate a dual challenge engaging with global human rights discourse while ensuring that their advocacy resonates within local socio-religious norms. This process involves not only the dissemination of information but also the strategic framing of issues in ways that align with Islamic ethical principles. As such, digital activism in Egypt reflects a broader phenomenon of norm localization, in which global ideas are adapted and reinterpreted within specific cultural and religious contexts. Based on these considerations, this study seeks to examine how digital activism constitutes a new arena of human rights advocacy in Muslim society, focusing on the #MeToo movement in Egypt. Specifically, the research aims to analyze how digital

activists utilize transnational advocacy strategies and how Islamic ethical values are integrated into their advocacy practices. By doing so, this study contributes to the broader literature by highlighting the role of Muslim society as an active agent in shaping human rights discourse and by introducing the concept of Islamic ethical adaptation as a key dimension of contemporary advocacy (Engle Merry, 2006).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach using a case study design focusing on the #MeToo movement in Egypt. The qualitative approach is particularly suitable for analysing complex social phenomena such as digital activism and human rights advocacy, as it allows for an in-depth understanding of social interactions, discursive practices, and political dynamics. The research relies primarily on secondary data sources, including academic literature, reports from international human rights organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, and credible media reports documenting cases of sexual violence and digital activism in Egypt. These sources provide insights into both the development of the #MeToo movement and the broader socio-political context in which it operates.

The analytical framework of this study is based on the Transnational Advocacy Network (TAN) theory developed by Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink. According to this framework, advocacy

networks consist of various actors including activists, NGOs, media, and international organizations who collaborate to promote normative change and influence policy outcomes (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). Within this framework, four key advocacy strategies are identified: Information Politics which involves collecting and disseminating credible information to raise awareness about social problems, Symbolic Politics which uses symbols or narratives and image to frame issues in emotionally compelling ways, Leverage Politics which involves mobilizing powerful actors such as international organizations to pressure governments, and Accountability Politics which seeks to hold states accountable to their commitments and obligations. These strategies are used in this study to analyse how digital activists in Egypt mobilize online platforms to advocate for women's rights and challenge the culture of silence surrounding sexual violence.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Digital Activism as a New Arena of Human Rights Advocacy in Muslim Societys

The findings of this study reveal that digital activism in Egypt does not merely function as a communication tool, but rather constitutes a new arena of human rights advocacy within Muslim society. Unlike conventional advocacy spaces such as civil society organizations or legal institutions, digital platforms provide an alternative sphere where sensitive issues particularly sexual violence can be articulated despite socio-cultural and

political constraints. In the context of Egyptian Muslim society, discussions on sexual violence are often restricted by patriarchal norms, moral stigma, and religious sensitivities. Consequently, victims are frequently silenced, and their experiences remain invisible in the public sphere. Digital activism, particularly through platforms such as Instagram, disrupts this pattern by enabling survivors to share their testimonies anonymously. This transformation indicates that digital space functions as a contested yet transformative arena, where human rights discourse is renegotiated within the boundaries of religious and cultural norms. Therefore, this study argues that Muslim society should not be perceived merely as a passive context of human rights discourse, but rather as an active arena in which global norms are localized, contested, and reinterpreted. This reflects an important shift in human rights advocacy, where digital platforms serve as a bridge between global movements such as #MeToo and local socio-religious realities.

This arena is characterized by the intersection of global human rights norms, local socio-cultural practices, and Islamic ethical frameworks, resulting in a dynamic and multilayered space of contestation and negotiation (Engle Merry, 2006). Unlike traditional advocacy structures that rely on formal institutions such as courts, NGOs, or international organizations, digital platforms enable a decentralized and participatory form of engagement. This transformation reflects what Castells (2015) describes as the shift toward networked social movements, where power is distributed across digital networks rather than concentrated in hierarchical institutions. In the Egyptian context, this shift is particularly significant

because formal channels for reporting sexual violence are often inaccessible or ineffective due to social stigma and institutional limitations (Human Rights Watch, 2023). The emergence of this hybrid arena also challenges the conventional dichotomy between “global” and “local” human rights discourse. Rather than passively adopting external norms, digital activists actively reinterpret and reshape these norms to fit the socio-religious realities of Muslim society. This process aligns with the concept of vernacularization, in which global human rights ideas are translated into culturally meaningful terms (Engle Merry, 2006). In Egypt, this translation is not merely linguistic but deeply ethical, as activists frame sexual violence as a violation of Islamic moral principles.

Digital activism introduces a new dimension of visibility that alters the power dynamics of advocacy. By circulating testimonies through social media, activists disrupt traditional gatekeeping mechanisms that previously controlled public discourse. This increased visibility not only empowers survivors but also creates a form of social pressure that compels institutions to respond. As Keck and Sikkink (1998) argue, information politics becomes particularly effective when it generates widespread attention and moral urgency, both of which are amplified in digital environments. However, this new arena is not entirely emancipatory. It remains shaped by existing power structures, including state surveillance, platform governance, and societal norms. In Egypt, the state’s control over digital space imposes constraints on activism, requiring activists to adopt cautious strategies such as anonymity and indirect framing (Howard & Hussain, 2013). This

indicates that digital activism operates within a negotiated space, where opportunities for advocacy coexist with risks and limitations. In the context of Muslim society, the hybrid nature of this arena becomes even more pronounced. Digital activism does not simply replicate Western models of human rights advocacy but instead produces a distinct form that integrates religious, cultural, and global elements. This suggests that Muslim society should be understood as a productive site of normative innovation, rather than a passive recipient of external ideas. Ultimately, the case of the #MeToo movement in Egypt illustrates that digital activism is not only expanding the reach of human rights advocacy but also redefining its foundational structure. By creating a hybrid arena that bridges global norms and local values, digital activists contribute to the evolution of human rights discourse in ways that are both context-specific and globally relevant.

Islamic Ethical Integration in Digital Activism

A key finding of this research is the strategic integration of Islamic ethical principles in digital activism practices. Rather than adopting a purely secular or Western feminist discourse, digital activists in Egypt frame their advocacy within the moral language of Islam. This reflects a process of what can be described as Islamic ethical adaptation in human rights advocacy.

Islamic principles such as *adl* (justice), *karamah* (human dignity), and *hifz al-ird* (protection of honor) are not only referenced as abstract values, but are actively employed to legitimize claims against sexual

violence. By doing so, activists position their advocacy not as a foreign imposition, but as a moral obligation rooted in Islamic teachings. This strategy is particularly important in a Muslim majority society, where religious legitimacy plays a crucial role in shaping public acceptance. The integration of Islamic ethics allows activists to reduce resistance from conservative segments of society, reframe sexual violence as a violation of Islamic moral order, and strengthen the normative foundation of human rights claims. Thus, digital activism in Egypt demonstrates that human rights advocacy in Muslim contexts is not necessarily in opposition to religion, but can instead be reconstructed through religious ethical frameworks.

Beyond serving as a source of moral reference, Islamic ethical principles in the context of digital activism in Egypt are actively operationalized as strategic tools of framing and legitimization. This indicates that Islamic ethics are not merely symbolic, but function as an embedded mechanism through which human rights claims are articulated, justified, and socially negotiated within Muslim society. Digital activists do not simply invoke Islamic values in abstract terms; rather, they translate these principles into discursive practices that resonate with the moral consciousness of society. In this sense, Islamic ethics become a living framework that is continuously reinterpreted in response to evolving social challenges, including sexual violence. One key dimension of this operationalization is the use of moral framing. Activists strategically frame sexual violence not only as a legal or social issue, but as a violation of Islamic

moral order. By emphasizing concepts such as *zulm* (injustice) and *amanah* (moral responsibility), digital campaigns reposition survivors not as sources of shame, but as victims of injustice whose dignity must be restored. This reframing plays a crucial role in shifting public perception, particularly in societies where moral legitimacy is closely tied to religious values (Hashemi, 2009). Moreover, Islamic ethical integration enables what can be understood as strategic legitimization, where activists align their advocacy with widely accepted religious norms to enhance credibility and reduce resistance. In conservative contexts, arguments grounded in religious values tend to carry greater persuasive power than those framed solely in secular or rights-based language. At the same time, the integration of Islamic ethics introduces a layer of normative negotiation that shapes the boundaries of digital activism. While Islamic principles support justice and dignity, they also emphasize modesty, privacy, and social harmony. As a result, activists must carefully balance the imperative to expose injustice with the need to maintain ethical conduct in accordance with societal expectations. This balancing act is evident in the widespread use of anonymity in platforms such as @assaultpolice, which allows survivors to share their experiences without compromising their personal dignity (Human Rights Watch, 2023).

This dual function of Islamic ethics as both an enabling and constraining force highlights the complexity of human rights advocacy in Muslim contexts. Rather than operating in a purely emancipatory framework, digital activism is embedded within a moral economy, where legitimacy, acceptability, and effectiveness are shaped by religious and

cultural norms (Mahmood, 2011). Furthermore, the integration of Islamic ethics contributes to the de-Westernization of human rights discourse. By grounding advocacy in local ethical frameworks, digital activists challenge the perception that human rights are exclusively Western constructs. Instead, they demonstrate that human rights principles can be articulated through diverse moral traditions, including Islam. This aligns with the broader scholarly argument that human rights should be understood as a plural and evolving discourse, shaped by multiple cultural and religious contributions (Donnelly, 2013). In the Egyptian case, this process results in a form of advocacy that is both locally rooted and globally connected. Digital activists draw upon global movements such as #MeToo while simultaneously embedding their claims within Islamic ethical narratives. This hybrid approach not only enhances the resonance of advocacy efforts but also contributes to the emergence of new models of human rights engagement in Muslim societies. Ultimately, Islamic ethical integration in digital activism should be understood not as a passive adaptation, but as an active process of ethical reconstruction, where religious values are mobilized to support justice, challenge social injustices, and redefine the boundaries of acceptable discourse. This underscores the role of Muslim society as an agent of normative transformation, capable of generating context-specific approaches to human rights advocacy that are both culturally legitimate and socially impactful.

Reflecting Islamic Ethics in the #MeToo Movement

The #MeToo movement in Egypt illustrates a complex interaction between global feminist discourse and local Islamic values. While the movement originates from a global context, its adaptation within Muslim society requires a careful negotiation of meaning. From an Islamic ethical perspective, the act of speaking out against injustice aligns with the principle of *amr bil ma'ruf wa nahi munkar* (enjoining good and forbidding evil). In this sense, survivors who share their experiences are not merely participating in a social movement, but are also engaging in a form of moral testimony. However, this process is not without tension. Public disclosure of sexual violence may conflict with social norms regarding modesty and privacy. As a result, digital activists often employ strategies such as anonymity to balance the need for justice with the preservation of personal dignity. This finding highlights that Islamic ethics in this context functions both as a source of legitimacy, supporting advocacy efforts and a normative boundary, shaping how advocacy is conducted. Therefore, the #MeToo movement in Egypt cannot be fully understood without considering how Islamic ethical values influence both the opportunities and limitations of digital activism.

The reflection of Islamic ethics within the #MeToo movement in Egypt reveals a complex interaction between normative ideals and lived social realities, where ethical principles are not always translated seamlessly into practice. While Islamic teachings strongly emphasize justice, dignity, and protection from harm, the manifestation of these values in societal responses to sexual violence often reflects tensions, contradictions, and

selective interpretations. At the normative level, Islamic ethics provides a robust moral foundation that aligns with the core objectives of the #MeToo movement. Principles such as *adl* (justice), *karamah* (human dignity), and the prohibition of harm (*la darar wa la dirar*) establish a clear ethical stance against sexual violence. These principles support the protection of victims and the accountability of perpetrators, suggesting that advocacy against harassment is not only socially necessary but also religiously justified (Kamali, 2008). However, the reflection of these ethical ideals in practice reveals a more complex reality. In many instances, societal reactions to #MeToo narratives in Egypt demonstrate a gap between Islamic moral teachings and social behavior. Victim-blaming, stigmatization, and the prioritization of family honor over individual justice continue to shape public discourse. This indicates that what is often perceived as “Islamic values” in society may, in fact, be influenced more by cultural norms than by authentic ethical teachings of Islam (Abu-Lughod, 2013). This discrepancy highlights the need to distinguish between Islam as a moral framework and social practices carried out in its name. As Ahmed (1992) argues, interpretations of gender and morality in Muslim societies are historically constructed and often intertwined with patriarchal structures. Consequently, the resistance faced by #MeToo activists cannot be understood solely as religious opposition, but rather as a reflection of deeply embedded social hierarchies. In this context, digital activism plays a crucial role as a space for ethical re-articulation, where activists challenge dominant interpretations and propose alternative readings of Islamic values. Through online platforms, activists emphasize that protecting

victims and speaking out against injustice are not acts of moral transgression, but rather expressions of Islamic ethical responsibility. This process reflects what Bunt (2018) describes as the emergence of “digital Islam,” where religious discourse is reshaped through digital engagement.

The #MeToo movement in Egypt demonstrates how Islamic ethics can function as a tool for moral critique and social transformation. Activists often invoke religious arguments to question societal practices that contradict Islamic principles, such as silencing victims or protecting perpetrators. By doing so, they reposition Islam not as a barrier to human rights advocacy, but as a source of moral authority that supports it. At the same time, this reflective process also exposes the limitations and challenges of ethical integration. One major challenge is the selective use of religious narratives, where certain values (such as modesty) are emphasized to control women’s behavior, while others (such as justice and accountability) are underutilized. This selective interpretation creates an imbalance that undermines the holistic nature of Islamic ethics. Moreover, the public nature of digital platforms introduces new ethical dilemmas. While exposing cases of sexual violence is crucial for raising awareness, it may also conflict with Islamic principles related to privacy (*satr*) and the avoidance of public scandal. Activists must therefore navigate a delicate balance between the need for transparency and the ethical imperative to protect individuals from harm. This tension reflects broader debates within Islamic jurisprudence regarding the limits of public disclosure and the ethics of testimony (Hallaq, 2009). Despite these challenges, the #MeToo movement

in Egypt ultimately illustrates the potential of Islamic ethics as a dynamic and evolving framework. Rather than being static or restrictive, Islamic ethics can be reinterpreted to address contemporary issues, including gender-based violence. This aligns with the concept of *maqasid al-sharia* (the higher objectives of Islamic law), which prioritize the protection of life, dignity, and justice as fundamental goals (Auda, 2008). Through this lens, digital activism becomes a site of ethical negotiation and transformation, where competing interpretations of Islam are debated and redefined. The movement not only raises awareness about sexual violence but also contributes to a broader rethinking of how Islamic values are understood and applied in modern society. Ultimately, reflecting Islamic ethics in the #MeToo movement reveals that the relationship between religion and human rights is neither inherently conflicting nor automatically harmonious. Instead, it is a dynamic process shaped by interpretation, context, and agency. In the Egyptian case, digital activists emerge as key actors in this process, actively engaging with Islamic ethics to promote justice, challenge social norms, and expand the possibilities of human rights advocacy within Muslim society.

Muslim Society and the Expansion of Human Rights Awareness

Another important finding is the increasing awareness of human rights within Muslim society, particularly regarding issues of gender-based violence. Digital activism has contributed to shifting public perceptions, from viewing sexual harassment as a private issue to recognizing it as a

public human rights concern. This shift indicates that Muslim society is not inherently resistant to human rights values, but rather engages with them through culturally and religiously relevant frameworks. In this sense, the expansion of human rights awareness in Egypt reflects a process of norm localization, where global human rights principles are adapted to local contexts. Furthermore, the emphasis on justice and dignity within Islamic teachings provides a foundation for promoting peaceful and solution-oriented approaches to advocacy. Rather than framing the issue in a confrontational manner, digital activists often emphasize moral responsibility and collective accountability.

The emergence of digital activism in Egypt, particularly through the #MeToo movement, has contributed to a significant transformation in Muslim society by fostering the expansion of human rights awareness. This transformation reflects a shift from a traditionally passive reception of norms toward a more active and participatory engagement with issues of justice, gender, and dignity. Historically, discussions of human rights in many Muslim societies have often been framed within state-centric or elite-driven narratives, where awareness and advocacy were largely confined to institutional actors. However, the rise of digital platforms has disrupted this dynamic by enabling broader societal participation. As Eickelman and Anderson (2003) argue, new media technologies have facilitated the emergence of what they term a “Muslim public sphere,” in which individuals can engage in discussions about social and political issues beyond traditional structures. In the Egyptian context, this shift is

particularly evident in the way ordinary citizens engage with issues of sexual violence. Through platforms such as Instagram and Twitter, users are no longer passive consumers of information but active participants in shaping public discourse. This participatory dynamic contributes to the democratization of human rights awareness, where knowledge about rights and injustices is no longer limited to legal experts or activists, but becomes part of everyday social interaction (Howard & Hussain, 2013). Moreover, the expansion of awareness is closely linked to the normalization of discourse around previously silenced issues. Sexual harassment and assault, which were often considered taboo topics, are increasingly being discussed openly within Muslim society. This shift indicates not only a change in communication patterns but also a transformation in societal attitudes toward what constitutes legitimate public concern. As Merry (2006) notes, the localization of human rights discourse involves translating abstract principles into culturally meaningful narratives, making them more accessible and acceptable within specific contexts.

At the same time, the expansion of human rights awareness in Muslim society is not a linear or uncontested process. It involves ongoing negotiation between competing values, including tradition, religion, and modernity. While digital activism has increased visibility and awareness, it has also generated resistance from segments of society that perceive such movements as threats to cultural or moral order. This reflects what Hefner (2011) describes as the pluralization of moral authority in Muslim societies, where multiple actors compete to define legitimate norms and values.

Importantly, the growing awareness of human rights does not necessarily imply a wholesale adoption of Western frameworks. Instead, it reflects a process of selective adaptation and reinterpretation, where global human rights norms are integrated with local cultural and religious values. In this regard, Muslim society becomes not merely a recipient of external ideas, but an active agent in redefining the meaning and scope of human rights (An-Na'im, 2008). Furthermore, the expansion of awareness is accompanied by the development of collective moral consciousness, where individuals begin to see issues such as sexual violence not as isolated incidents but as systemic problems requiring collective response. This shift from individual to collective understanding is crucial for sustaining advocacy efforts and promoting long-term social change. It also aligns with the concept of "social accountability," where communities play an active role in holding individuals and institutions accountable for violations of rights. Another significant aspect of this transformation is the emergence of new forms of solidarity within Muslim society. Digital platforms enable survivors, activists, and supporters to connect, share experiences, and build networks of support that transcend geographical and social boundaries. This solidarity reinforces awareness by creating a sense of shared responsibility and collective identity around the issue of human rights (Castells, 2015). However, it is also important to acknowledge the limitations of this expanded awareness. Increased visibility does not automatically translate into structural change. Legal reforms, institutional accountability, and cultural transformation often lag behind shifts in public discourse. This gap highlights the need for sustained engagement and the integration of digital

activism with broader advocacy strategies, including policy reform and education (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

Despite these challenges, the case of the #MeToo movement in Egypt demonstrates that Muslim society is undergoing a gradual but significant transformation in its engagement with human rights. The expansion of awareness reflects a move toward a more inclusive and participatory model of advocacy, where individuals are not only aware of their rights but also actively involved in defending them. Ultimately, Muslim society should be understood as a dynamic and evolving arena of human rights advocacy, where awareness is continuously shaped by interaction between digital media, cultural values, and religious ethics. This transformation underscores the importance of recognizing the role of society not just the state or international actors in advancing human rights. It also highlights the potential for context-specific approaches that are rooted in local realities while remaining connected to global movements

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that digital activism constitutes a significant transformation in the landscape of human rights advocacy, particularly within Muslim society, as evidenced by the #MeToo movement in Egypt. Rather than functioning merely as a tool of communication, digital platforms emerge as a new and hybrid arena of advocacy, where global human rights norms are actively negotiated, localized, and

reinterpreted within specific socio-religious contexts. In this regard, Muslim society should not be understood as a passive recipient of human rights discourse, but as an active and dynamic arena in which normative meanings are continuously constructed and contested. The findings reveal that digital activism in Egypt plays a crucial role in breaking the longstanding culture of silence surrounding sexual violence. By enabling anonymous testimony and collective storytelling, platforms such as Instagram transform private experiences into public discourse, thereby reshaping the visibility and urgency of gender-based violence as a human rights issue. This transformation reflects a broader shift from institutional and elite-centered advocacy toward more decentralized, participatory, and society-driven forms of engagement.

Importantly, this study highlights that the effectiveness of digital activism in Muslim society is closely linked to the integration of Islamic ethical principles. Activists strategically frame their advocacy within the moral language of Islam, drawing upon values such as justice (*adl*), human dignity (*karamah*), and the protection of honor (*hifz al-'ird*). This process, conceptualized as Islamic ethical adaptation, demonstrates that human rights advocacy in Muslim contexts is not inherently in opposition to religion, but can instead be reinforced through religious ethical frameworks. Islamic ethics, in this sense, functions both as a source of legitimacy and as a normative boundary that shapes how advocacy is conducted. At the same time, the study reveals that the reflection of Islamic ethics within the #MeToo movement is characterized by a complex interaction between

normative ideals and social realities. While Islamic teachings provide a strong moral foundation for opposing injustice, societal responses often reflect contradictions, including stigma, victim-blaming, and the prioritization of social honor over individual rights. This gap underscores the importance of distinguishing between Islamic ethical principles and their social interpretations, as well as the role of digital activism in challenging dominant narratives and rearticulating ethical values in more justice-oriented ways. Furthermore, the emergence of digital activism contributes to the expansion of human rights awareness within Muslim society. The findings indicate a shift from passive acceptance of social norms toward more active and participatory engagement with issues of justice and dignity. Through digital platforms, human rights discourse becomes increasingly accessible, normalized, and embedded in everyday social interactions. This process fosters the development of collective moral consciousness and new forms of solidarity, while also highlighting the ongoing negotiation between religious values, cultural traditions, and global norms. This transformation remains complex and incomplete. While digital activism enhances visibility and awareness, it does not automatically lead to structural change. Legal reform, institutional accountability, and cultural transformation continue to face significant challenges, particularly within restrictive political environments. This suggests that digital activism should be understood as part of a broader ecosystem of advocacy that requires sustained engagement across multiple levels.

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