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McDonaldization of Online Prostitution Through Michat in Islam's Perspective

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Abstract

The shift in prostitution from conventional practices to online platforms has enabled sex workers to connect directly with customers through social media, replacing localization and pimps. One platform frequently associated with this practice is the Michat application. Online prostitution has become increasingly widespread in Indonesia, including Lamongan Regency, where cases involving Michat have been identified. This study aims to analyze the pattern of online prostitution on Michat using McDonaldization Theory and examine it from an Islamic perspective. The study employed the Critical Hacking Analysis (CHA) method, which is suitable for research conducted in virtual environments. Data were collected through observations within the Michat application, including photos, symbols, and coded information, and were analyzed using McDonaldization Theory. The findings reveal a structured pattern of online prostitution, beginning with downloading and installing Michat, creating an account, accessing the nearby users feature, and selecting accounts based on appearance, offered services, and distance. These practices reflect the principles of efficiency and speed emphasized in McDonaldization. From an Islamic perspective, online prostitution is considered a form of adultery (zina), which is strictly prohibited and carries both legal and spiritual consequences. Beyond individual sin, it also threatens moral values, weakens faith, undermines the sanctity of marriage, and may contribute to increasing divorce rates. The study concludes that digital platforms have rationalized prostitution practices while creating significant social and religious challenges in predominantly Muslim communities.

Keyword: *Online Prostitution, McDonaldization and Islam*

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Introduction

Prostitution is categorized as a social problem because it violates the social system, values, and norms existing within society. In Indonesia, prostitution is a serious problem. Prostitution is located in areas called lokalisasi in Indonesia as it exist in cities across Indonesia, such as Yogyakarta's Sarkem district and Surabaya's Dolly district. Puji Laksomo and Riska Magfiraini (2014) examined how the social problem of prostitution also enters and occurs in the virtual world. In the digital era, with its society known as cyber society, prostitution is referred to as cyber prostitution. Technological advancements and availability are also exploited in its promotion and transactions. Cyber prostitution exploits the commodification of women's bodies and the libidos of people in cyber society. Various applications have been used as promotional and communication media between sex workers or pimps and potential clients. Artists also engage in online prostitution by utilizing social media applications like Beetalk, We Chat, Snapchat , and Twitter to meet lifestyle needs, including beauty treatments and purchasing luxury goods (Zainal Fadri, 2020). Online prostitution is widespread and has become a difficult problem to address because it occurs in the virtual space (Prior et al., 2026). The virtual space contains numerous websites and applications, making online prostitution increasingly difficult to control and monitor. A study focused on examining the phenomenon of online prostitution based on the sites or applications used is needed. One such misused application in online prostitutions is Michat.

The drive to fulfill a lifestyle and achieve prestige are the reasons for engaging in and using prostitution services (Bayar & Sezgin, 2026). In prostitution, both sex workers and clients receive benefits and satisfaction, both material and non-material. Sex workers offer their bodies to clients in exchange for material rewards such as money, jewelry, or branded goods. These rewards are needed to simply meet their needs or even to maintain a lifestyle. Meanwhile, clients gain satisfaction by fulfilling their sexual desires. With social media, sex workers and clients no longer need to visit lokalisasi districts. Interactions and transactions between sex workers and clients in online prostitution networks are conscious actions undertaken to fulfill each other's needs and satisfaction. These sexual interactions and transactions represent a form of cost and reward , as individuals interact socially for certain rewards. The drive to fulfill a lifestyle also causes sex workers to feel inadequate and unfair with the profit distribution arranged by pimps. Therefore, they prefer to leave conventional prostitution and switch to online prostitution. This way, sex

workers can perform their work without the interference of pimps and other prostitutes, resulting in higher pay or income. The income that was initially used to meet their needs is also sufficient to meet their lifestyle (Krüsi et al., 2026)

Online prostitution has been widely practiced and has become a problem that is quite difficult to overcome because it is in the virtual space (Pereda & Águila-Otero, 2026). The virtual space contains many sites and applications, making online prostitution increasingly difficult to control and monitor, including those through the Michat application. Cases of online prostitution have occurred. One case was reported by PORTALJTV.com, which exposed the practice of online prostitution by securing 10 sex workers at a homestay called Lestara in the Grand Garden shophouse complex in Gresik Regency. Information was obtained that the sex workers were selling themselves through the Michat application (Kharuhayothin & Patarapongsant, 2026). Meanwhile, through the news websites Lamongantimes.com, a man was arrested by the police in Diwek District, Jombang Regency for being a pimp by selling a 20-year-old sex worker on the Michat application (Archibugi & Tosoni, 2026). Even minors have also become victims of online prostitution businesses and have been included in human trafficking crimes. KOMPAS.com reported an online prostitution case involving two children under the age of 15 and 16 in Yogyakarta City. Local police arrested three suspects for operating the Michat application to find customers (Desquesnes & Proia-Lelouey, 2026).

Misuse of information technology also occurred in Lamongan Regency, East Java. In a news report by Wirafokus.com on April 24, 2025, it was reported that there was a prostitution practice using the Michat platform to offer prostitution services. AKBP Agus Dwi Suryanto, the Lamongan Police Chief, explained that this case involved a married couple who had run a prostitution business six times due to economic pressure. Furthermore, on June 30, 2025, Beritasatu.com reported on a pornography case perpetrated by two men who were a same-sex couple. It was explained that the two perpetrators created pornographic content and then used the Facebook and MiChat applications as a medium to disseminate the content. The use of social media was also a medium for finding partners and other gay male communities. From these two news reports, Lamongan Regency was not immune to the misuse of social media, especially Michat, as a medium for easily and quickly offering prostitution services and finding sexual partners.

Michat is a social media platform designed to make it easier for users to a new friend or even someone to date. It features a pre-set Global Positioning System (GPS) that allows users to interact with other users, both nearby and far away, and then continue the conversation by meeting. Michat itself is similar to Beetalk , as it has the same feature of scanning contacts who are nearby or not

too far from the radar. Michat is well known to the public because it is often referred to as an online prostitution application (A. M. Fauzi et al., 2025). In a study conducted by (Inobemhe et al., 2025), online prostitution with Michat also occurred in Bima, specifically in Woha District. Sex workers engage in online prostitution with Michat because it can solve economic problems and fulfill their lifestyle. Meanwhile, in Lampung, female students are driven to engage in online prostitution with Michat due to the urge of lifestyle and lack of family control. Students consciously use Michat to engage in prostitution because they consider it the fastest way to solve their problems (Calabrese et al., 2025).

Opening MiChat and viewing the accounts gives the impression of being similar to an e-commerce app. User accounts resemble stores, and the offerings resemble menus. Both MiChat and e-commerce apps offer the same flexibility: customers can meet their needs with minimal effort and a short time. (Guanah, 2025) states that people today tend to seek faster and more efficient options. Ritzer also cites four principles of McDonaldization: efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control. This would be interesting to examine using McDonaldization Theory. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Lamongan Regency in 2021, the majority of Lamongan Regency's population is Muslim. The Muslim population is recorded at 1,061,195. The second largest number of adherents is Protestantism, with only 2,453 people. Therefore, 99% of Lamongan Regency's population is Muslim, and only 1% adheres to religions other than Islam. Online prostitution is a form of sin prohibited by Islam because it is a form of adultery. Adultery is viewed differently from conventional law. Islam considers any prohibited sexual intercourse to be adultery and the perpetrator must be punished, regardless of whether they are married or not. Conventional law, or positive law, does not consider any prohibited sexual intercourse to be adultery. In Islam, any sexual intercourse conducted outside of marriage, such as online prostitution, should be punished.

The formulation of the problem in this research is: " McDonaldization of Online Prostitution Throught Michat in Religious Perspective ?" The formulation of this problem is the base for understanding the aspects that shape the practice of online prostitution throught Michat. By identifying the principals of McDonaldization in the practice, also this research to reveal how the Islam as a religion online prostitution. The formulation of this problem also focuses on stages, uniqueness and differences between online prostitution and conventional prostitution. Through this question, the research will continue to know how Islam sees this phenomenon. This research aims to answer these questions with in-depth analysis. The main purpose of this research is to reveal the formulation of the problem that has been mentioned, namely understanding the

prostitution change from conventional to online and how religion sees about the practice. This goal is important because it can provide insight of online prostitutions and the role of religion in communities. By digging deeper into the online prostitution, this research also aims to understand how Islamic perspective of online prostitution phenomenon. This research hopes to provide new insights of Islam as religion has role to prevent online prostitution happening. In particular, it will help explain how online prostitutions accurate and how islam preceptive about the phenomenon, this research is expected to make a real contribution to the study of social problems and the sociology of religion

Methods

The approach applied in the following research is an online qualitative approach with the Critical Hacking Analysis (CHA) method developed by Muhammad Jacky in the book Critical Hacking Analysis: Decoding Power In The Digital Age (2025). This type of research is exploratory qualitative research with a multimodal critical analysis design, namely research that is not limited to text and conversations on the research platform but also pays attention to visual aspects, symbols, code language, and distribution patterns of digital interactions. A qualitative approach according to Bodgan and Taylor is research that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed behavior (Ahmada, 2020). The Critical Hacking Analysis (CHA) method developed by Muhammad Jacky uses power theory, platform/media studies and discourse analysis to uncover how algorithms, policies and digital interactions shape social relations and how the structure of meaning in online spaces is formed (Jacky, 2025). Critical Hacking Analysis (CHA) is qualitative-critical in nature which emphasizes the meaning, power and resistance strategies hidden behind the algorithmic mechanisms and symbolic interactions in the Michat application, making it suitable to answer the research problem formulation. The CHA's function is to uncover the power structures and algorithms that enable online prostitution practices within the Michat platform and to analyze user strategies in exploiting system vulnerabilities (platform hacking). This method was also chosen to understand how digital rationalization creates new forms of economic bodily relations within virtual spaces. Data collection involved observations in the Michat application, articles and journals related to the topic, and screenshots of observations.

The research was conducted on the Michat app and online prostitution accounts within the app. The criteria for accounts that met the research requirements were determined by their profile photos, photo albums, statuses/about information, and symbols used. The focus was on online

prostitution accounts operated by female sex workers (PSKs) that appeared in the "nearby users" feature, located in the center of Lamongan Regency, namely Lamongan District.

Second, the researcher will go to the Lamongan Regency Square and open the Nearest Users feature. This will allow the author to determine how far or close Michat users are within the research focus area, namely Lamongan District, Lamongan Regency. At this stage, the researcher will also select accounts that meet the specified subject criteria. The next step is to attempt to communicate with the selected accounts. At this stage, active accounts will be selected, namely those that respond or send messages to the researcher's account.

Other data includes screenshots or screenshots from the Michat application as authentic evidence of the phenomena focused on in this research, namely code language, symbols, and interaction structures. Based on the methods applied in this study, the observational results will also be supported by previous research, either in the form of articles or theses that examine online prostitution and online prostitution on Michat.

The research process above also aligns with the three main stages of CHA (A. Fauzi et al., 2018), namely by conducting epistemic hacking, namely by reading discourse, symbols, and bodily representations in the Michat digital space. Next, the Algorithmic Exploitation Mapping stage analyzes how the application's features and logic, such as those available and used in prostitution practices. And finally, the Digital Resistance Interpretation stage interprets how female sex workers as platform users negotiate control over their bodies and the meaning of sexuality amidst the prevailing economic system. Therefore, this research can describe user behavior and understand the mechanism of digital prostitution as a form of rationalization of McDonaldization.

In addition, CHA emphasizes the principle of non-exploitative research, namely that research must not increase risks for subjects, and the results are expected to be a critical reflection on the social system that surrounds them.

Data validity is also considered by: comparing digital observation data and literature, conducting a digital audit trail, namely systematic recording of all data, dates and context of collection, conducting peer debriefing by discussing with the supervising lecturer, and finally by conducting reflexivity, namely realizing that the researcher's position as a digital observer is not neutral

Result and Discussion

The Phenomenon of Online Prostitutions through Michat

Online prostitution is the practice of providing sexual services to clients for sexual intercourse in exchange for money agreed upon by both parties. Social media makes it easier for people to communicate, make friends, and even conduct business. However, behind the convenience and benefits provided, there are individuals who misuse social media for personal gain. One example is the misuse of social media, Michat, as a new marketing tool, simplifying and making the process for sex workers and potential commercial sex clients to meet more efficiently and quickly. McDonald's is a fast food franchise whose fast and efficient service is a key advantage that is also applied in online prostitution. The dimensions of efficiency, calculation, predictability, and control are evident in the process of potential clients finding sex workers and when sex workers promote themselves.

The fast and easy process, requiring minimal effort and expense, has led to the thriving of online prostitution through Michat in Lamongan Regency. This is in line with the continued growth of smartphone and internet users in Indonesia, according to a We Are Social report that stated there were 204.7 million internet users in Indonesia as of January 2022. (Hady & Ibrahim, 2023; Rahmadi et al., 2021) The unconstrained nature of space and time, while simultaneously accessible to many, makes Michat a perfect platform. The phenomenon of online prostitution in Lamongan District, Lamongan Regency, is closely related to the technological structure that facilitates and normalizes it. Michat is not just a conversational medium but also an algorithmic infrastructure with a system that regulates, directs, and controls user behavior through the platform's design, code, and logic.

Just like McDonald's, which has a well-organized flow that achieves all four dimensions: efficiency, calculation, predictability, and control. Customers arrive at the restaurant, queue, browse the menu, order, pay, and then receive their order. Efficiency, predictability, and control are achieved through a flow that organizes and simplifies transactions for both customers and the restaurant. An efficient flow allows for more transactions to be completed in less time.

To understand how online prostitution is practiced on the Michat social media app in Lamongan Regency, the researcher will discuss field findings regarding phenomena and facts, as well as a discussion to answer the research problem formulation regarding how McDonald's online prostitution is practiced through the Michat app in Lamongan Regency. The findings were obtained through field observations, with the researcher also posing as a potential customer. Research

documents and previous research in the form of journals and books serve as supporting data for this study.

This study uses an observation strategy by creating a Michat account as a man interested in using prostitution services, with this subject not knowing the original purpose of the communication. Documentation from the following observations is a screenshot of the account, album and status of the subject in the Michat application (Ozanne et al., 1998). Using the "Nearby Users" feature that applies GPS (Global Positioning System) to measure the distance of the user and other users around him, so that it will automatically sort users who are in a close radius. Each step continues by selecting an account that suits the needs, namely, located in the Lamongan District, female, has a complete profile, and is responsive. A similarity in the flow that refers to the flow that resembles McDonalidization in online prostitution through Michat in Lamongan District, Lamongan Regency is found, as can be seen in the following chart

Research results should be written clearly and succinctly, and not detailed data. It is recommended to give a review of how your findings or results differ from previous studies. The most important part of your article is your discussion, where you have an opportunity to examine your data. It usually begins with a summary of research results and then deals with relevant theories or references. All the theories or references used should be accompanied by an obvious source. In the preceding edition, a theoretical review is included separately in the subheadings. However, from Vol. 2 No. 1 2026, a theoretical review has become an important part of the subheading result and discussion. In the context or context, points and numbering may not be used. If they are used in a sentence or discussion, they should be mentioned directly in a paragraph using Numbers in parentheses. For example, marriage has several functions, such as: (1) a religious function; (2)

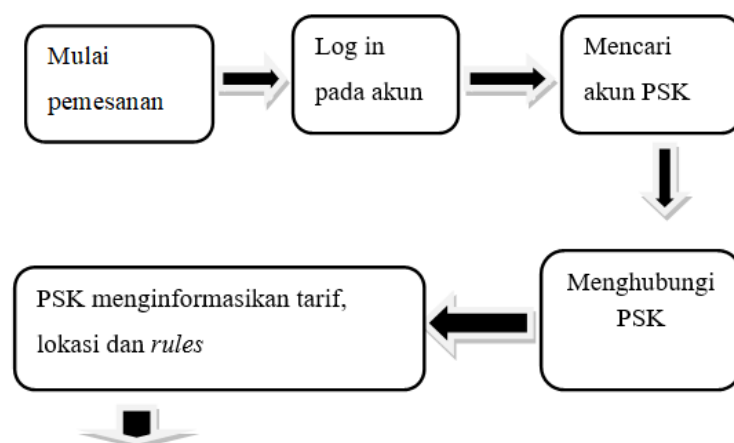


Figure 1 Sequence chart of Online Prostitution Services using the Michat Application

psychological function; (3) reproductive functions; (4) social function etc

Sex workers create accounts with text and photos that potential clients can view. The following is a breakdown of the online prostitution process carried out by sex workers and potential clients using Michat in Lamongan District, Lamongan Regency:

1. Search and promote yourself

Downloading the Michat app and creating an account is quite easy and requires minimal investment. All you need is a smartphone and internet data/ Wi-Fi. Prospective customers don't need to go to red-light districts to find prostitution services, nor do sex workers need to appear in red-light districts to attract potential customers.

For sex workers (PSKs), promoting themselves on Michat is sufficient using the app's features. However, accounts must also include attractive photos and information that clearly explain the services offered. Sexy photos, rules, and proof of chats with previous clients are essential to convince potential clients that the services offered are genuine and reliable.

There are codes embedded by sex workers to attract and signal, such as: Stay/Call, Ready for Lamkot, cash for room, Cash upon meeting, and some also include weight information.

2. Booking

Potential customers can use the Nearby Users feature to find prostitutes near their location. They can view and identify the prostitutes they're interested in and then initiate communication by sending a greeting. If the prostitute is active and receives the greeting, they'll reply with information about their rates, location, and rules.

Rates vary depending on location, duration, and services provided. Rates range from Rp 300,000 to Rp 700,000.

3. Transaction

And if the prospective customer agrees with the rates, location and rules, the transaction can be carried out and payment can be made according to the PSK's instructions.

Online prostitution through Michat sees the ease and practicality of the Michat application for the ease and security of prostitution practices carried out.

- Efficiency in online prostitution through Michat

Michat acts as an intermediary tool that eliminates the limitations of space, time, and energy. Individual lifestyles have changed significantly with technological advancements.

Many aspects of life have become more efficient thanks to technology, both in the economic and service sectors. And to sell or buy somethings does not require sellers and buyers to meet in markets or shops, but rather they meet on e-commerce platform applications. Sellers provide photos and descriptions of the products for sale, while sellers view and evaluate whether the appearance, description, and price match their preferences. Both buyers and sellers can save time and energy by using gadget and the internet. Service providers, such as transportation companies, also have numerous applications that facilitate meeting between providers and customers. Thanks to GPS, both parties can save time and energy by selecting the nearest available driver. Similarly, in online prostitution, the system within the application provides a platform for sex workers to sell their services and bodies like products. Clients are free to view and evaluate according to their preferences based on the photos and information uploaded by the sex workers. GPS also plays a role in making this practice easy and simple, users who want to save time and energy only need to open the application using the nearby user feature and choose sex workers according to their interests near them. Efficiency is about making the most of tools and utilizing them optimally to achieve desired results. Both sex workers and potential clients see Michat as a convenient and affordable platform for streamlining the transaction process. Both potential clients and sex workers benefit from the convenience and convenience of meeting in a brothel. The Nearby Users feature saves time and effort to transport in long distance, allowing potential clients to find sex workers nearby, making everything more efficient.

- Calculability of online prostitution through Michat

Online prostitution through Michat makes it easy for prospective buyers and sex workers to meet without having to go to a brothel; they only need a Michat account and an internet connection. To order sex, prospective customers simply use the Nearby Users feature and send a greeting. Prospective customers no longer need to spend time searching for services or rates; they simply visit the sex worker's account and send a greeting with the rates and services offered. This speed of processing also benefits sex workers, allowing them to serve more customers and generate more profits.

- Predictability in Online Prostitution through Michat

The accounts of sex workers (PSKs) operating online prostitution through Michat in Lamongan District, Lamongan Regency, have a similar pattern: prospective customers simply need to send a greeting via the Nearby Users feature, and they will respond with information

about rates, locations, and services. The album also includes screenshots of evidence or testimonials to convince prospective customers. Ritzer explains that new consumption platforms allow for the cloning of previously successful companies' systems. The same experience, payment methods, website design, operational systems, and management as successful companies can strengthen predictability (Christiani, 2018). This similar flow helps prospective customers feel familiar and secure during interactions, both before and during transactions.

Begins with potential customers typically initiate communication by sending a greeting via the Nearby Users feature, which is then responded to with a relatively uniformly formatted message containing information about rates, location, and the type of service offered (Graça et al., 2016). Furthermore, these accounts often display photo albums containing screenshots of transaction receipts or customer testimonials as a means of building trust. These repetitive communication patterns and information presentation form a kind of predictable transaction pattern where each stage of the interaction occurs in a relatively similar order.

- Control on online prostitution through Michat

Another principle of McDonaldization is control. This principle applies when technology replaces humans in controlling workers, customers, and production processes. Technology is seen as a machine with high-precision computing capabilities. However, not all control in McDonaldization is machine-based; there is also control in the form of knowledge, skills, regulations, procedures, and techniques.

Sex workers implement rules and procedures to control potential clients. These include payment rules and procedures. These rules can include both rules and prohibitions, such as payment methods and prohibitions against haggling over the price of services offered or requesting services that are not available.

Potential customers have no choice or subjective preference. If they are interested, they will only receive service according to the rules and cannot bargain or violate them. At McDonald's, customers can only order food from the menu. Employees will not serve customers if they order food outside of that menu (Sipon et al., 2014). This is similar to online prostitution; if an account states that it does not offer oral sex, potential customers are not allowed to request such services.

And still related to Ritzer's framework, this practice reflects the predictability but also

control dimensions of digital consumption, where the platform facilitates the reproduction of consistent and easily recognizable interaction patterns for users (De Jonge et al., 2018). The standardization of communication flows, the use of uniform message formats, and the visualization of transaction receipts serve as indirect control mechanisms, guiding the behavior of both sellers and buyers to maintain established interaction patterns. Thus, Michat is not only a transaction medium, but also plays a role in forming and stabilizing consumption rituals that provide a sense of security, familiarity, and control for potential customers before and during the transaction process.

A report published on the Wirafokus.com news channel explains that prostitution through Michat is not solely run by individuals but is also used by pimps to offer online prostitution. In this case, a husband and wife are the perpetrators. The husband acts as the admin for the wife's account. Therefore, for the wife, even though she is a prostitute using Michat, she is also bound by her husband's control. Thus, the principle of control in online prostitution through Michat is layered and mutually influential. Potential clients are bound by the prostitute's rules, but the prostitute herself can also be bound by the pimp's control, and the pimp/account admin also follows Michat's control as the medium used.

That's why social media has big role to shapes attitudes toward sexuality and consumerism, especially among young women. Platforms like Michat, Instagram, and TikTok normalize the public display of attractiveness and aspirational lifestyles, creating pressures to generate income through visibility, including online sex work. Consumerist values embedded in likes, followers, and engagement metrics foster a transactional view of self-presentation, where sexualized performance can be perceived as strategic and legitimate.

The standardized, predictable interactions in online prostitution—such as structured messaging, pricing, and testimonials—mirror broader social media logics, aligning with McDonaldization principles of predictability and rationalization. Consequently, social media not only facilitates access to online sex work but also shapes perceptions of sexuality and consumption, contributing to the normalization of practices that intersect with economic need and digital culture

Online Prostitution Through Michat From An Islamic Perspective

In Arabic, prostitution is referred to in Islam as zina. The word zina itself comes from the Arabic word bai'ul irdhi, meaning "selling honor." Therefore, prostitution also means selling honor, and those who engage in it can be called "honor sellers." Islam clearly forbids and prohibits prostitution, meaning that anyone who engages in it will face legal sanctions in both this world and

the afterlife.

Women in Islam are highly protected and their status is elevated, as seen from the granting of equal rights between men and women. In the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, when he was asked who was most obligated to be respected, he answered that it was the mother who must be respected. The Prophet Muhammad SAW still gave the same answer three times when asked the same question. And on a different occasion, the Prophet Muhammad SAW once reprimanded a friend because he preferred to hold his son in his arms, but when his daughter came, he told her to sit on the floor. The Prophet Muhammad SAW then said to him, "Do you always do this to your children? By Allah, if I am told to give special treatment to children, I will give special treatment to my daughters."

From these two stories, it can be concluded that women receive greater respect and privilege than men. This respect also includes special attention in their religious education. This is expected to reduce the risk of women falling into prostitution. With the attention and priority accorded by Islamic teachings, Islam prohibits women from sacrificing their honor for money or any other payment, as this would also indirectly lead to humiliation.

Prostitution is an insult to human dignity, especially women. The prohibition against approaching and engaging in prostitution is clearly stated in the primary sources of Islamic law, the Quran and the Hadith. Prostitution involves using one's body for sexual gratification for the benefit of another person. It differs from adultery, as adultery itself is consensual sexual intercourse. In Islamic ethics, the concept of *adab* emphasizes chastity, honor, and behavior that maintains individual dignity and social integrity. Prostitution, both conventional and online, is considered detrimental to *adab* because it commodifies the body and sexual relations, violates the value of chastity, and disrupts the moral order of Muslim society. This practice not only poses spiritual risks to individuals but also undermines collective social and moral norms, including perceptions of honor, gender responsibility, and ethical social interaction. From a sociology of religion perspective, violations of *adab* through online prostitution reflect the tension between digital modernization and moral-religious traditions. This phenomenon highlights how digital platforms that facilitate sexual transactions can erode long-held moral norms, while creating social dilemmas among younger generations exposed to consumer culture and visualizations of sexuality on social media.

The engagement of individuals, particularly young women, in online prostitution is shaped not only see from Islam perspective but so much complex it's also connect with cultural, social, and

economic dynamics. In many communities, traditional taboos around premarital sex, gender roles, and economic opportunity intersect with rapidly changing digital environments. Social media and messaging applications normalize mediated forms of interaction, providing anonymity and reducing the stigma of direct solicitation, which can lower psychological barriers to participation.

Economic pressures are often central. Limited employment opportunities, gendered labor expectations, and the rising cost of education or household contributions can push young women toward income-generating activities that offer flexibility and financial independence, even when such activities contravene social or religious norms. Peer influence and aspirational lifestyles—reinforced through online culture and the visibility of consumption—also play a role in shaping perceptions of legitimacy and desirability of sex work.

Furthermore, cultural acceptance of technology-mediated consumption creates a form of moral rationalization. The standardization and predictability of online platforms, as seen through features like structured messaging and testimonial-based trust-building, mirror patterns analyzed under McDonaldization theory, making the behavior feel familiar and manageable despite social prohibitions. These cultural and technological dynamics interact to create a landscape where young women navigate both opportunity and risk in online prostitution.

Online prostitution is also categorized as sexual exploitation, which is also prohibited by Islamic teachings. This is stated and explained in the Qur'an, An-Nisa; 24:33, which reads "And do not compel your female slaves to prostitution, while they themselves desire chastity, seeking worldly gain. And whoever forces them, then surely Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful (towards those who are forced) after they are forced." Therefore, in the eyes of Islam, all forms of coercion and sexual exploitation are prohibited and victims of sexual exploitation are given the opportunity to be accompanied so they can return to safety and confidence.

In addition to the consequences of punishment and sin, someone who commits adultery and rape will also have their faith removed from their hearts. This is contained in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, narrated by Abdullah ibn 'Abbas ra and narrated by Imam Bukhari and Muslim. "A person who commits adultery, when he commits adultery is not a believer." Online prostitution and conventional prostitution are both forms of adultery, regardless of the media or specific methods used. Adultery is the act of sexual intercourse (coitus) committed outside of a legal marriage. And the criminal element of adultery is the act of sex outside of marriage.

Prostitution is the provision of sexual services by men or women for financial gain. The reason prostitution is considered a form of adultery is that in Islam, zina literally means Fahisyah ,

meaning a heinous act. The term zina refers to sexual intercourse between a man and a woman who are not married. There are two types of punishments for perpetrators: muhsan (unmarried) and ghair muhsan (unmarried). The difference between the two is based on marital status. Muhsan is the punishment for married perpetrators, while ghair muhsan is the punishment for unmarried perpetrators, and is punished by flogging.

Therefore, based on the explanation above, prostitution is considered a form of adultery in Islam, which in practice involves the elements of adultery, namely forbidden sexual intercourse and deliberate or unlawful intent. Repeated adultery, committed for monetary gain or reward, even though it is clearly prohibited and the perpetrator is aware of the prohibition, will also be detrimental and have significant negative impacts on community life.

According to Islamic law, prostitution is the practice of adultery committed repeatedly. From an economic perspective, adultery generates income for the perpetrator, especially when committed by women. The motive may be to fulfill an increasingly high-quality lifestyle, leading many women from the lower classes to engage in it

compelled to sell themselves to men. In online prostitution through Michat in Lamongan District, many female accounts intentionally upload sexy photos, wearing tight, short clothing, to attract men to use their services. Special codes, such as words and emojis, also indicate that the account provides sexual services. Testimonials are also found on the sex worker accounts to convince men that their offers are genuine and legitimate.

Online prostitution prohibits not only adultery but also anything that leads someone to it, as stated by Allah SWT in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Isra', verse 32. This verse explains that not only adultery is forbidden, but also any activity that opens up opportunities for it. The verse also includes someone using technology that can be a means of adultery. Therefore, although the use of the Michat application is not directly forbidden, it is widely used for acts that lead to adultery and open up opportunities for immorality. In Islamic law, there is the principle of sadd al-Dzara'i , namely the principle to prevent things that can lead to immorality and major sins. Therefore, it is highly recommended not to use the Michat application because it is close to immorality. Its negative impact on many parties is also an important reason to avoid Michat, such as:

a) Increase the risk of promiscuity

This can happen because it is easy for one person to become friends with another person with only a little information about each other, so it is possible for someone to meet someone who has a bad influence.

b) Misused as a medium for prostitution

The number of news media and observation results show that many accounts use Michat for promotional purposes and communication between sex workers and potential customers.

c) Destroying the household

The process and absence of special requirements means that anyone can create an account on Michat, so there is a possibility that Michat is also used as a medium for cheating husbands using anonymous accounts.

d) Getting closer to a free lifestyle

Its easy, fast and effective use makes it highly likely that people will use the application to find new acquaintances and even look for prostitutes.

e) Reduces piety to Allah SWT

The use of the Michat application for improper activities such as online prostitution also has an impact on a person's faith, thereby eroding the value of a person's faith and piety.

In Islam, there is the concept of ihtiyat, which is the attitude of being cautious in one's religion to prevent one from falling into sin. In practice, ihtiyat involves avoiding anything that could lead to evil, even if it seems harmless and not intended for evil purposes. This principle is crucial for Muslims, as humans are inherently constantly exposed to trials, including those faced with doubtful or questionable matters, which can lead to sin and immorality.

Online prostitution contradicts the principle of Hifz al-Nasl (protecting the family and society) because it undermines the family and social order by fostering adultery. Other negative impacts of online prostitution include the potential to undermine religion, endanger lives, influence reason, and constitute an illicit use of wealth. Therefore, the impact not only impacts the individual but also their offspring, thus, in Islam, online prostitution also undermines Hifz al-Nasl (protecting the offspring). There is also the risk of pregnancy, even with contraception, and the child's lineage will be unclear because the mother has had sexual relations with multiple men. In terms of population, the number of children without clear legal status will increase and this can also weaken the institution of marriage, which should be a legitimate way to protect the offspring. Because online prostitution can involve all groups, including married men, it will also increase the social problems of divorce and marital disintegration.

In the principle of Hifz al-Din (protecting religion), online prostitution contradicts Islamic

teachings, which emphasize the importance of maintaining morality and purity in interpersonal relationships. Online prostitution is also a form of sin that can erode religious values, lead individuals away from spiritual attitudes and thoughts, and lead to moral degradation in society. Online prostitution also threatens Hifz al-Nafs (protecting the soul) because it can lead to exploitation, human trafficking, and violence against women. Furthermore, there is the risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, threatening a person's well-being and mental health.

From the perspective of Hifz al-'Aql , online prostitution can damage common sense because it encourages immoral behavior, sexual addiction, and drug abuse that impact decision-making in personal and social life. From the aspect of Hifz al-Mal , this practice also violates the principle of halal property because it involves illegal transactions, fraud, and economic exploitation. Therefore, from an Islamic perspective, online prostitution is not just an individual problem, but a serious threat to morality and social order. Therefore, a joint effort is needed by the government, ulama, and society to prevent it, because this practice is a modern form of adultery that is prohibited and contrary to the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

In legal consequences of online prostitution, the prohibition on online prostitution is rooted not only in state criminal law but also in the Islamic legal framework embedded in social norms and religious discourse (Coleman et al., 2020). The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) consistently asserts that prostitution, including that mediated by digital technology, is haram (forbidden) because it falls under the category of zina (adultery) and all forms of intermediary (wasā'il al-ḥarām). Activities such as promoting sexual services, negotiating rates, and facilitating transactions through digital platforms are viewed as forms of ta'āwun 'alā al-ithm (cooperation in sin), which is prohibited under Islamic law.

From a socio-legal perspective, this prohibition is not only normative-theological but also functions as a mechanism of social control in Indonesian Muslim society. Religious norms operate alongside positive law and shape public perceptions of morality, deviance, and social acceptability. Within Ritzer's McDonaldization framework, the practice of online prostitution through platforms like Michat presents a paradox: on the one hand, digital systems create predictability and control through standardized interactions and transaction rituals; On the other hand, this structured pattern contributes to the normalization of practices that are normatively rejected by Islamic law and local values. Thus, online prostitution is not only a legal violation but also an arena of tension between the rationalization of digital consumption and the moral-religious regime that seeks to maintain social control and the ethical order of society.

Islamic criminal law addresses online prostitution as haram and counted as prohibited acted. Islam has own legal consequences like jurisprudence (fiqh) provides a normative framework for assessing digital prostitution through principles such as ḥudūd, taʿzīr, and sadd al-dharāʾiʿ. Although classical Islamic law does not explicitly address online prostitution, the underlying exchange of sexual services for compensation remains prohibited as zina. However, the strict evidentiary requirements associated with ḥudūd punishments—such as confession or the testimony of four eyewitnesses—render their application limited in digitally mediated contexts. Consequently, Islamic legal responses tend to emphasize regulatory and preventive approaches rather than fixed corporal sanctions.

Within this framework, taʿzīr offers discretionary authority to address acts that facilitate or normalize prohibited behavior, including online advertising of sexual services, price negotiation, and the management of digital accounts. Such practices may be classified as jarāʾim taʿzīriyyah, allowing state or religious authorities to impose sanctions aimed at deterrence, moral regulation, and social order. This approach aligns Islamic legal reasoning with contemporary governance mechanisms.

The principle of sadd al-dharāʾiʿ further justifies intervention by restricting technologies and practices that function as means toward prohibited outcomes. Digital platforms that enable anonymity, standardized communication, and predictable transactional rituals—features characteristic of McDonaldized consumption—lower moral barriers and facilitate illicit exchanges. Viewed socio-legally, Islamic law thus operates as a counter-framework that challenges the rationalization and normalization of digital prostitution, emphasizing moral control alongside technological regulation in Muslim-majority societies such as Indonesia.

And because online prostitutions is still growing but it's difficult to track. One of main and most possible to do is prevention by teach muslimah or woman about Islamic values, such as respect (izzah) and purity (taqwa), shape Muslim society's perspective on sexual behavior and transactions involving the body. Online prostitution is seen as violating izzah, as it diminishes individual dignity and damages social reputation, as well as tarnishing taqwa, which is spiritual awareness and adherence to moral norms. Violation of these values is not only considered an individual sin but also a threat to the collective moral integrity of society.

These values can form a strategic basis for prevention efforts. For example, religious education and moral awareness can emphasize the importance of maintaining izzah and taqwa in the digital era, so that the community and the younger generation are encouraged to reject or avoid online

prostitution. This values-based approach can also be combined with regulations and social interventions to create a digital environment that is ethical, safe, and compliant with Islamic moral

Encouraging people to focus about islamic spirituality (ruhiyyah) emphasizes self-awareness, moral responsibility, and achieving closeness to God, which can serve as a counterargument to the digital rationalizations that drive online prostitution. While online platforms emphasize predictability, efficiency, and control of interactions—minimizing risk and increasing profit—ruhiyyah values emphasize spiritual integrity, purity, and self-respect.

The maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah approach reinforces this perspective by emphasizing the protection of the soul (nafs), honor (‘ird), and property (māl) from exploitation and social harm. Online prostitution not only corrupts individual morals but also causes widespread spiritual and social harm, contradicting the goal of Islamic law to safeguard the well-being of society. Thus, ruhiyyah and maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah provide a critical framework for rejecting profit-based rationalizations, emphasizing ethical and moral values over digital efficiency

Conclusion

Online prostitution through the Michat app in Lamongan Regency demonstrates a process of McDonaldization characterized by efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control in sexual transactions. Technological features such as "Nearby Users," easy account creation, and unified communication patterns have facilitated quick, affordable, and structured meetings between sex workers and potential clients. This situation has made online prostitution increasingly organized, hidden, and difficult to control, thus thriving along with the rise in internet and smartphone use.

From an Islamic perspective, online prostitution is a modern form of adultery, which is clearly prohibited because it contradicts the Qur'an and Sunnah. This practice not only violates the prohibition of adultery, but also contradicts the principles of the maqāṣid al-syarī'ah , specifically Hifz al-Din , Hifz al-Nafs , Hifz al-'Aql , Hifz al-Mal , and Hifz al-Nasl . Its impacts include moral decay, sexual exploitation, degradation of faith, threats to mental and physical health, misuse of wealth in an unlawful manner, and the destruction of family and lineage structures.

Therefore, online prostitution cannot be viewed as merely an individual issue, but rather as a social and moral problem that requires comprehensive action. The government, religious scholars, and the public must play an active role in education, monitoring, prevention, and the wise use of technology to prevent it from becoming a vehicle for immoral acts. Preventing online prostitution is part of efforts to maintain the sanctity, human dignity, and moral resilience of society in accordance with Islamic values.

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