



A Model for Utilization of Cyberspace based on the Holy Quran and Hadiths

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Abstract

In today's world, cyberspace has become an essential part of daily life. Its impact on the family environment can sometimes be greater than that of physical space. The damage caused by this uninvited guest cannot be denied, just as the current benefits of this platform cannot be ignored. Is it possible to create a safe and healthy path for utilizing this space by providing families with a suitable religious model? By developing an adequate answer to this question, we can take effective steps towards strengthening the foundations of family and ultimately, the cultural consolidation of society. However, if such a model is not presented to society, the destructive consequences of cyberspace may threaten the religious and cultural security of our society. The aim of this research is to answer the following question through an analytical-explanatory method, using the library research method: How can such a model be designed according to religious sources? According to the research findings, incorporating nine religious components into interactions with cyberspace can help in developing a successful model. These components are: cultural appropriateness, necessity, age, gender, time, specialized knowledge level, general knowledge level, family role, and societal role.

Keywords: Cyberspace, Quran, hadiths, consumption model.

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a. Media Literacy, Media Ethics, Media Behavior

Recently, the term "media literacy" has gained popularity in cultural circles. This phenomenon can be attributed to the increasing prevalence of media warfare by adversaries, and the need to develop a response to it. In recent years, the Western and Western-minded media have waged an open and unequal war on human and Islamic values. They are attempting to alter and reorganize the beliefs of their audiences. Equipping individuals with a comprehensive understanding of media culture, particularly media literacy, is one of the most effective ways to neutralize this cultural invasion. Media literacy is a multifaceted concept, and different perspectives exist regarding its definition. One possible definition is as follows: Media literacy involves the ability to access, categorize, deconstruct, analyze, and evaluate the media dimensions of a message and its values. It also involves cultural reprocessing and adaptation, as well as artistic objectification of meanings based on cultural principles, methods, and tools.

This definition comprises three critical dimensions. The first pertains to message analysis, which involves recognizing the sender, purpose, and production of the message. This dimension helps regulate our media consumption. The second dimension involves customizing messages for sharing with others. Finally, the third dimension relates to the creation of high quality and valuable media products.

Based on conventional definitions and the historical background of this term, media literacy is often viewed as a defensive and passive skill that only enables individuals to avoid harm from the media. However, some alternative definitions have moved beyond this passive view and expanded the concept of media literacy by including the aspect of production in the set of skills and competencies. Given the expanded definition of media literacy, which includes production skills, can we conclude that media literacy alone is sufficient to confront the media? Furthermore, is the mere production, distribution, and consumption of media sufficient?

It is important to note that media literacy is just one aspect of mastering media culture. Once one has gained an understanding of media literacy and acquired the necessary skills in media

production, distribution, and consumption, the next step is to implement these skills effectively. In fact, "media behavior" is even more important than media literacy. A user who has acquired media literacy, but does not adjust their behavior in using media based on this literacy, has gained an unproductive skill set.

To transform media literacy into media behavior, it is essential to have trust or belief in media information. Without trust in the information, an individual's behavior will not change accordingly. Therefore, it is only when media information becomes an integral part of an individual's beliefs that it can lead to appropriate behavior.

This is where the concept of "media ethics" comes into play. In essence, media ethics involves integrating media literacy into an individual's beliefs and values. When some Muslims claimed to have faith, the Holy Quran responded as follows: "The Bedouins say, 'We have faith.' Say, 'You do not have faith yet; rather, say, 'We have embraced Islam,' for faith has not yet entered into your hearts" (Quran 49:14). Media literacy alone is not sufficient to correct media behavior. However, if media literacy is transformed into media ethics, it can guide behavior accordingly.

Media literacy serves as the initial step towards achieving a proper culture of media usage. The second step involves transforming this skill into capability and ethics. After acquiring the necessary capability, the desired media behavior will follow as the third step.

By outlining the essential components of correcting media behavior, this article aims to assist readers in designing a sensible model for utilizing all forms of media, including cyberspace.

b. Practical Model of Utilizing Cyberspace

Imam 'Alī (a) delivered an enlightening speech to Kumayl and stated, "O Kumayl! Your religion is like your brother, so be vigilant in safeguarding your religion as much as possible" (Mufīd 1413 AH, 283).

The potential risks associated with using cyberspace cannot be overlooked; thus, it is crucial to exercise caution and mindfulness when utilizing this space. By introducing a suitable religious model, the potential risks associated with using cyberspace can be significantly reduced or eliminated altogether. By examining religious sources, it becomes evident that adhering to the

following components can aid in designing an effective and desirable model. In a broader perspective, the following nine main components (which are not exhaustive and may be supplemented by others) can be introduced in this context.

1. Cultural Suitability

The first criterion for utilizing media and cyberspace is to ensure that media products are appropriate and culturally compatible. When there is such proportionality in various aspects, a common language can emerge.

Religious Culture

The initial step in achieving cultural compatibility is to compare media products with Islamic law (Sharia) and its objectives. Therefore, it is necessary to learn the rules of media, particularly new media. Furthermore, conformity with ideological principles and moral propositions is one of the most crucial aspects of religious culture.

Upon careful examination of the evidence for the prohibition of most sins, it becomes clear that the criteria for many sins, such as lying, backbiting, spying, gazing upon the forbidden, neglecting the prohibition of evil, and casting doubt, are the same in both real life and cyberspace. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the manifestations of these sins in cyberspace.

Here are some examples. A lie is a piece of information that is not true and contradicts the external reality (Qummī 1387 AH, 410; Khomeini 1415 AH, 2: 48). When considering information as a lie, there is no difference between speaking, writing, or even nonverbal communication such as gestures made with hands, eyebrows, or head, as long as they do not reflect reality. Similarly, presenting a false sign is also considered a form of lying. Some Muslim jurists state:

It is evident that lying is not established merely by speaking and uttering words, in the sense of being a statement that comes from the mouth and contradicts reality ... Lying is typically a statement that contradicts reality and is not limited to verbal communication. It can also include written communication, gestures, and other forms of expression. This includes information found in newspapers, magazines, and diaries. (Khomeini 1415 AH, 2: 453)

A lie is not restricted to verbal communication but is customarily defined as a piece of information that contradicts reality. This includes written communication and nonverbal cues such as gestures. Therefore, lies can also be found in written form, such as in magazines and newspapers. Based on this definition, certain media actions, such as spreading rumors or misinformation, can be considered forms of lying.

To establish the criterion for considering backbiting a sin, we can refer to a hadith from the Prophet (s): "I asked the Messenger of Allah (s), 'What is backbiting?' He replied, 'To mention something about your brother that he would dislike.' I said, 'But what if what I say is true?' He replied, 'If what you say is true, then you have backbitten him, but if it is not true, then you have slandered him'" (Tūsī 1414 AH, 537). The narrator asked the Prophet (s) about the criterion for backbiting, and he (s) replied, "Mentioning something about your brother that he dislikes" (i.e., discussing the faults of your fellow believer that they do not wish to be made known).

Abd al-Rahmān Siyāba narrated an authentic hadith from Imam al-Ṣādiq (a), in which he stated: "Backbiting is to mention the faults that Allah has concealed in your brother" (Kulaynī 1407 AH, 2: 358).

It is worth noting that some jurists believe that "defamation" must also be present for a statement to be considered backbiting (Shahīd al-Thānī, n.d., 284). In other words, if the intention behind mentioning someone's faults is to discredit and humiliate them, it is considered backbiting; otherwise, it is not. Backbiting is also prevalent in cyberspace. One of the most apparent examples of virtual backbiting is the publicizing of people's hidden sins without their consent, particularly when they do not wish for them to be made known. It is now common to see instances where a football player or an actor, for instance, commits an inappropriate action, which is rapidly shared in the form of a video or photograph on online platforms.

Another frequent transgression in cyberspace is spying, an act that is explicitly prohibited in the Holy Quran: "And do not spy on one another" (Quran 49: 12). In the context of the Quran, spying refers to the act of secretly investigating and gathering information about others without their knowledge or consent. Allamah Ṭabāṭabā'ī

further explains this term, stating that spying involves following and researching people's hidden affairs in order to obtain information about them (Ṭabāṭabā'ī 1390 AH, 18: 323).

Capturing photos and videos of individuals' private lives and sharing them online can be considered a form of spying, as it involves intruding into their personal space and sharing information about them without their consent. It is worth noting that even events that occur in public cannot be filmed or photographed without the consent of those involved, and if someone captures a video or photo of them without their permission, it is considered a violation that can lead to legal action (Mansour 1395 Sh, 158).

Viewing inappropriate pictures and videos is another common transgression in cyberspace. However, many users may be unaware that this is a sinful act, particularly when such content is shared in the form of humorous clips and pictures. Hence, it is crucial to provide proper guidance on the prohibited acts and behaviors in order to address this pervasive problem. In Islam, it is permissible to look at the face and hands of a Muslim woman, specifically the roundness of her face and the area of her hands from the wrist to the fingers, on the condition that these areas are free from makeup and the act of looking is free from any lustful intentions or fear of committing sin. As for a non-Muslim woman, one may only look at the parts of her body that are typically exposed in public, provided that the two conditions mentioned earlier are met. Looking at any part of her body beyond this limit is considered impermissible. Likewise, there are also criteria for a woman to look at the body of a non-mahram man (Ṭabāṭabā'ī 1419 AH, 5: 439; Khomeini 1366 Sh, 2: 243). It is important to note that these guidelines apply to any situation, whether humorous or serious, and to any form of media, including photos and videos.

Given that cyberspace can facilitate the occurrence of various sinful acts, forbidding evil takes on various forms in this context. Users may encounter sins such as the reception of prohibited images and videos, false information, insults and defamation (often in the form of backbiting and spying), gambling offers, and so on. The same principles and limitations of enjoining good and forbidding evil that apply in the physical world also hold true in

the virtual world. As such, initially, one should express their disapproval inwardly, and then proceed to voice their opposition verbally or in writing, such as by sending emojis, and so on.

Political Culture

The second step towards achieving cultural compatibility involves aligning the product with the political culture of the country. The political culture of a nation may include concepts such as elections, political participation, the autonomy of political entities, jihad, martyrdom, religious authority, and so on. Any opposition to these concepts may result in cultural incompatibility. Numerous values in a country's political culture are often derived from religious sources. The Holy Quran, in particular, provides various insights into how to counter the soft war waged by adversaries in the political arena of a target society. At times, the Quran identifies humiliation and weakening of the audience as a tactic employed by the enemy: "Thus did he mislead his people and they obeyed him" (Quran 43: 54). In other instances, the Quran attributes the act of public display and showing off to the enemy as a means to weaken the spirit of competition among Muslims: "Never be misled by the bustle of the faithless in the towns" (Quran 3: 196). At other times, the Quran refers to the deceptive tactics employed by the enemy: "Pharaoh said, 'O Haman! Build me a tower so that I may reach the routes. -the routes of the heavens- and take a look at the God of Moses, and indeed I consider him a liar'" (Quran 40: 36-37). The Quran also expresses how the destruction of the competitor's character can be used as a ploy by the enemy: "Who seeks to expel you from your land with his magic. So what do you advise?" (Quran 26: 35).

It is important to note that in today's world, the media is considered a powerful tool in the realization of these plots by the enemy.

Social Culture

The third step towards achieving cultural compatibility involves aligning the product with the social culture of the country. In the social culture, values such as mutual respect, friendly relations, and the observance of Iranian-Islamic traditions are commonly upheld. However, what we are currently witnessing in cyberspace is the

enemy's attempt to globalize and organize social relations in societies based on non-religious lifestyles, which runs counter to the values of Iranian-Islamic culture.

It is evident that this lifestyle clashes with the religious and social culture of our society across various social dimensions. The American lifestyle, in particular, seeks to promote promiscuity and free communication in society, whereas the religious and social values of the Iranian people resist pornography and liberal culture and do not accept such behaviors.

The Holy Quran provides detailed guidance on the appropriate ways for men and women to communicate with each other. In a beautiful verse, it explains the rationale behind these regulations, stating, "That is more decent for them" (Quran 24: 30).

Furthermore, a prominent characteristic of the American lifestyle is the pursuit of extreme pleasure and personal gain, whereas the Quran and religious leaders constantly command sacrifice and prioritizing the needs of others over personal benefit. The Holy Quran praises the sacrifices made by the people of the cloak, stating, "For the love of Him, they feed the needy, the orphan and the prisoner" (Quran 76: 8).

Another point of differentiation between the Islamic lifestyle and the Western lifestyle is the emphasis on respect and kindness towards others, particularly parents. The Quran also stresses the importance of treating the general society with kindness and compassion, commanding believers to respond to the evil of others with good, as stated in the following verse: "Good and evil [conduct] are not equal. Repel [evil] with what is best. [If you do so,] he between whom and you was enmity, will then be as though he were a sympathetic friend" (Quran 41: 34). In addition, in its instruction on proper treatment of one's parents, the Quran says: "Lower the wing of humility to them, mercifully, and say, 'My Lord! Have mercy on them, just as they reared me when I was [a] small [child]!'" (Quran 17: 24).

Another point of divergence between religious social culture and liberal culture is the emphasis on social compassion and benevolence, as well as the propagation of goodness and the prevention of the spread of evil. This crucial matter, which holds a special place in the hearts of the Iranian people, is referred to in religious sources as "enjoining what is good and forbidding what

is evil." A chapter in *al-Kāfi*, titled "The Chapter on Caring for the Affairs of Muslims, Advising Them, and Benefiting Them", highlights the importance of promoting this authentic social culture through eleven hadiths, underscoring the religion's emphasis on this social obligation. One of these hadiths highlights the idea that people and society as a whole are dependent on Allah and are considered part of His family: "All creatures are dependents of Allah, so the most beloved of creatures to Allah is the one who benefits God's dependents and brings happiness to the household" (Kulaynī 1407 AH, 2: 164).

The necessity of enjoining good and forbidding evil in society is emphasized in several Quranic verses, including the following: "You are the best nation [ever] brought forth for mankind: you bid what is right and forbid what is wrong, and have faith in Allah" (Quran 3: 110).

Economic Culture

The fourth step towards achieving cultural compatibility involves aligning the product with the economic culture of the country. In the economic culture, values such as cooperation, charity, and the avoidance of usury and illicit income are commonly upheld. However, the economic practices that are popular in cyberspace can deviate from this model. Cyberspace users may encounter numerous dangers, such as gambling, betting, a focus on personal gain at the expense of religious financial obligations like Khums and Zakat, and so on. These practices can be considered hazardous to the economic culture of the society. Imam 'Alī (a) emphasized the importance of learning the jurisprudential rulings of economics before engaging in any economic activity, to avoid falling into the trap of illegitimate acts such as usury. He said, "He who trades without knowledge gets involved in usury" (Kulaynī 1407 AH, 5: 154).

2. The Need

The second criterion for adopting a media consumption regime is based on the audience's needs. It is important to determine our actual needs for media products, as creating a need for such products can be considered artificial. By carefully examining the product and comparing it to our needs, we can determine the

authenticity of the need and make an informed decision.

It is important to note that if media consumption is prioritized over human needs, it can lead to numerous problems that cannot be compensated for. While media is not a fundamental human need, it can play a supportive role based on human needs and can have a significant impact in this regard.

Ensuring accuracy in setting demands based on real needs is a strict religious command, and its importance can be found in religious sources through keywords such as "parsimony." Imam al-Sajjad (a) emphasized this point, stating, "Fear God and be frugal" (Saduq 1362 Sh, 1: 64). The Prophet Muhammad (s) also highlighted the importance of moderation and contentment in sustenance, stating, "The best sustenance is that which is enough to meet one's needs" (Majlisi 1403 AH, 74: 168).

3. The Age

Another criterion for adjusting the media consumption model is age. Although age is not a topic in the media, it is a crucial factor in media consumption due to its unique characteristics. Naturally, the way media is used will differ at every age, which makes understanding the age group's needs and preferences equally important. The Prophet (s) spoke about the different stages of life, stating, "A child is a master for seven years, a slave for seven years, and a minister for seven years. Therefore, if you are content with his nature at the age of twenty-one, give thanks to God. Otherwise, leave him alone, for you have been excused in the sight of God" (Hurr al-Āmilī 1406 AH, 21: 476).

When it comes to cyberspace, age proportions should be taken into account from at least two perspectives. The first perspective is the risk of exposure to false information. As both correct and incorrect information are present in cyberspace, it is crucial to ensure the safety of different age groups, especially children who may be more vulnerable to such content. Imam ʿAlī (a) emphasized the importance of guiding young people in his famous letter to his son, Imam al-Ḥasan al-Mujtabā (a), stating, "Certainly, the heart of a young man is like uncultivated land. It accepts whatever is strewn on it. So, I hastened to mold you properly before your heart hardened up and your mind became occupied" (Sayyid al-Raḍī 1414 AH, letter 31).

The second perspective is that of sexual education. According to religious sources, the act of gazing upon someone with lustful intent is prohibited for individuals of any age: "Tell the faithful men to cast down their looks... And tell the faithful women to cast down their looks..." (Quran 24: 29-30).

However, since the mind of a younger individual may be more susceptible to confusion and may retain thoughts and imaginations for longer periods, it is crucial to provide more intensive care during this stage of life. This care, known as sexual education, is emphasized in religious texts as a means of guiding individuals towards healthy sexual behavior and preventing harmful practices. For instance, Imam al-Kāzīm (a) emphasized the importance of respecting personal boundaries and privacy during childhood, stating, "When a girl reaches the age of six, it is not permissible for a man who is not her mahram to kiss or hug her" (Ṭūsī 1407 AH, 7: 461).

Furthermore, another hadith recommends to separate the sleeping arrangements of children once they reach the age of six. It is narrated, "He used to separate the boys in their beds at the age of six" (Ṣadūq 1413 AH, 3: 436). Moreover, the Quran emphasizes the importance of parents being mindful of their children's sexual education and the significance of teaching them to seek permission before entering their parents' private space (Quran 24: 59). Based on these commandments, it becomes evident that carefully addressing children's sexual matters is highly significant.

4. The Gender

Gender is an additional factor that affects how men and women engage with media. Certain media content is tailored specifically for men, while others are created with women in mind. Recognizing the distinct characteristics of both genders helps us navigate toward our desired objectives. Women exhibit certain characteristics such as being conservative and restrained, displaying concern for the emotions and feelings of others, experiencing heightened emotions, seeking security, demonstrating dependency, and being detail-oriented. On the other hand, men can display traits such as dominance, independence, emotional control, and a sense of responsibility.

Considering these gender differences, the utilization of

cyberspace is also influenced accordingly. Specific groups, channels, dress styles, hairstyles, and other aspects are designed specifically for women, just as there are similar groups tailored for men. When examining religious sources, it becomes evident that this gender differentiation is acknowledged within the religious framework. The teachings and actions of religious leaders affirm this perspective. For instance, one of the agreements made between the Prophet (s) and newly converted Muslim women was the pledge to avoid being alone with non-mahram men in private settings: "The Messenger of Allah (s) established a covenant with women ... to refrain from sitting privately with non-mahram men" (Ṭabarsī 1412 AH, 233). Lady Zahra (a), in a reflective statement, highlights the noble stance of a Muslim woman to make an effort in avoiding interactions with non-mahram men and refraining from being in environments closely associated with men: "It is preferable for women not to see men, and not to be seen by men" (Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī 1409 AH, 20: 67). Imam ʿAlī (a), in his guidance to Imam al-Ḥasan al-Mujtabā (s), advised against involving women in exclusive men's affairs or assigning men's tasks to them. He explained that this prohibition is aimed at preserving the beauty of women, as they are inherently modest and delicate like flowers. Challenging and strenuous work is not expected from them.

5. The Time

Human activities can be categorized into two types: constrained and unconstrained. Constrained activities hold significant importance, and media consumption should be viewed in relation to these activities. Additionally, it is important to note that leisure time should not be solely focused on finding tasks to engage with media, but should be defined based on other meaningful relationships and pursuits.

Media engagement and behavior should not be solely regarded as leisure time activities, but also as a valuable educational pursuit. By planning and managing media usage for yourself and your family, you can avoid excessive reliance on media for mere entertainment purposes. It is important to recognize that leisure and enjoyment are essential human needs, and they can serve as catalysts for productivity throughout the day. Imam al-Riḍā (a) has advised to

allocate one's time into four parts, with one part dedicated to permissible pleasures. This allotted time for enjoyment serves as a means to effectively manage the other three parts: "Strive to divide your time into four: a time for devoting yourself to Allah, a time for earning a livelihood, a time for socializing with trustworthy companions who remind you of your shortcomings and genuinely care for your well-being, and a time when you can be alone to indulge in permissible pleasures. By managing this time for enjoyment, you can better navigate and balance the other three aspects of your life" (Majlisī 1403 AH, 75: 346).

Nevertheless, excessive indulgence in entertainment can lead to regret and neglect of important responsibilities for users of cyberspace. Time is one of the most precious assets for every individual. All the verses that emphasize the imminence of the Resurrection and the fleeting nature of time can be examined within the same framework, such as: "Mankind's reckoning has drawn near to them, yet they are disregarding in [their] obliviousness" (Quran 21: 1). Furthermore, the verses that encourage competition in performing good deeds also underscore the importance of being mindful of time: "Take the lead towards forgiveness from your Lord" (Quran 57:21) and "Hasten towards your Lord's forgiveness" (Quran 3: 133).

The Prophet (s) advised Abū Dharr to prioritize and make the most of his time, emphasizing its significance by saying: "O Abū Dharr! Value your time more than your Dirhams and Dinars" (Ṭabarsī 1412 AH, 460). The aforementioned hadith, along with the instruction to divide one's time into four parts, highlights the importance of effective time management. While cyberspace offers numerous advantages and benefits, it can also become a major time-consuming factor. Neglecting the necessary evaluation of online content can lead to significant time wastage.

6. The Specialized Knowledge

Specialized knowledge refers to information that is specific to a particular field or domain. Possessing specialized knowledge grants individuals permission to access and engage with specific media products. The question is, according to Islamic rulings, is it legitimate for a person to engage in a field outside of their proficiency and expertise?

In religious culture, great emphasis is placed on the source of

the message, as evidenced by the words of Imam al-Jawād (a): "When one listens to a speaker, it is akin to worshipping them. If the message conveyed by the speaker is divine, the listener is worshipping God. However, if the message is Satanic in nature, then the listener has worshipped Satan" (Kulaynī 1407 AH, 6: 434). Individuals who lack the necessary expertise in the field of message analysis are not typically regarded as valid contributors in specialized channels and groups.

The arguments supporting the prohibition of the usage of misleading books can be relevant in this context as well, as preserving one's beliefs is both a rational decision and a Quranic directive. This is evident from the analysis of prominent jurists like al-Shaykh al-Anṣārī, who have emphasized the responsibility emphasized in certain Quranic verses, such as Quran (31: 6): "And among the people is he who buys hadith for himself, in order to lead astray from the path of God without knowledge, and takes it as a joke. For them is a humiliating punishment" (Anṣārī 1411 AH, 1: 115).

Ayatollah Motahhari's statements in this context can also be extended to encompass the utilization of cyberspace, particularly in cases involving deceit and false advertising. For instance, consider a scenario where an individual deliberately omits or alters a portion of a sentence or a Quranic verse, subsequently presenting this distorted statement as evidence. Similarly, one may selectively remove elements from historical facts and exploit this incomplete information to support personal agendas or assert scientific credibility, despite the inherent distortions within their claims.

Deception must not be allowed to thrive under any circumstances. In Islam, the act of buying and selling misleading books is explicitly prohibited, and even the permission to engage in such transactions is not granted due to the potential social harm they can cause (Yazdi 1379 Sh, 266).

7. General Knowledge Level

An individual's general knowledge serves as a foundation for processing and evaluating raw data, allowing them to confirm or reject its validity. The extent of this knowledge plays a crucial role in shaping one's approach to utilizing the media.

Indeed, media literacy can be regarded as a vital form of general

knowledge essential for navigating and utilizing media and cyberspace effectively. It is highly recommended that every user acquire media literacy skills to ensure optimal and responsible use of these tools, minimizing potential harm.

The concept and attributes of media literacy have been previously addressed. This section highlights a particular aspect of media literacy. Rumors, fake news, and false information circulating in cyberspace inevitably undermine audience trust and may even impact their worldview. Consequently, it is essential to consider the following points (which encompass general knowledge applicable to all facets of cyberspace) when encountering such news, in an effort to exercise discernment and critical thinking:

First: Source Validation

When evaluating news sources, it is prudent to approach media outlets affiliated with perceived adversaries with suspicion. Imam 'Alī (a) advises in his letter to Mālik al-Ashtar: "Do not be overly trusting of your enemy" (Nahj al-Balagha, letter 53).

When an English media outlet assumes the role of a news source, when supporters of the Pahlavi regime and the US president express concerns about Iranian people, and when media outlets associated with the People's Mojahedin Organization (a designated terrorist group) exhibit vehement responses, then in such instances, it becomes essential to exercise caution by meticulously verifying and researching the news until a reasonable level of certainty is attained, as the Holy Quran says: "O you who have believed, if an evil-doer comes to you with news, verify it, lest you strike people out of ignorance, then become remorseful for what you have done" (Quran 49: 6).

Second: Implication Validation

It is crucial to actively seek evidence and analyze news before simply spreading it. Rather than accepting news at face value, it is important to compare it with verified information. The presence of significant doubts and uncertainties necessitates an individual's personal effort in assessing and verifying information, as there is no one-size-fits-all solution for providing ready-made information to everyone.

It is advisable to allocate sufficient time to carefully analyze

information before making a decision regarding its acceptance or rejection, as the Holy Quran says: “And do not follow that of which you have no knowledge, for the hearing, the sight and the heart are all of these for which they will be questioned” (Quran 17: 36).

The ear serves as the gateway to hearing, the eye provides insights, and the heart acts as the gateway to thoughts and imagination. Human information is predominantly acquired through these three faculties, and Allah has emphasized the importance of seeking knowledge and certainty in accepting information through all three.

8. Family Role

Each family member has a unique role that requires careful attention. Improper use of cyberspace can negatively impact the fulfillment of these roles. Spouses, for instance, should prioritize kindness, respect, patience, benevolence, and fostering joy and happiness in their interactions. Fathers, as the head of the family, have the responsibility of being exemplary role models. They should manage relationships between family members, ensure the safety and harmony of the home, and show dedication to the education and well-being of their loved ones. This duty is divinely mandated by God Almighty: “O you who have faith! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel will be people and stones” (Quran 66: 6).

A mother plays a critical role in creating an environment conducive to the growth and development of the family. She should prioritize the education and upbringing of her children, fostering an atmosphere of love and affection within the household through patience and composure. Such a mother embodies the profound wisdom behind the Prophetic saying: "Paradise is under the feet of mothers" (Nūrī 1408 AH, 15: 180).

In addition to obeying their parents, it is important for a child within the family to prioritize kindness and love towards them as their ultimate goal. They should endeavor to exhibit patience and understanding in response to any harshness or difficult circumstances they may encounter from their parents. The following verse from the Quran provides a practical and exemplary model for treating one’s parents: “Lower the wing of humility to them, mercifully, and say, ‘My Lord! Have mercy on

them, just as they reared me when I was [a] small [child]!” (Quran 17: 24). Moreover, siblings should practice cooperation, empathy, support, and skill-building in their relationship.

The consolidation, vitality, and warmth of the family atmosphere hold such significance that even the smallest gesture contributing to them is regarded as an act of worship (*‘Ibādāt*). The Prophet (s) asserted, "When someone purchases something for their family and presents it to them, it is akin to giving charity to the poor. When he brings happiness to his daughter, it is as if he has liberated a slave. And when he brings joy to his son, it is as if he has shed tears out of reverence for God. And the reward for shedding tears in awe of God is Paradise" (Ḥurr al-‘Āmilī 1409 AH, 21: 514).

On the contrary, any action that undermines the strength of this sacred institution is detested in religion. Hence, the Prophet (s) declares, "Divorce shakes the Throne of God" (Ḥurr al-‘Āmilī 1409 AH, 22: 9). Therefore, if the utilization of cyberspace interferes with fulfilling one's family responsibilities and erodes the bonds of affection within the family, it becomes imperative to reassess such an approach.

9. Social Role

The selection and consumption of media are directly influenced by the social roles individuals assume. This influence is shaped by the characteristics inherent in these roles. For instance, someone who holds the responsibility of disseminating information, raising awareness about media literacy, and monitoring potential risks and opportunities as an observer, naturally dedicates more time to engaging with cyberspace. Likewise, an individual involved in cultural pursuits, whose work demands understanding contemporary matters and providing clarifications, as stated in the hadith: "One who is knowledgeable about the affairs of their time will not be plagued by uncertainties" (Kulaynī 1407 AH, 1: 27), must possess knowledge about the content and happenings in cyberspace. Furthermore, individuals whose profession revolves around cyberspace will naturally need to have a deeper involvement with it due to their social position. However, if someone's social presence and influence are not directly tied to cyberspace, spending excessive time in this virtual realm may not be justified.

Conclusion

Media users, in general, and users of cyberspace, in particular, should not only acquire media literacy but also equip themselves with media ethics and adopt responsible media behavior to fully utilize this platform. Religious sources provide a framework that can serve as a model for ideal media behavior. Drawing from the criteria derived from the Quran and hadiths, our family's media consumption model will be distinctive. By combining and considering these criteria as a whole, we can develop a more comprehensive approach to using cyberspace. This will equip us with the ability to adapt and modify our media consumption model effectively.

These criteria, which provide a general framework (with other cases referring back to these nine criteria), include cultural suitability, necessity, age, gender, timing, level of specialized information, level of general knowledge, family role, and social role. By adhering to this model derived from religious sources, the use of virtual space can be viewed as an opportunity-driven tool. However, if this model is not followed, the destructive and threatening aspects of virtual space are likely to overshadow its potential benefits.

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