

Artificial Intelligence-Based Islamic Family Law Consultation: An Empirical Study of the Shifting Religious Authority

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 30-05-2026 Revised: 06-05-2026 Accepted: 06-06-2026 Published: 04-06-2026 Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Islamic Family Law; Religious Consultative Authority; Empirical Legal Study.	<i>The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has transformed the practice of Islamic family law consultation in contemporary society. Individuals increasingly rely on AI-powered platforms to seek information on marriage, divorce, maintenance (nafkah), inheritance, child custody, and other family law issues, rather than consulting exclusively with ulama, marriage registrars, judges of the Mahkamah Syar'iyah (Sharia Courts), or legal practitioners. This development raises important legal questions concerning the motivations behind AI usage and its implications for the shifting authority of religious consultation in resolving Islamic family law matters. This study aims to analyze the use of AI as a medium for Islamic family law consultation, identify the factors encouraging its use, and examine its impact on religious consultative authority. The research employs an empirical juridical method with conceptual and sociological approaches. Data were collected through library research and semi-structured interviews and analyzed descriptively and analytically. The findings reveal that AI adoption is driven by accessibility, rapid responses, time and cost efficiency, privacy protection, and its ability to present legal information in a clear and understandable manner. AI serves as an initial source of legal consultation that enhances public legal literacy but cannot replace the authority of ulama and other Islamic legal experts because it lacks the capacity to assess factual circumstances, exercise contextual legal reasoning, and issue authoritative religious opinions. AI should therefore be positioned as a complementary instrument rather than a substitute for qualified Islamic legal authorities. This study recommends establishing regulatory guidelines and developing AI-assisted consultation services integrated with qualified Sharia experts to ensure legal certainty, informational accuracy, and effective public protection.</i>
Info Artikel	Abstrak
Kata Kunci: Artificial Intelligence; Hukum Keluarga Islam; Otoritas Konsultasi Keagamaan; Penelitian Hukum Empiris;	Perkembangan pesat Artificial Intelligence (AI) telah mengubah praktik konsultasi hukum keluarga Islam di tengah masyarakat modern. Masyarakat semakin memanfaatkan platform berbasis AI untuk memperoleh informasi mengenai perkawinan, perceraian, nafkah, waris, hak asuh anak, dan berbagai persoalan hukum keluarga lainnya, dibandingkan hanya berkonsultasi dengan ulama, penghulu, hakim Mahkamah Syar'iyah, atau praktisi hukum. Perkembangan ini memunculkan persoalan hukum terkait motivasi masyarakat menggunakan AI serta implikasinya terhadap pergeseran otoritas konsultasi keagamaan dalam penyelesaian permasalahan hukum keluarga Islam. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis penggunaan AI

sebagai media konsultasi hukum keluarga Islam, mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang mendorong pemanfaatannya, serta mengkaji pengaruhnya terhadap otoritas konsultasi keagamaan. Penelitian menggunakan metode yuridis empiris dengan pendekatan konseptual dan pendekatan sosiologis. Data dikumpulkan melalui studi kepustakaan dan wawancara semi-terstruktur, kemudian dianalisis secara deskriptif dan analitis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan AI didorong oleh kemudahan akses, kecepatan memperoleh informasi, efisiensi waktu dan biaya, serta kemampuannya menyajikan informasi hukum secara jelas dan mudah dipahami. AI berfungsi sebagai sumber konsultasi awal yang meningkatkan literasi hukum masyarakat, tetapi belum mampu menggantikan otoritas ulama dan ahli hukum Islam karena memiliki keterbatasan dalam memahami fakta konkret, melakukan penalaran hukum yang kontekstual, serta memberikan pendapat keagamaan yang bersifat otoritatif. AI lebih tepat diposisikan sebagai instrumen pendukung, bukan pengganti ahli hukum Islam. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penyusunan pedoman pemanfaatan AI serta pengembangan layanan konsultasi hukum keluarga Islam berbasis AI yang terintegrasi dengan pendampingan ahli syariah guna menjamin kepastian hukum, akurasi informasi, dan perlindungan bagi masyarakat. Penelitian ini berkontribusi untuk pengembangan kajian hukum keluarga Islam dengan memperluas analisis otoritas keagamaan ke dalam ruang digital serta menawarkan perspektif integratif yang menempatkan AI sebagai instrumen pendukung, sementara validasi hukum tetap berada pada ahli syariah. Penelitian merekomendasikan penyusunan pedoman pemanfaatan AI dan pengembangan layanan konsultasi berbasis AI yang terintegrasi dengan ahli syariah.

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INTRODUCTION

The most fundamental transformation in the practice of Islamic family law consultation today is no longer taking place primarily in courtrooms, religious affairs offices, or majlis taklim, but increasingly on the smartphone screens within people's hands (Hidayah, Zain, & Ma'rifah, 2024). When issues concerning marriage, divorce, maintenance, inheritance, child custody, or the division of marital property arise, some members of society no longer turn first to ulama, marriage registrars, judges of the Sharia Court, or legal practitioners for legal guidance. Instead, they directly submit their questions to Artificial Intelligence (AI) platforms such as ChatGPT (Kamalludin & Pratami, 2024; Sidqi, Nisa, & Daini, 2023). This phenomenon demonstrates that the development of artificial intelligence has transformed the way people seek legal information, shifting from a model centered on authoritative sources toward one driven by accessibility, speed, and efficiency. This transformation has extended into the formation of legal behavior, potentially reshaping how individuals understand, interpret, and make decisions concerning Islamic family law. The growing use of AI for family law consultation therefore represents a strategic issue that warrants serious attention, particularly as AI-generated responses increasingly influence individuals' legal actions before they have obtained advice from qualified legal or religious authorities.

The provision of legal consultation is fundamentally not limited to conveying legal information; it also requires ensuring that every piece of advice takes into account the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, the factual circumstances of the parties involved, prevailing social customs, and the

applicable positive law (Taufiqurohman & Fauziah, 2023). Consultation on matters such as ṭalāq, ruḡūʿ, inheritance, marriage dispensation, and child custody requires the capacity for ijtihād, a sound understanding of the methods of istinbāt al-aḥkām, and sensitivity to the relevant social context. Ideally, such consultation should therefore be provided by individuals with appropriate expertise in Islamic jurisprudence and recognized professional authority (Salman, 2020). Within this framework, AI should be regarded primarily as a supporting instrument capable of providing preliminary legal information, rather than as a substitute for religious authority or a source of fatwā (Hakim & Azizi, 2023). This distinction is particularly important because the validity of a legal opinion in Islam is determined not merely by the breadth of the information on which it is based, but also by the scholar's intellectual authority, the soundness of the legal methodology employed, and the moral responsibility attached to the advice provided.

Empirical realities, however, reveal a different trend. People are increasingly turning to ChatGPT and various AI platforms to obtain answers concerning divorce requirements, ṭalāq procedures, inheritance distribution, child maintenance, and the legal status of marriages, often through nothing more than brief conversations. Recent studies indicate that AI can provide basic legal information rapidly, in an accessible manner, and around the clock, making it an increasingly attractive alternative to conventional legal consultation. At the same time, various studies have found that AI remains prone to generating inconsistent responses, overlooking differences among Islamic schools of jurisprudence (madhāhib), and providing inaccurate or inadequate explanations of complex family law issues. These findings indicate that members of the public are beginning to place their trust in AI as a source of legal consultation, despite the absence of adequate mechanisms for certification, oversight, and accountability governing AI-generated responses.

This shift in consultation practices has implications that extend far beyond technological change alone (Ramadhan, 2024). The transfer of religious consultation authority to AI may affect the quality of legal decision-making within families, reduce the intensity of interactions between communities and religious institutions, and create a new form of authority shaped by algorithms (Whyte, 2022). These risks become more pronounced when AI-generated responses are used as the basis for decisions concerning divorce, inheritance distribution, or the resolution of domestic conflicts without verification by qualified Islamic legal experts (Hendrik, Kusnianto, Pasaribu, & Sahmat Muhd, 2024; Wahid, 2025). In the long term, this phenomenon may influence public trust in religious institutions while also raising fundamental questions about accountability when AI-generated legal information causes harm or adverse consequences to its users.

This phenomenon demonstrates that changes in legal consultation behavior are influenced not only by technological developments, but also by ease of access, the speed of obtaining answers, user anonymity, relatively low costs, and growing levels of digital literacy within society (Sudirman, Antony, Lie, & Celline, 2025). At the same time, there are currently no clear guidelines governing the permissible scope of AI use as a medium for Islamic family law consultation or establishing standards for verifying AI-generated responses (Wahid, 2025). This situation highlights the need for an empirical juridical approach that examines not only normative aspects, but also the motivations underlying people's use of AI, their level of trust in AI-generated responses, the types of Islamic family law issues most frequently submitted for consultation, and the extent to which AI use affects the position of ulama, marriage registrars, Sharia Court judges, and advocates as authoritative sources of Islamic family law consultation (Mappasessu & Mappasessu, 2024).

Previous studies have generally focused on the normative dimensions of AI use in Islamic law, digital ethics, and the development of chatbots as platforms for delivering legal information (Dewi, 2024; Sudirwo, Hadi, & Judijanto, 2025; Sukri, 2025). Falah and Putri's study emphasizes that AI chatbots have considerable potential to provide rapid guidance on family law matters,

although they remain limited in addressing issues that require in-depth legal analysis (M. B. Falah & Putri, 2023). These studies have largely examined the technological characteristics of AI and the accuracy or validity of AI-generated responses, while empirical research on why people choose AI as a medium for Islamic family law consultation and how this choice contributes to shifts in religious consultation authority remains limited.

This study offers a novel contribution by conceptualizing Artificial Intelligence as an actor that influences changes in legal help-seeking behavior in the field of Islamic family law. The research focuses on analyzing the motivations underlying people's use of AI for Islamic family law consultations, identifying the types of legal issues most frequently submitted to AI platforms, and examining how AI use affects the authority of religious consultation traditionally exercised by ulama, marriage registrars, Sharia Court judges, and Sharia advocates. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of Islamic family law scholarship in the era of artificial intelligence while providing a foundation for formulating policies on AI use that preserve scholarly authority, ensure accountability, and protect the public in accessing Islamic family law consultation services.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research method to examine the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a medium for Islamic family law consultation and its implications for shifts in religious consultation authority (Mansari, 2026). A qualitative approach was selected because the study seeks to explore how AI is utilized by members of the public in actual practice in Banda Aceh. The research data consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with four informants, comprising two members of the public who use AI for Islamic family law consultations and two academics with expertise in Islamic family law and technology law. Secondary data were obtained through a literature review of relevant legislation, scholarly literature, books, and journal articles (Mukti Fajar, 2015). The data were analyzed descriptively and analytically through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing to develop a comprehensive understanding of the motivations underlying AI use and its implications for religious consultation authority in addressing Islamic family law issues.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Use of Artificial Intelligence as a Medium for Islamic Family Law Consultation by the Public in Addressing Family Law Issues

The development of digital technology has transformed the way people access legal information, including in the field of Islamic family law (Musafa'ah, Hadi, Al Maliki, & Ghufon, 2025; Ridwan, 2024). Whereas consultations concerning marriage, divorce, maintenance, child custody, and inheritance were previously conducted primarily with ulama, marriage registrars, Sharia Court judges, advocates, or Islamic law scholars, people are now increasingly turning to Artificial Intelligence (AI) as an initial source of legal consultation (B. Falah & Putri, 2023). AI offers convenient access to information without the constraints of time and location, enabling it to meet the needs of individuals seeking rapid answers to their legal concerns (Kumara et al., 2025). This shift demonstrates that technology no longer functions merely as a medium for disseminating information but has evolved into an instrument that influences how people seek legal assistance. The phenomenon reflects a transformation in legal consultation practices from conventional models toward increasingly accepted digital forms of consultation across different segments of society. This transformation represents one of the indicators of an emerging digital legal culture that is reshaping the practice of Islamic family law consultation.

The use of AI in Islamic family law consultation cannot be separated from the characteristics of modern society, which increasingly values efficiency, convenience, and rapid access to information. AI can provide responses within seconds to a wide range of questions concerning marriage requirements, divorce procedures, inheritance distribution, maintenance obligations, and child custody (Sukindar, Kusnianto, Sarikun, Pasaribu, & Sahmat, 2024). This capability has positioned AI as a practical alternative for consultation, particularly for individuals who face limited access to Islamic legal experts or family consultation services. Some users rely on AI to obtain an initial understanding of a legal issue before consulting an authorized professional, while others use AI-generated responses as a basis for making legal decisions. These different patterns of use indicate that AI is beginning to occupy a strategic position in the process of seeking legal information. This development demonstrates that technology is shaping new patterns of behavior in accessing and acquiring knowledge of Islamic family law.

The phenomenon of AI use is also influenced by increasing levels of digital literacy within society. The widespread ability to access the internet through smartphones has made people more accustomed to seeking answers independently rather than visiting consultation institutions in person. For some users, AI provides a sense of comfort because it allows consultations to be conducted anonymously, without embarrassment or concern about social judgment. This aspect of confidentiality is particularly important when the issues involved concern domestic conflicts, marital disputes, or sensitive inheritance matters. These circumstances demonstrate that the motivation to use AI is shaped not only by technological developments but also by psychological, social, and cultural factors within society. This situation broadens the meaning of legal consultation from merely obtaining information to a process shaped by users' experiences and their perceptions of technology.

Despite the various conveniences offered by AI, its use in Islamic family law consultation requires careful consideration. Family law issues are inherently complex because they involve not only positive legal norms but also principles of fiqh, customary practices, social circumstances, and the specific facts of each case. AI-generated responses are generally produced based on patterns derived from available data and may therefore fail to capture the full factual context of an individual's situation. Differences in the circumstances of the parties involved may lead to different legal consequences, even when the questions posed appear similar. This reality indicates that family law consultation cannot be reduced entirely to communication between a user and a digital system. AI is more appropriately positioned as a supporting tool for obtaining preliminary legal information rather than as a substitute for consultation with experts who possess the necessary competence in Islamic law.

The use of AI in Islamic family law consultation also reflects a shift in how society perceives authoritative sources of religious knowledge. In the past, the legitimacy of a legal opinion was largely determined by the scholarly competence, experience, and institutional authority of the person providing it. Today, some members of society increasingly assess the quality of legal responses based on their speed, accessibility, clarity, and the ability of AI to present explanations in a systematic manner. This shift in perception indicates that technology is beginning to shape new understandings of authority in legal knowledge. Nevertheless, scholarly legitimacy in Islamic law continues to require legal reasoning (*ijtihad*), a sound understanding of legal sources, and the ability to assess relevant facts comprehensively. These dimensions cannot yet be fully replicated by AI systems that operate primarily through data processing and algorithmic mechanisms.

Changes in family law consultation practices are also associated with the growing demand for accessible legal services. Not every region has equal access to ulama, Sharia advocates, or adequately equipped family consultation institutions. Under such circumstances, AI provides an alternative that can be accessed at any time without requiring additional consultation fees. This accessibility offers significant benefits, particularly for communities living in areas where legal

services are limited. At the same time, reliance on AI without the capacity to verify the information provided may lead to misunderstandings of Islamic family law provisions. This situation highlights the importance of strengthening digital legal literacy so that people can distinguish between preliminary legal information and legal opinions that carry recognized scholarly or professional authority.

Public Motivation for Using Artificial Intelligence as a Medium for Islamic Family Law Consultation

The development of information technology has transformed the way people acquire legal knowledge, including in the field of Islamic family law. Consultation practices that were previously conducted through ulama, marriage registrars, Sharia Court judges, advocates, and academics are increasingly shifting toward Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based platforms. This transformation indicates that people are becoming more receptive to using technology as an independent source of legal information. AI offers instant and accessible services, enabling users to obtain rapid responses to a wide range of Islamic family law issues. This development has created a new pattern of legal information-seeking behavior that differs from conventional consultation practices. The phenomenon warrants further examination because people's motivations for using AI are shaped not only by technological advancement but also by changing patterns of thought, practical needs, and perceptions of legal authority.

Motivation is a fundamental factor that drives individuals to engage in particular actions in pursuit of desired outcomes. In the context of using AI as a medium for Islamic family law consultation, motivation is not limited to the desire to obtain answers to legal questions but is also shaped by perceptions of convenience, efficiency, comfort, and trust in technology (Rahim, Rahman, Thaidi, Azimi, & Jailani, 2025). Individuals may have different reasons for choosing AI rather than consulting Islamic legal experts directly. Some users prioritize the speed with which information can be obtained, while others consider factors such as cost, confidentiality, or limited access to legal consultation services. These variations in motivation indicate that AI use emerges from the interaction between individual needs and developments in digital technology. Understanding these motivations is essential for explaining changes in legal behavior within society in the context of digital transformation.

One of the most prominent motivations is the ease of access to consultation services. AI can be accessed 24 hours a day without being constrained by operating hours, geographical location, or administrative procedures (Irwan, interview, 2026). Users simply enter their questions through a smartphone or computer and receive explanations within seconds. This convenience provides an experience that differs from conventional consultation, which often requires scheduling appointments, transportation costs, and waiting time (Mutia, interview, 2026). From the users' perspective, AI improves efficiency and corresponds to the characteristics of modern society, which increasingly demands fast and straightforward services (Boyhaqi, interview, 2026). This factor contributes significantly to the growing acceptance of AI as an initial consultation medium before users seek advice from Islamic family law experts.

In addition to ease of access, confidentiality is another factor that motivates people to use AI. Liana explained, "When asking AI, I do not feel embarrassed about sharing my family problems because the system does not know me personally. It is different from consulting another person, where I would feel ashamed" (Liana, interview, 2026). This is particularly relevant because Islamic family law issues may involve domestic conflicts, marital disputes, maintenance problems, domestic violence, inheritance disputes, or intentions to seek divorce (Muhajarah, 2017). Not everyone feels comfortable discussing such matters with another person due to concerns about being negatively

judged by their social environment. AI provides a private consultation space in which users can raise sensitive questions without necessarily disclosing their identities. This sense of security contributes to the perception that AI can provide greater privacy than face-to-face consultation (Chametka, Maqsood, & Chiasson, 2023). In certain circumstances, these psychological considerations may constitute a stronger motivation for using AI than the legal considerations themselves.

Privacy is an important factor influencing the use of AI. Family and marital matters are often regarded as highly private, leading some individuals to feel more comfortable seeking consultation anonymously. This condition indicates that the motivation to use AI is influenced not only by technological factors but also by users' psychological considerations (Lyu & Wang, 2023). From the perspective of digital consumer behavior theory, a sense of security and comfort can strengthen trust in a service. This helps explain why AI is increasingly being used as an initial medium for legal consultation.

Another important motivation is AI's ability to present information in accessible and easily understandable language. AI-generated legal explanations generally use relatively simple sentence structures, making them more accessible to people without a formal background in legal education (Saggion, 2024). Users can also ask follow-up questions whenever they encounter information they do not fully understand, without feeling embarrassed or concerned about being perceived as uninformed. This type of interaction creates a more flexible learning experience than conventional consultation. For some members of the public, AI functions as a legal education tool that helps them understand basic legal concepts before taking further legal action. This role demonstrates that AI is used not only as a medium for consultation but also as a source of learning about Islamic family law.

One informant described her experience as follows: "I usually ask ChatGPT first when I have questions about maintenance or divorce. The response is quick and directly explains the legal basis. After that, I verify the information with an ustaz or someone who has a sound understanding of Islamic law" (Mutia, interview, 2026). This statement indicates that AI is not necessarily used as a substitute for religious or Islamic legal experts but rather as a source of preliminary information. Users rely on AI to obtain a general understanding of the issues they are facing so that, when consulting an expert, they already possess a basic level of knowledge. This pattern demonstrates that AI functions as a supporting tool in the process of legal decision-making. From the perspective of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis (1989), this behavior is influenced by perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness (Kondrateva, Rhattat, & Khvatova, 2023). The greater the benefits perceived by users, the stronger their tendency to incorporate the technology into their everyday activities.

One informant stated, "I feel embarrassed talking about my family problems with other people. When I ask AI, I feel more comfortable because no one knows my identity." This statement demonstrates that the motivation to use AI is driven not only by technological considerations but also by the need to protect privacy. Islamic family law matters are often highly sensitive, making confidentiality an important consideration when individuals seek legal assistance. AI provides a communication space that users perceive as more secure because it does not require direct interaction with another person. From the perspective of Lawrence M. Friedman's theory of legal behavior, this shift indicates that society's legal culture is also evolving alongside the development of digital technology (Kautsar et al., 2022). People are developing new habits in accessing legal information by turning to media that they perceive as best suited to their needs.

Implications of Artificial Intelligence Use for Shifts in Religious Consultation Authority in Addressing Islamic Family Law Issues

The emergence of this technology has not only expanded access to legal information but has also changed how people identify sources of reference when dealing with issues concerning marriage, divorce, maintenance, inheritance, and child custody. Whereas legal consultation was previously associated primarily with direct interaction with ulama, marriage registrars, Sharia Court judges, or Sharia advocates, some members of the public now turn to AI first as an initial consultation medium. This shift indicates that religious authority is no longer understood solely as an authority vested in particular individuals or institutions but is increasingly influenced by the capacity of technology to provide information rapidly and in an accessible manner. This phenomenon represents a logical consequence of the development of digital society, in which accessibility has become an important consideration in obtaining legal information. This development raises questions about the position of religious authority as AI increasingly becomes a source of reference for people seeking to address Islamic family law issues.

This shift does not mean that people have completely abandoned the role of ulama or religious institutions. Many users employ AI to obtain preliminary knowledge before seeking further consultation from individuals with expertise in Islamic law. AI is perceived as capable of explaining basic family law concepts in simple language, thereby helping users understand the issues they are facing. The emergence of this technology instead demonstrates a transformation in the stages of legal consultation, from a pattern that previously involved direct access to experts toward a process that begins with independent information seeking. This change in the consultation mechanism indicates that AI functions as an entry point in the process of seeking legal assistance. At the same time, it demonstrates that people are becoming increasingly active in developing their own legal knowledge before making decisions.

One informant stated, “I usually ask AI first so that I can get an overview of the legal issue. After that, I go to the ustaz because I already know what I want to ask” (Liana, interview, 2026). This statement illustrates that AI is used as a means of obtaining an initial orientation regarding Islamic family law issues. The user does not position AI as the ultimate decision-maker but rather as a tool for broadening their understanding before consulting an expert. From the perspective of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis (1989), this behavior is influenced by perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. These two factors contribute to a positive attitude toward technology, thereby increasing the intensity of its use. AI consequently becomes part of the consultation process, although it has not replaced the role of Islamic family law experts.

Changes in consultation patterns also affect how people perceive religious authority. Previously, the legitimacy of a legal opinion depended heavily on the scholarly competence of the person providing the advice. Today, some members of the public have begun to assess the quality of responses based on their speed, comprehensiveness, and ease of understanding, including explanations provided by AI. This shift in evaluative criteria indicates the emergence of a new form of trust in technology. Such trust is not necessarily related to the substantive accuracy of the information provided but is also shaped by users’ experiences when interacting with digital systems. This condition demonstrates that technology plays a significant role in shaping an emerging legal culture within society.

Another informant stated, “AI-generated answers are easier to understand than reading legal books or searching for the information myself on the internet.” This statement indicates that the ease of understanding information is a major factor motivating AI use. People tend to choose platforms capable of simplifying complex legal concepts into more accessible and communicative language. From the perspective of the Legal Culture theory developed by Lawrence M. Friedman (1975), this shift represents part of the development of society’s legal culture. Legal culture is shaped not only by legal norms and institutions but also by how people obtain, understand, and use legal information. As reliance on digital media increases, the influence of technology on legal behavior likewise becomes more significant.

Nevertheless, the use of AI has limitations that need to be recognized by the public. AI operates on the basis of data, algorithms, and linguistic patterns and is therefore unable to fully consider all factual circumstances underlying a particular case (Sudirwo et al., 2025). Islamic family

law issues often require an assessment of psychological conditions, social relationships, prevailing customs, and evidentiary elements that cannot be comprehensively understood by digital systems. In certain circumstances, AI-generated responses may be overly general and therefore require adaptation to the specific circumstances of the parties involved. These limitations demonstrate that the role of Islamic legal experts remains essential in providing comprehensive legal assessment and guidance. AI is more appropriately positioned as a supporting instrument rather than as a substitute for religious authority.

One informant further stated that she still seeks advice from an ustaz or someone knowledgeable in Islamic law because family-related problems do not always correspond to the examples provided by AI (Liana, interview, 2026). This statement reflects an awareness that each case has its own distinctive characteristics. Users recognize that AI can provide information based on general patterns, whereas legal resolution requires an analysis of the specific facts and circumstances of each case. This perspective indicates that religious authority continues to retain strong legitimacy in providing legal guidance. AI merely facilitates and accelerates the process of obtaining preliminary information without eliminating the need for expert advice. These findings suggest that the relationship between AI and ulama is more complementary than competitive.

The presence of AI also has implications for the accessibility of legal knowledge and education among the public. According to Liana, “AI helped me understand the divorce procedure before going to the Sharia Court, although I could still discuss the matter with people who understand the law and with legal practitioners. At least, it gave me an initial overview of the process that I would need to go through to resolve the case” (Liana, interview, 2026). This statement demonstrates the educational function of AI in improving public legal literacy. Users can obtain an initial understanding of legal procedures, enabling them to be better prepared when interacting with judicial institutions or legal consultation services. From the perspective of Rogers’ Diffusion of Innovations theory (2003), the adoption of AI indicates that the innovation is perceived as offering relative advantages, being relatively easy to use, and corresponding to users’ needs (Fitri & Hassan, 2025). Acceptance of the innovation does not necessarily displace existing systems but may enhance the effectiveness of legal services when used appropriately. In this context, AI is more appropriately understood as a complementary component of the Islamic family law consultation system.

Based on the foregoing discussion, it can be understood that the use of AI has influenced the relationship between society and religious consultation authorities. This transformation does not necessarily diminish the roles of *ulama*, marriage registrars, or Sharia Court judges, but rather changes the stages and methods through which people obtain legal information. AI serves as an initial source of legal knowledge, while religious authorities continue to provide validation and authoritative guidance on legal matters that require in-depth assessment. This relationship reflects a transformation from a hierarchical model of consultation toward a more collaborative model. The emerging challenge lies in how religious institutions can adapt to technological developments while preserving the scholarly legitimacy that has historically formed the foundation of public trust.

CONCLUSION.

This study concludes that the use of Artificial Intelligence as a medium for Islamic family law consultation has established a new pattern of legal information-seeking by providing services that are fast, accessible, flexible, and capable of offering preliminary explanations of various family law issues. AI is used as an initial consultation tool to understand issues such as marriage, divorce, maintenance, inheritance, child custody, and the division of marital property before users consult individuals with expertise in Islamic law. In this practice, AI functions primarily as a supporting instrument that expands access to legal information rather than replacing religious authorities in determining or issuing legally binding opinions. The public’s motivation to use Artificial Intelligence as a medium for Islamic family law consultation is influenced by a combination of factors, including ease of access, the speed of obtaining information, time and cost efficiency, privacy protection, and AI’s ability to present legal explanations in accessible language. These factors demonstrate that patterns of legal consultation are undergoing transformation alongside increasing digital literacy and the growing acceptance of technological innovation in everyday life.

This transformation indicates that people's decisions when choosing a medium for legal consultation are shaped not only by the authority of the information provider but also by user experience and perceptions of the benefits offered by technology. The use of Artificial Intelligence has influenced the relationship between society and religious consultation authorities by changing the stages through which people seek legal information. AI increasingly serves as an initial source of legal knowledge before individuals consult ulama, marriage registrars, Sharia Court judges, or Sharia advocates. This shift does not eliminate the legitimacy of religious authorities but instead positions AI as a complementary tool that can contribute to improving public legal literacy. The formulation of legal opinions, however, still requires the involvement of experts who possess competence in Islamic law, understand the factual context of individual cases, and bear ethical and legal responsibility for the advice they provide. These findings suggest that future models of Islamic family law consultation should promote greater synergy between artificial intelligence and religious authorities so that technological utilization remains consistent with the principles of sharia, legal certainty, and public protection. Policymakers should formulate regulations governing the use of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic family law consultation. Sharia Courts, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and relevant religious institutions should develop digital consultation services involving qualified Islamic law experts. Members of the public should treat AI-generated responses as preliminary information rather than authoritative legal opinions. Future research should focus on developing an AI governance model specifically designed for Islamic family law consultation.

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