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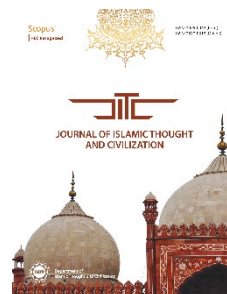
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# Emergence of Digital Matrimony: Exploring Islamic Legal Responses to Metaverse Marriages

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## Abstract

This research examines the Islamic legal perspective on conducting marriages within the virtual realm of the metaverse, by addressing the implications of digital advancements in religious practices and legal frameworks. The study explores how Islamic legal principles can be applied or adapted to virtual marriages in contemporary contexts. Thus, a qualitative methodology is employed that utilises document analysis and in-depth interviews with scholars and experts in contemporary Islamic jurisprudence and technology. This research focuses on assessing the validity, conditions, and execution of virtual marriages, identifying the challenges and potential solutions in aligning these practices with Sharia principles. The results indicate that integrating marriage practices into the metaverse is feasible with appropriate adjustments to ensure compliance with Islamic law, particularly regarding legal, technical, and ethical considerations. The uniqueness of this study stems from its exploration of previously unexplored areas, where digital innovation intersects with religious law, offering new perspectives on the adaptability of Islamic legal principles in response to emerging technologies. The implications of the findings are significant for policymakers, legal practitioners, and Muslim communities, as they provide a strategic framework for developing relevant Islamic legal policies and guidance for virtual interactions, ensuring that the evolving digital landscape respects and upholds religious values.

**Keywords:** contemporary jurisprudence, digital technology, digital matrimony, Islamic Law, Metaverse marriages

## Introduction

The advancement of digital technology over the past few decades has significantly transformed multiple facets of human life, particularly in the way we engage socially. One of the latest innovations is the Metaverse,<sup>1</sup> “A digital realm that enables users to engage with each other in fully immersive

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<sup>1</sup>Feifei Shi et al., “A New Technology Perspective of the Metaverse: Its Essence, Framework and Challenges,” *Digital Communications and Networks* (March 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcan.2023.02.017>

settings.”<sup>2</sup> In the Metaverse, individuals can communicate, work, and even carry out daily activities, such as shopping or participating in social ceremonies, including weddings. The emergence of this Metaverse raises new challenges.<sup>3</sup> The emergence of the Metaverse presents new challenges<sup>4</sup> in many fields,<sup>5</sup> One of them is from the viewpoint of Islamic law.<sup>6</sup>

Marriage in Islam has clear pillars and conditions, including *ijāb qabūl*, guardians, witnesses, and the execution of a valid contract.<sup>7</sup> These elements are carried out in a physical space with the actual presence of both parties, as in the marriage rules in the compilation of Islamic law.<sup>8</sup> However, with the emergence of virtual worlds, such as Metaverse,<sup>9</sup> an important question arises: Can a marriage performed virtually in the Metaverse be considered valid under Islamic law?

This paper examines how Islamic legal principles can be applied or adapted to virtual marriages in contemporary contexts, particularly in the phenomenon of metaverse marriages. Marriage occurring in the metaverse is considered a part of future technological advancements that connect the real world with the virtual world. Therefore, in this study, the aim is to understand how Islamic law responds to social and technological changes that enable interactions and marriages to occur in immersive digital environments, such as the metaverse.

A prior study by Muhammad Adrian Pranata, entitled “The Legitimacy of Marriage Contracts via Video Calls in Islamic Law,” revealed that marriages conducted via video call can be considered valid under Islamic law. The study concluded that marriage through video call, includes the declaration of *ijāb* pronounced by the bride's guardian and the response from the groom, utilizing technological advancements through the internet. This marriage is declared valid because it fulfills the requirements and pillars of marriage in Islam, such as the presence of the groom, the bride's guardian, two witnesses, and the *ijāb qabūl* process. Thus, the findings become particularly interesting when linked to more advanced technological developments, such as the concept of marriage in the metaverse, which offers a new dimension in conducting marriage contracts.

Marriage in the metaverse, refers to the transformation of space and interaction in the execution of marriage contracts. In the metaverse, marriage is no longer limited by physical boundaries or geographical locations; instead, it can be conducted in an immersive virtual world. Avatars represent

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<sup>2</sup>Alya Nur Alifia, “The Law of Transactions of Virtual Land Sale and Purchase in Metaverse From the Perspective of Fiqh Mu’Amalah,” *Journal of Indonesian Comparative of Syari’ah Law* 6, no. 1 (2023): 143–58.

<sup>3</sup>Mursyid Fikri et al., “The Potential Utilization of Metaverse as a Praying Space from the Perspective of Maslahah Mursalah,” *Journal of Ecohumanism* 3, no. 4 (2024): 2143–60.

<sup>4</sup>Suwinto Johan, “Metaverse and Its Implication in Law and Business,” *Jurnal Hukum Progresif* 10, no. 2 (2022): 153–66.

<sup>5</sup>Mahfud Heru Fatoni et al., “Analisis Peran Metaverse Sebagai Media Pendidikan Islam Di Masa Depan,” *Bustanul Ulum Journal of Islamic Education* 2, no. 1 (2024): 99–111, <https://doi.org/10.62448/bujie.v2i1.75>.

<sup>6</sup>Biliana Popova, “Embracing the Metaverse: The Future of Islamic Teaching and Learning,” in *2023 20th Learning and Technology Conference (L&T)*, (2023): 1–7.

<sup>7</sup>Karenina Nurissa Karen, Yandi Maryandi, and Ilham Mujahid, “Tinjauan Maqashid Syariah Terhadap Kawin Paksa,” *Bandung Conference Series: Islamic Family Law* 2, no. 2 (2022): 93–98, <https://doi.org/10.29313/bcsifl.v2i2.2756>.

<sup>8</sup>Mochamad Adrian Pranata, Neneng Nurhasanah, and Muhammad Yunus, “The Validity of Marriage Contract Through Video Call According to Islamic Law” *Jurnal Riset Hukum Keluarga Islam* 1, no. 1 (2021): 20–25.

<sup>9</sup>Alanah Davis et al., “Avatars, People, and Virtual Worlds: Foundations for Research in Metaverses,” *Journal of the Association for Information Systems* 10, no. 2 (2009): 90–117.

the bride, groom, and witnesses, allowing the marriage to take place in a specially designed digital space, complete with virtual ambience, and decorations.

Moreover, the metaverse offers flexibility that is not present in conventional marriage practices. For example, the layout of the wedding space, the appearance of the avatars, as well as the ambience, and the visual effects can be fully customized according to the couple's preferences, creating a unique experience for both parties. This dimension also includes how real-time technologies, such as Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) enable every movement, expression, and utterance in the marriage procession to be accurately replicated. Thus, the metaverse introduces a new way of understanding the validity and implementation of marriage contracts, challenging traditional boundaries and existing Islamic law

With the increasing use of technology for various religious and social activities, there is an urgent need to understand how Islamic law views the implementation of virtual marriage contracts, which have been widely practiced since the 19th century.<sup>10</sup> Some scholars have issued fatwas regarding marriage contracts through online platforms,<sup>11</sup> but the Metaverse offers a much more immersive level of interaction and experience than previous digital technologies.

The Metaverse allows the parties involved in a marriage to be present virtually as avatars, without physical presence.<sup>12</sup> This raises the debate whether virtual presence can be considered equivalent to physical presence, especially in fulfilling the requirements for a valid marriage contract according to Sharia. In addition, aspects of digital identity, witness validity, and the presence of a guardian in the virtual world add to the legal complexity that needs to be studied.<sup>13</sup>

This study utilizes a qualitative research approach, combining document analysis and in-depth interviews to thoroughly investigate the phenomenon of marriage in the metaverse. Document analysis involves systematically reviewing scholarly articles, books, legal documents, and reports related to virtual marriage and Islamic jurisprudence. This process aims to identify key themes, concepts, and perspectives from both Islamic law and technological viewpoints relevant to the phenomenon of marriage in the virtual world.

In addition, the researchers conduct in-depth interviews with a purposive sample of scholars and experts in the fields of contemporary Islamic jurisprudence and technology. The interviewees are selected based on their extensive knowledge and experience in addressing issues related to marriage within the context of the metaverse. A semi-structured interview guide is employed to facilitate open-ended and in-depth discussions, providing flexibility to explore emerging themes during the conversations. Each interview is recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns, views, and insights regarding marriage in the metaverse.

By combining document analysis and expert interviews, this methodology offers a holistic understanding of marriage in the metaverse. This approach also enables the triangulation of various data sources, thereby, enhancing the validity and reliability of the research findings.

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<sup>10</sup>Supriadi Supriadi, "Marriage Contract Through Teleconference During the Covid-19 Pandemic : An Overview of Maqashid Syariah" *Al-Bayyinah* 5, no. 2 (2021): 157–171.

<sup>11</sup>Zaeini Misbaahuddin, and Mohammad Rafli, "Analysis of the Problems of Virtual Marriage Contracts from the Perspective of the Four Schools of Islamic Jurisprudence," *Syariah: Journal of Fiqh Studies* 1, no. 2 (December 3, 2023): 127–44.

<sup>12</sup>Neal Stephenson, "Snow Crash," *Futures* 26, no. 7 (1994): 798–800.

<sup>13</sup>Yuntao Wang et al., "A Survey on Metaverse: Fundamentals, Security, and Privacy," *IEEE Communications Surveys and Tutorials* 25, no. 1 (2023): 319–52.

This study is important given the increasing number of people using digital technology in their daily lives, including for religious matters.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, this study aims to explore how Islamic law views the implementation of marriage in the virtual world and the extent to which technology, such as the Metaverse, can be adapted to the principles of Islamic law. This research will also examine the views of Islamic scholars and previously published literature on the validity of marriage contracts in the virtual world of the Metaverse, to guide Muslim communities in navigating the growing digital era.

## 2. Principles of Nikāḥ in Islamic Law

From the perspective of Islamic law, the validity of a marriage is determined by the fulfillment of the conditions and pillars of marriage that have been established.<sup>15</sup> The fundamental difference between conditions and pillars lies in their time of applicability: conditions are provisions that must be fulfilled before a legal action can be carried out<sup>16</sup>, while pillars are elements that must be present when carrying out the legal action. The Arabic term for marriage, *al-nikāḥ*, etymologically means *al-waṭi'* (having intimate relations), *al-dammu wa al-tadakhul* (unification and mixing), and is sometimes interpreted as *al-dammu wa al-jamm'u* (unification) or *'ibarat 'an al-wath' wa al-'aqd* (having intimate relations and making a contract).<sup>17</sup> Based on this language meaning, the *fiqh* scholars formulated the definition of marriage in biological relations and legal contracts.<sup>18</sup>

Article 14 of the Compilation of Islamic Law outlines that marriage is founded upon five essential pillars,<sup>19</sup> namely: the prospective groom, the prospective bride, the marriage guardian, two witnesses, and the marriage contract (*ijāb* and *qabūl*).<sup>20</sup> The requirements that must be met in a marriage are as follows:

1. Prospective Husband: The requirements that must be met by the prospective husband include the following: being a Muslim,<sup>21</sup> having good character and personality,<sup>22</sup> economic stability,<sup>23</sup>

<sup>14</sup>Asri Amanta, "The Presence of Istiqlal Mosque as the First Mosque in Indonesia's Metaverse Ecosystem," 2023, <https://metanesia.id/blog/kehadiran-masjid-istiqlal-metanesia>.

<sup>15</sup>Jitha Kemala and Putri Lumingkewas, "Islamic Law's Impact on Wives, Children, and Wealth in Contract Marriages," *Damhil Law Journal* 2, no. 2 (2022): 110–26.

<sup>16</sup>Nawawi Nawawi, "Quo Vadis of Nikah Sirri from the Perspective of Islamic Law," *Al-Qadha : Jurnal Hukum Islam Dan Perundang-Undangan* 7, no. 2 (2020): 119–32.

<sup>17</sup>Hanan Bishara, "Sex and Sexual Fantasy among the Arabs in the Middle Ages," *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal* 7, no. 5 (2020): 96–116.

<sup>18</sup>Muhammad Ismail, and Mushtaq Ahmad, "A Scientific and Comparative Study of Four Schools of Thoughts Regarding the Definition, Interpretation and Applied Forms of Nikāḥ," *Al-Idah* 38, no. 2 (2020): 144-158.

<sup>19</sup>Ani Krismiati, Hilma Syita El Asith, and Lutvi Anisa, "The Phenomenon of a Guardian's Refusal to Marry Off Their Child (A Case Study at the Klaten Religious Court)," *Academica : Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies* 3, no. 2 (2019): 175–88.

<sup>20</sup>Ahmad Nabil Atoillah and Ahmad Kamal, "Penggantian Wali Nasab Oleh Wali Hakim Menurut Intruksi Presiden Nomor 1 Tahun 1991," *Istinbath | Jurnal Penelitian Hukum Islam* 15, no. 1 (2019): 113, <https://doi.org/10.36667/istinbath.v15i1.276>.

<sup>21</sup>Eko Setiawan, B Baehaqi, and Agus Fatuh, "Pandangan Hukum Islam Tentang Calon Suami Mewakulkan Akad Qobul Pernikahan Kepada Orang Lain Pada Masa Pandemi," *Mamba'ul 'Ulum* 18, no. 2 (2022): 110–21, <https://doi.org/10.54090/mu.63>.

<sup>22</sup>Novita Sari, "Mahar Pernikahan Perspektif Hukum Keluarga Islam," *El-Bait: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 2, no. 1 (January 22, 2023): 16–35, <https://doi.org/10.53515/ejbhki.v2i1.27>.

<sup>23</sup>Siti Munawaroh et al., "Analysis of Consumptive and Socio Economic Traits in the Sambirejo Village Community on Household Economic Stability," *Equilibrium : Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi dan Pembelajarannya* (2024): 140–49, <http://doi.org/10.25273/gulawentah.v4i2.5521>.

- and possessing education and skills that indicate their ability to face challenges and adapt to change.<sup>24</sup>
2. Prospective Wife: The requirements to be fulfilled by the prospective wife include the following: strong faith and adherence to the teachings of Islam,<sup>25</sup> The prospective wife is expected to possess traits, such as patience,<sup>26</sup> honesty, kindness,<sup>27</sup> and a pleasant demeanor.<sup>28</sup> Good health is also important to support daily activities and responsibilities within the family.<sup>29</sup>
  3. Guardian for Marriage: In the Shafi'i school of thought, a marriage guardian must fulfill several conditions, namely being a Muslim, having reached puberty, being of sound mind, being free, being male, and being just.<sup>30</sup> However, in the Hanafi school, a guardian does not have to be just; being a Muslim is sufficient.<sup>31</sup> If the guardian refuses to perform the marriage without a *shar'ī* reason, *wali adhal* can be applied, whereby the bride-to-be can apply to the religious court for a *wali hakim* to perform the marriage. This is under Indonesian procedures based on Islamic law.<sup>32</sup>
  4. Marriage Witnesses: In Islam, marriage witnesses are crucial components that ensure the validity of the marriage contract.<sup>33</sup> The fundamental requirements for witnesses are that they must be male, Muslim, and fair. In addition, the witness must have reached the age of majority and be capable of understanding legal responsibilities.<sup>34</sup> The witness must also be of sound mind to fully understand the marriage contract process. During the marriage contract, the witness must be present in person to observe the *ijāb qabūl* and may not be represented.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore,

<sup>24</sup>Suud Sarim Karimullah, "The Urgency of Pre-Marital Education in Building a Prosperous Family: A Perspective of Khoiruddin Nasution," *Kariman: Jurnal Pendidikan Keislaman* 9, no. 2 (2021): 229–46.

<sup>25</sup>Abi Hasan, "The Community's Perception of the Effectiveness of Pre-Marriage Guidance at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in Simpang Kanan District," *El-Usrah* 5, no. 1 (2022): 12–22.

<sup>26</sup>Karen Pfeffer, "Young Nigerians' Perceptions of a 'Good Husband' and a 'Good Wife,'" *Youth & Society* 28, no. 4 (June 19, 1997): 499–516.

<sup>27</sup>H. Wallace Goddard et al., "Qualities of Character That Predict Marital Well-Being," *Family Relations* 65, no. 3 (July 28, 2016): 424–38.

<sup>28</sup>Fakultas Syariah, Ekonomi Islam, and Iain Antasari, "Aisyiyah and Its Role in the Development of Sakinah Family of Rabi'atul Adawiah," *Jurnal Studi Gender Dan Anak* 1, no. 2 (2013): 97–116.

<sup>29</sup>Derry Angling Kesuma, and Rohman Hasyim, "Analysis of the Factors Causing the High Number of Divorce Petitions During the Covid-19 Pandemic in Palembang City," *Jurnal Hukum Tri Pantang* 7, no. 1 (2021): 13–26.

<sup>30</sup>Fadhil Mubarak, and Januddin Januddin, "'Fair' Status of Marriage Wali According to Shafi'i Mazhab and Hanafi Mazhab," *Al Mashaadir: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 3, no. 2 (January 3, 2023): 95–112.

<sup>31</sup>Waqas Ahmad, Khurram Baig, and Dr. Shaukat Hussain, "Role of Wali in Contract Marriage of Islam: A Critical Analysis," *Journal of Law & Social Studies* 4, no. 3 (September 30, 2022): 409–18.

<sup>32</sup>Mardi Candra et al., "The Religious Court Trial Of Wali Adhal Cases In The Indonesian Legal System: A Legal Analysis," *Jurnal Hukum Dan Peradilan* 12, no. 1 (March 31, 2023): 77.

<sup>33</sup>Rusdiyah et al., "Educational Fiqh: The Viewpoints of Sheikh Arsyad Al Banjari and Az Zuhaili on the Method for Determining Marriage Witnesses," *KnE Social Sciences*, May 26, 2023.

<sup>34</sup>Idrus M. Said, "Thematic Hadits Studies: A Syar'i Study of Hadits on Marriage Witness," *Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Science* 2, no. 6 (March 25, 2023): 2688–97.

<sup>35</sup>Muhammad Abdul Aziz et al., "A Study on Marriage Ceremony through Video Call Software: Modernity and Islamic Law Perspective," in *Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on*

individuals who have a direct relationship with the bride and groom, such as the guardian or the father of the groom, are not permitted to be witnesses.<sup>36</sup> By fulfilling these conditions, the testimony provided will uphold the validity of the marriage in the view of Islamic law.<sup>37</sup>

5. *Ijāb* and *Qabūl*: *Ijāb* and *qabūl* are the main pillars of Islamic marriage and must fulfill several conditions for the marriage contract to be considered valid.<sup>38</sup> *Ijāb* is pronounced by the bride's guardian or their representative in clear and unequivocal words, such as "I give in marriage," without any conditions attached. The *ijāb* statement must be addressed directly to the groom and conducted in the same assembly, without a long interval.<sup>39</sup> The *qabūl*, on the other hand, should be pronounced by the groom or his representative with a clear and unequivocal response, such as "I accept the marriage." The words of the *qabūl* must be consistent with the *ijāb* spoken earlier and must also be unconditional. The testimony of two witnesses who are present in person is essential, as they must witness and understand the *ijāb* and *qabūl*.<sup>40</sup> There should not be a long gap between the *ijāb* and *qabūl*, and all parties involved, including the guardian, groom, and witnesses, must be conscious. Meeting all these conditions makes the *ijāb* and *qabūl* valid according to Islamic law.

In the context of the Metaverse, the conduct of virtual marriages presents its challenges regarding the application of the pillars of marriage. While technologies, such as video calling allow for real-time interaction between the parties involved, including guardians, witnesses, and the recitation of the *ijāb* and *qabūl*, there is debate about the validity of marriages that do not take place physically.<sup>41</sup> In a digital realm, such as the Metaverse, although the bride and groom, guardians, and witnesses can participate through their avatars, special care is needed to fulfill the elements of physical presence and emotional connectedness.<sup>42</sup> While the Metaverse offers ease of access.<sup>43</sup> The validity of a marriage in Islam still depends heavily on fulfilling the pillar conditions of marriage,

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*Recent Innovations* (SCITEPRESS - Science and Technology Publications, 2018), 2960–67, <https://doi.org/10.5220/0009944629602967>.

<sup>36</sup>Rusdiyah et al., "Educational Fiqh: The Viewpoints of Sheikh Arsyad Al Banjari and Az Zuhaili on the Method for Determining Marriage Witnesses."

<sup>37</sup>Atoilah and Kamal, "Penggantian Wali Nasab Oleh Wali Hakim Menurut Intruksi Presiden Nomor 1 Tahun 1991."

<sup>38</sup>Asep Koswara, Hasan Bisri, and Ayi Ishak Sholih Muchtar, "The Opinion of Sheikh Nizhamuddin Al-Balkhi in the Book of Fatawa Al-Hindiyyah on the Connection Between the Offer (Ijab) and Acceptance (Kabul) in the Marriage Contract," *Istinbath | Jurnal Penelitian Hukum Islam* 14, no. 2 (November 5, 2020): 131.

<sup>39</sup>Arnisa Siregar, Ikhwanuddin Harahap, and Adi syahputra Sirait, "Lafadz Ijab Qabul in the Perspective of As-Syafi'i Fiqh," *Jurnal El-Thawalib* 2, no. 5 (October 29, 2021): 443–54.

<sup>40</sup>Azni Azni et al., "Tinjauan Kehujahan 'Urf on Ijab Qabūl in the Perspective of Islamic Law," *Al-Fikru: Jurnal Ilmiah* 16, no. 1 (June 30, 2022): 69–81.

<sup>41</sup>Misbaahuddin and Rafli, "Analysis of the Problems of Virtual Marriage Contracts from the Perspective of Four Schools of Thought."

<sup>42</sup>Mahardika Putera Emas, "The Issues of Online Marriage Contracts and the Conduct of Wedding Receptions During the Covid-19 Pandemic," *Batulis Civil Law Review* 1, no. 1 (November 22, 2020): 68.

<sup>43</sup>Wenjie Cao, Felix Kottmann, and Richard T. B. Ma, "Towards a Bandwidth Market for the Metaverse," in *2023 IEEE International Conference on Metaverse Computing, Networking and Applications (MetaCom)* (IEEE, 2023), 345–49.



particularly concerning live testimony and clarity in the recitation of the *ijāb* and *qabūl*, which can be challenging in such a virtual world.<sup>44</sup>

### 3. Fatwa and Islamic Law on Metaverse Technology

In Islam, every aspect of life, including the use of technology, such as the Metaverse, must be guided by Sharia principles based on the Qur'ān and Hadīth.<sup>45</sup> Metaverse technology, which allows virtual interaction through avatars in the digital world, raises new questions regarding its implementation in Islamic law,<sup>46</sup> especially in aspects of worship and *muamalah*, such as marriage. In the Islamic view, all activities must meet the criteria of halal and haram,<sup>47</sup> including the use of technology. Therefore, whether the use of the Metaverse aligns with Shaī'a becomes important while talking about Islamic law and the metaverse's technological role in marriage. Essentially, technology in Islam is acceptable as long as it does not violate the basic rules of religion, such as maintaining ethics, *adab*,<sup>48</sup> and avoiding things that are contrary to Islamic teachings.<sup>49</sup>

In this context, the Qur'ān, particularly in Q.S. Al-Baqarah (2) verse 282, emphasizes the importance of clear recording and witnessing in significant transactions. This teaching is especially relevant when the need for valid testimony in various forms of agreements, such as marriage contracts or economic transactions, is to be considered. In Islam, testimony requires not only the physical presence of witnesses but also their clarity and full responsibility to ensure the validity and truthfulness of the transaction or contract. This emphasizes that Islamic principles of transparency and accountability are essential for ensuring that every agreement or contract is carried out with integrity. The translation of Q.S Al-Baqarah (2): 282 is as follows:

And bear witness with two witnesses from among your men. If there are not two men, then a man and two women of witnesses whom you are pleased with, so that if one forgets, the other may remind him. The witnesses should not be reluctant to give evidence when called upon; and do not tire of writing it down for a fixed period of time, whether the transaction is small or large. That is more just in the sight of Allah, and more likely to strengthen the testimony, and closer to avoiding doubt...<sup>50</sup>

One of the main issues arising from the use of the Metaverse is related to aspects of identity and social justice. In the virtual world, individuals can create avatars that may differ significantly from

<sup>44</sup>Hang Wang et al., "A Survey on the Metaverse: The State-of-the-Art, Technologies, Applications, and Challenges," *IEEE Internet of Things Journal* 10, no. 16 (August 15, 2023): 14671–88.

<sup>45</sup>Auwal Adam Saad et al., "The Metaverse and Islamic Financial Contracts: The Case of Ijarah," *F1000Research* 12 (July 17, 2023): 837.

<sup>46</sup>Abdullah Hemmet, "Harmonizing Artificial Intelligence with Islamic Values - A Thoughtful Analysis of Religious, Social, and Economic Impacts of Technological Advancements," *American Journal of Smart Technology and Solutions* 2, no. 2 (December 4, 2023): 65–76.

<sup>47</sup>Mohd Akil Muhamed Ali et al., "The Status of Makruh in The Halal Haram Framework: A Conceptual Analysis," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 12, no. 11 (2022): 60-69.

<sup>48</sup>Mohd Hasrul Shuhari, "The Importance of Using Current Technology in the Study of Islamic Ethics," *International Journal of Advanced Trends in Computer Science and Engineering* 9, no. 3 (June 25, 2020): 3945–49.

<sup>49</sup>Ehsan Arzroomchilar, and Maryam Olamaiekopaie, "Where Technology Meets Islam: Towards an Islamic Perspective on Technology," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 12, no. 2 (November 11, 2022): 14–27.

<sup>50</sup>Al-Baqara 2:282.



their real-world selves,<sup>51</sup> including in terms of gender, appearance, and behavior. Islam emphasizes the importance of honesty, transparency, and responsibility in every interaction.<sup>52</sup> The use of avatars that do not match one's true identity or are used for purposes inconsistent with Islamic values may raise moral and ethical issues.<sup>53</sup> In addition, the Metaverse can present challenges regarding the mixing of non-mahram men and women in virtual spaces, which Sharia requires to be controlled to avoid fitnah and inappropriate actions.<sup>54</sup>

The Hadiths of Prophet Muhammad do not discuss technology directly because technologies such as the Metaverse did not exist. However, the principles of ethics and morals<sup>55</sup> contained in the Hadiths provide guidance for Muslims in using all forms of technological advancement. Hadiths that emphasize honesty, transparency, and avoiding deception are relevant to the use of virtual technology.<sup>56</sup> For example, the Prophet said: "Whoever cheats is not one of us."<sup>57</sup> This Hadith clearly emphasizes that we should not use technology to violate the Islamic values of honesty and morality.

#### 4. Virtual Marriage in the Metaverse in Practice

Marriage in the Metaverse is a new concept that allows couples to hold their wedding ceremony in a virtual world, where they are represented by avatars. These avatars are digital representations of the bride and groom, which are designed according to their preferences. In this practice, the couple can invite family, friends, and guests who also have avatars in the Metaverse to attend the ceremony. The entire process, from the wedding procession to the vows, is conducted in a specially designed virtual space. By utilizing Virtual Reality (VR) technology, participants can experience a near-real event, as if they were truly present at a grand and beautiful wedding venue.

The design of the wedding space in the Metaverse entirely depends on the creativity of the couple and the virtual world development. Couples can choose their desired background, such as a beautiful garden, a classic wedding hall, or even a fantastical setting like a castle in the sky or an enchanted forest. Virtual reality technology allows every detail of the space to be arranged realistically, complete with decorations, lighting, and background sounds that enhance the solemn and romantic atmosphere. Additionally, guest avatars can interact with each other, greet, offer congratulations, and even 'dance' together at the virtual reception, creating a lively celebration. Here is an example of a Metaverse wedding room design:

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<sup>51</sup>Haihan Duan et al., "Metaverse for Social Good: A University Campus Prototype," in *Proceedings of the 29th ACM International Conference on Multimedia* (New York, NY, USA: ACM, 2021), 153–61.

<sup>52</sup>Saad et al., "The Metaverse and Islamic Financial Contracts: The Case of Ijarah."

<sup>53</sup>Xuhui Mao et al., "Metaverse: Deconstruction and Differentiation of Identity Under the New Media Environment," *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal* 10, no. 3 (March 26, 2023): 218–25.

<sup>54</sup>Mahbobullah Hazim, and Abdulaziz Nazari, "The Negative Consequences of Gender Mixing and Its Rulings in Islamic Shariah," *Integrated Journal for Research in Arts and Humanities* 3, no. 4 (July 5, 2023): 6–19.

<sup>55</sup>Wachida Muhlis, and Ibnu Hajar, "Hadīth And Technological Challenges in The Contemporary Era," *Al-Bukhari : Jurnal Ilmu Hadis* 6, no. 2 (December 15, 2023): 230–43.

<sup>56</sup>Mostafa Taqavi, Mahdi Kafaee, and Rostam Ravanbakhsh, "Islamic Alternatives to the Ethical Maxims of Modern Technology from the Perspective of Mario Bunge," *Technology in Society* 66 (August 2021): 101681.

<sup>57</sup>Imam Muslim bin al-Hajjaj al-Qusyairy an-Naisabury, *Shahīh Muslim, Kitab Iman* (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Ilmiyah, n.d.), 102



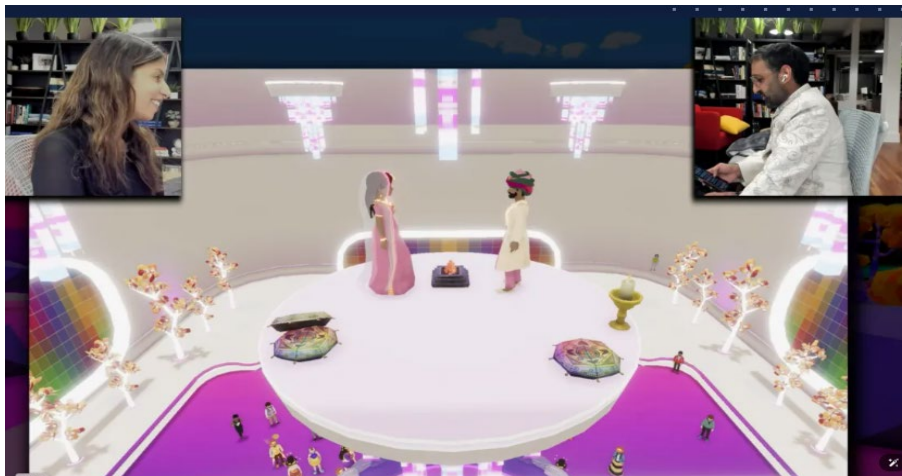
**Figure 1.** Analogy of VR Metaverse Room Design For Marriage

The couple's avatars carry the entire wedding procession, from the exchange of vows to the ring ceremony out in the virtual space. VR technology allows for the accurate replication of every movement, expression, and word, making the virtual wedding experience almost indistinguishable from a real one. Additional features such as music, visual effects, and video documentation can even be integrated into the event to create unforgettable memories. However, since everything happens in the virtual world and not in a physical context, weddings in the Metaverse raise various questions about their validity according to laws and traditions, including Sharia law.

### **5. Analysis of Virtual Marriage in the Metaverse from Islamic Law Perspective**

In marriage and its relation to metaverse technology, the Sharia approach, the views of scholars, and Hadith play an important role in ensuring that virtual marriages performed in the metaverse remain valid and under Islamic teachings.<sup>58</sup> Marriage in Islam has clear terms and conditions, such as *ijāb* and *qabul*, a guardian, two fair witnesses, and dowry. The following is an illustration of the implementation of *Nikah* in the Metaverse the couple Sheel Mohnot and Amruta Godbole carried that out:

<sup>58</sup>Muhammad Habibi Miftakhul Marwa, and Norma Sari, "Akad Nikah Virtual Perawat Saat Covid-19: Tinjauan Hukum Perkawinan Islam Dan Hukum Kesehatan," [Nurses' Virtual Marriage Contract During Covid-19: Review of Islamic Marriage Law and Health Law], *Jurnal Hukum Ius Quia Iustum* 29, no. 3 (September 1, 2022): 674–97.



**Figure 2.** Reception Design using Avatar Metaverse<sup>59</sup>

Contemporary scholars have discussed virtual marriages conducted through technology, including the Metaverse. One of the prevailing opinions is that as long as the pillars and conditions of marriage in Islam are fulfilled, a virtual marriage can be considered valid. For example, if the *ijāb qabul* is conducted virtually with the presence of a guardian, two fair witnesses, and an agreed dowry, then, in Sharia principles, the marriage contract is acceptable. Scholars such as Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Shaykh Abdul Aziz bin Baz have argued that the use of modern technology in marriage contracts, such as marriages performed through videoconferencing, is permissible as long as all parties are directly involved and testimony can be ascertained.

However, there are important conditions in Sharia marriage that must be maintained in the virtual world. One of these conditions is the honesty and clarity of the identity of the parties involved. In the Metaverse, the avatars used may not reflect one's true identity, which can lead to confusion or fraud.<sup>60</sup>

One pillar of marriage in Islam is the presence of witnesses to the marriage contract. This testimony is important to ensure that the marriage is valid in the eyes of sharia law and leaves no doubt for the future. In a hadith narrated by Ibn Abbas, the Prophet said: "No marriage is valid except with a guardian and two fair witnesses."<sup>61</sup> Based on this hadith, the presence of witnesses in the marriage contract becomes mandatory. In the Metaverse, the witnesses involved in the marriage must still fulfill the requirements of sharia two fair male witnesses. In Islamic law, the clarity of the identities of the bride, groom, guardian, and witnesses is essential to ensure that the marriage is valid and leaves no doubt. Therefore, scholars have emphasized that virtual marriages are only valid if the

<sup>59</sup>Wahyu Sibarani, "Metaverse Successfully Conducts the First Wedding Ceremony in the Virtual World," *Sindo News*, 2023, <https://tekno.sindonews.com/read/1038575/207/metaverse-sukses-bikin-upacara-pernikahan-pertama-di-dunia-maya-1677967425>.

<sup>60</sup>Kedi Yang et al., "A Secure Authentication Framework to Guarantee the Traceability of Avatars in Metaverse," *IEEE Transactions on Information Forensics and Security* 18 (2023): 3817–32.

<sup>61</sup>Abu Dawud Sulaiman bin al-Asy'ats al-Azdi al-Sijistani, *Sunan Abi Dāwūd* (Beirut: alkhairat.org, 2009), 245.

identities of the parties involved can be clearly verified, for example, through video or documentation that confirms their in-person presence at the contract.



**Figure 3.** Marriage Ceremony at Metaverse Attended by Guardians, Witnesses and the Bride-to-be

The uniqueness of marriage in the Metaverse lies in how the virtual world creates a new space for conducting marriage contracts that combine elements of technology with religious tradition. In this scenario, although the bride, groom, guardian, and witnesses are not physically present, their digital avatars can act as representations, allowing all parties to be 'present' in the ceremony. Theoretically, if all parties are connected through a device that enables real-time communication,<sup>62</sup> the aspect of presence can be considered fulfilled. However, challenges arise when considering how traditional Islamic law, which prioritizes physical presence, can adapt to this digital space. Physical presence in a marriage contract is not just visual; it also carries spiritual and emotional significance that may be difficult to fully realize in cyberspace.

In addition, marriage in the Metaverse also offers a new dimension regarding the validity of *ijāb* and *qabul*, which are usually performed in person in one assembly. In the virtual world, although *ijāb* and *qabul* can be conducted through video call technology, potential network or technical disruptions can affect the clarity of pronunciation and continuity between *ijāb* and *qabul*, which are crucial elements of the marriage contract. The clarity of recitation and acceptance of *ijāb* and *qabul* in person is central to a valid marriage, so weddings in the Metaverse should ensure that there are no technical interruptions that could disrupt this procession. This shows that while the Metaverse provides convenience and accessibility, its application in Islamic weddings requires more attention to technical and legal details to remain compliant with the requirements of the pillars of marriage.

## 6. Conclusion

Marriage in the metaverse is a new phenomenon that combines advances in virtual technology with elements of long-held religious traditions. The metaverse, as an immersive digital space that allows the virtual conduct of wedding ceremonies by using avatars as representatives of each

<sup>62</sup>Dapeng Wu et al., "Virtual-Reality Interpromotion Technology for Metaverse: A Survey," *IEEE Internet of Things Journal* 10, no. 18 (September 15, 2023): 15788–809.

individual. In this context, technologies, such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) play a major role in creating an experience similar to a traditional ceremony but conducted in a digital world. The uniqueness of a wedding in the metaverse lies in its flexibility in integrating cultural and religious elements, such as consent, while utilizing technology to ensure immersive presence and participation.

However, while the metaverse opens up new opportunities for virtual marriages, there are challenges to be faced regarding the authenticity of identities and the legal validity of such marriages. In the metaverse, the avatar fully reflects a person's true identity, so honesty and clarity of identity are important elements to ensure the marriage is valid according to sharia and applicable laws. Authentication technologies, such as biometrics and digital footprints, can help overcome this challenge. Marriage in the metaverse could serve as a legitimate way to conduct marriage ceremonies, as long as it adheres to the legal and ethical standards.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors of the manuscript have no financial or non-financial conflict of interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

### **Data Availability**

The data associated with this study will be provided by the corresponding author upon request.

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