# The Interface of Maqashid al-Shariah with Human Cognitive Capacity and AI Innovation

**Muliyadi Thaib¹\*, Andriyaldi Andriyaldi², Yona Rosita³**

¹,² Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar
³ SMAN 3 Kota Solok

**Abstract:** *Human innovation in the form of increasingly advanced and intelligent technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), has raised new challenges particularly for the Muslim community. One such issue concerns the role of reason (ʿaql) as a primary instrument inherent in human beings and as a central component in understanding and applying Islamic law (shariʿah). Maqoshid al-shariʿah, as explained in Islamic legal theory, aims to safeguard and promote the welfare (mashlahah) of humanity. This welfare is manifested through ḥikmah (wisdom), one of whose core principles is the preservation of intellect (hifẓ al-ʿaql). Therefore, this study seeks to elaborate on the principle of hifẓ al-ʿaql in relation to the utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the understanding and application of Islamic teachings. Using a qualitative approach and literature study, this research explores how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is positioned within the framework of Islamic values whether as a tool that promotes welfare or as a potential threat to the authority and responsibility of human reasoning. The findings indicate that Artificial Intelligence (AI) cannot replace the function of human reason in the realm of shariʿah, as it lacks will, intention, and moral accountability. However, Artificial Intelligence (AI) can serve as a medium or intermediary that assists in understanding, deriving, and implementing legal rulings, provided that its use is guided and supervised by the dynamic principles of maqoṣhid al-shariʿah. Hence, maqoshid al-shariʿah serves as a foundational framework to regulate and direct the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in a manner that aligns with the welfare objectives defined by Islamic law. In conclusion, the relationship between the protection of human intellectual capacity (ḥifẓ al-ʿaql) and the sophistication of Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be harmonized through a strong grounding in maqoshid al-shariʿah.*

**Keywords:** *Maqashid al-Shariʿah, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Ḥifẓ al-ʿAql*

## Introduction

*T*he emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology marks a significant advancement in information and communication technology. The sophistication of AI has introduced a new entity into modern life capable of performing logical thinking processes (McCarthy, 2022), recognizing human

language, making predictions, and delivering data-driven solutions in a short time. This technological development has generated new dynamics across almost all aspects of human life, including how people access and understand religious knowledge as well as make ethical and legal decisions. (Clocksin, 2003)

AI, as a revolutionary tool, can address questions related to fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), translate hadiths, and even produce systematic and referenced Islamic content. (Imamah, 2025) However, concerns arise over the automation of Islamic knowledge through machines, which may blur the distinction between human intellect and artificial instruments, especially given AI's ability to potentially replace human reasoning in understanding and applying syariah values and the spiritual principles necessary for holistic legal deliberation. Islam, as a religion embodying the principle of rahmatan lil 'alamin (mercy to all worlds), holds a set of legal objectives known as maqashid al-shariah. These objectives govern not only the performance of worship but also encompass the welfare of human life across social, economic, political, and technological domains. Within the tradition of ushul fiqh (principles of Islamic jurisprudence), the maqashid al-shariah include the preservation of religion (hifz al-din), life (hifz al-nafs), intellect (hifz al-'aql), lineage (hifz al-nasl), and property (hifz al-mal). (Nabilah et al., 2025)  Intellect stands as a fundamental human attribute and a primary instrument for understanding textual sources (nash), conducting ijtihad (independent juristic reasoning), and evaluating benefits (maslahah) and harms (mudarat) in every act, thus constituting a prerequisite for bearing legal responsibilities in Islam. (Mahmudulhassan et al., 2024)

The legal objectives related to maqashid al-shariah, particularly concerning ḥifẓ al-'aql (preservation of intellect), face challenges posed by the advent of Artificial Intelligence. (Nikmah, 2025) Human intellect is capable of rational, emotional, and spiritual considerations, while AI possesses only rationality devoid of consciousness—it lacks intention and accountability. The spiritual dimension absent in AI makes it unable to grasp maqashid al-shariah as a dynamic and contextual value system. (Zainuri et al., 2025) AI-generated outcomes are essentially statistical conclusions derived from data patterns, lacking moral or ethical judgment. In line with this, Jasser Auda underlines that maqashid should be understood through a systemic and dynamic approach rather than a static and traditional one. The evaluation of social and technological phenomena must account for the interrelations among various objectives rather than solely textual legal provisions. (Auda, 2008) The impact of AI's emergence must be examined concerning justice, sustainability, human autonomy, and social harmony. The utilization of AI raises concerns beyond halal and haram legal classifications; it also questions whether AI supports or undermines maqashid al-shariah and the greater public interest. (Azwar & Abur Hamdi Usman, 2025)

Maqashid al-shariah acts as both a control mechanism and guiding framework for technological development, ensuring innovations do not violate human values. It stresses the importance of involvement by Muslim scholars and scientists in overseeing AI's evolution to align it with syariah values. (Muhaki & Aziz, 2024) Maqashid al-shariah functions not only defensively by protecting the five essentials but also proactively by promoting social, economic, and technological renewal rooted in Islamic principles. (Nabilah & Hayah, 2022) This study aims to conduct an in-depth literature review of maqashid al-shariah in maintaining the balance between human intellect's capabilities and the sophistication of Artificial Intelligence. The discussion will elaborate on maqashid al-shariah concerning human intellect, the syariah's boundaries in AI utilization—particularly in religious decision-making—and the role of AI in supporting the welfare of humanity.

## Method

This study employs a library research method with a qualitative descriptive approach. The purpose of this approach is to conduct an in-depth examination of the relationship between maqashid al-shariah—particularly the principle of hifz al-'aql—and the development and utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within the context of Islamic ethics and law. The data utilized in this research are qualitative in nature, comprising primary sources such as classical works (turath) in Arabic and secondary sources including contemporary literature from modern researchers and scholarly publications. Data collection involves a

comprehensive literature review of classical and contemporary books, as well as relevant scientific articles and journal publications. Data analysis follows a thematic approach (thematic analysis), identifying key themes such as maqashid perspectives on human intellectual capacity, shariah limitations on AI utilization, and AI's role in supporting public welfare (maslahah). This study elucidates the capabilities of human intellect alongside AI sophistication, particularly in religious decision-making, and AI's contribution to community welfare without undermining the authority of human reason or maqashid al-shariah values.

## Results and Discussion

### Maqashid al-Syariah on Human Intellect Amid Artificial Intelligence Developments

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology has introduced complex issues within contemporary scientific discourse, including in the realm of Islamic thought. One of the primary approaches to understanding these modern challenges from an Islamic perspective is through the framework of maqashid al-shariah, or the objectives of Islamic law. Within Islamic tradition, the intellect ('aql) holds a profoundly esteemed position as the principal means for humans to comprehend divine revelation, discern truth from falsehood, and fulfill their role as vicegerents (khalifah) on earth. Al-Syatibi, in his seminal work al-Muwafaqat, asserts that intellect forms the foundational basis for legal obligations. (Asman, 2020) Accordingly, the emergence of AI, which mimics human cognitive functions, necessitates careful examination within the maqashid framework, particularly concerning the preservation of intellect (hifz al-ʻaql).

Within the maqashid al-shariah, hifz al-ʻaql—or the safeguarding of intellect—is one of five fundamental objectives alongside the preservation of religion (ḥifẓ al-din), life (ḥifẓ al-nafs), lineage (ḥifẓ al-nasl), and property (ḥifẓ al-mal). (Jalili, 2021) Preservation of intellect extends beyond biological safeguards, such as prohibitions against intoxicants, to include maintaining the quality and freedom of thought as well as the moral authority of the intellect when confronted with contemporary challenges. (Muhsin et al., 2025) In this context, AI's capability to emulate intellectual functions such as decision-making, autonomous learning, and natural language processing must be critically assessed to ensure it does not supplant the role of the intellect as the moral foundation of human responsibility under Islamic law. Crucially, moral consciousness, accountability, and intent, which are inherent to humans, remain absent in AI systems. While AI can replicate certain intellectual functions, it cannot assume ethical responsibility. (Coeckelbergh, 2020) In Islamic theology, individual accountability for actions (taklif) is contingent upon the presence of intellect and will. Surrendering moral decision-making to technological systems risks undermining this principle of taklif. Al-Ghazali famously emphasized that humans are held accountable for their deeds precisely due to their intellect's capacity to distinguish and choose. (Zulkefli et al., 2025) Thus, despite AI's rational information processing capabilities, it is not recognized as a moral agent within the shariah framework.

The role of intellect in Islam transcends mere logical reasoning; it is fundamentally an instrument for understanding divine guidance. The Qur'an frequently exhorts mankind to exercise their intellect, as illustrated in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 164, which invites reflection on the signs of creation as a path to recognizing God's existence and wisdom. This perspective situates the discourse on AI within a theological-ethical framework that prioritizes human intellect as the core of responsibility, spirituality, and law. It calls for cautious integration of AI technologies, ensuring that while AI may assist in cognitive tasks, it does not replace human moral reasoning or the dynamic values embodied in maqashid al-shariah. The aforementioned Qur'anic verse illustrates that human intellect serves as a spiritual instrument, enabling profound reflection on divine signs. Any dominance of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in social spaces or policymaking that diminishes the role of human intellect must be critiqued through the lens of ḥifẓ al-ʻaql. AI should not supplant processes such as consultation (musyawarah), juristic reasoning (ijtihad), or decision-making within Muslim communities. Instead, AI must be positioned as a supportive tool rather than a substitute for human judgment.

In public policy formulation, maqashid al-shariah demands that technologies, including AI, be directed toward human welfare (maslahah). Ibn 'Asyur emphasizes that maqashid encompass not only individual benefits but also collective welfare (maslahah 'ammah), which considers justice, freedom, and social values. (Fauzan, 2023) In practice, AI deployment must safeguard human intellectual autonomy and prevent social inequalities arising from data monopolies enabled by technology. Applications of AI in Islamic contexts—such as shariah-compliant finance, Islamic education, or law enforcement—must remain aligned with maqashid principles that protect human dignity as rational and accountable beings. Contemporary scholars like Yusuf al-Qaradawi further underscore the necessity of flexibility in interpreting shariah through maqashid to address evolving circumstances. However, this flexibility does not entail surrendering control of values to technology. Al-Qaradawi asserts that Islamic shariah consistently positions humans as the primary agents in decision-making due to their intellect and heart. (Tohari & Kholish, 2020) Consequently, AI must operate within shariah-defined boundaries, without usurping the ethical evaluation process from humans guided by intellect and revelation.

Maqashid al-shariah views human intellect as an entity to be preserved and exalted, serving as the foundation for responsibility, morality, and decision-making in Islam. While AI advancements offer substantial benefits, they must not obscure or replace the human intellect's moral agency. AI should function as an intermediary tool that supports maqashid values. Therefore, developing an Islamic ethical and legal framework to guide responsible, welfare-oriented AI utilization is imperative.

## Shariah Boundaries on the Utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Religious Decision-Making

The advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology has permeated various aspects of human life, including the spiritual and religious domain. Islamic institutions have begun leveraging AI's sophistication to address fiqh questions, classify legal rulings, and recommend scholarly opinions. However, fundamental questions arise regarding the ethical boundaries from a shariah perspective on using this technology in religious decision-making processes. Islamic shariah emphasizes the authority of scholars, textual evidences (nash), and ijtihad as the foundation for legal determination. The application of AI in religious contexts cannot be equated with its use in technical fields like logistics or finance, as it involves matters of value, responsibility, and spirituality. The primary sources of Islamic legal rulings— Qur'an, Sunnah, consensus (ijma'), and analogy (qiyas)—are accessed through ijtihad, which relies not only on logical reasoning but also on moral sensitivity and pure intent. Al-Syatibi asserts that true ijtihad requires a mujtahid to comprehend not just the evidences but also the objectives of shariah (maqasid al-shariah) as the very purpose of law (al-Syatibi, 2001, p. 292). AI lacks this awareness of maqasid, rendering its outputs statistical rather than substantive. Entrusting ijtihad to AI risks diminishing the spiritual and moral dimensions of Islamic law.

Shariah ethics stipulate that religious decision-making must remain tied to moral and spiritual accountability, which AI, as a technology, cannot bear. Al-Ghazali emphasizes that legal subjects (al-mukallaf) must possess intellect capable of grasping shariah intent. (Parrey, 2024) AI is designed merely for compilation and pattern prediction, not for understanding social contexts, maqasid, or local community conditions—key considerations in ijtihad. AI can accelerate reference searches, scholarly opinions, or comparisons across fiqh texts on religious issues. Problems emerge when AI is granted authority to issue legal conclusions. Yusuf al-Qaradawi stresses that fatwas involve not just texts but context, social realities, and scholarly spiritual intuition. (Belal, 2018) Thus, AI remains a technical aid, not a replacement for human intellectual and spiritual capacity.

Maqasid al-shariah principles, particularly preserving religion (ḥifẓ al-din) and intellect (ḥifẓ al-'aql), must guide AI usage. Unchecked deployment risks reducing religion to a normative legal system devoid of justice, compassion, and wisdom. Ibn 'Asyur explains that shariah is revealed not to impose hardship but to realize human welfare across all dimensions (Ibn 'Asyur, 2006, p. 112). AI should assist in shariah comprehension rather than dictate decisions. Islamic epistemology views religious knowledge as derived from divine unveiling (kashf), spiritual taste (dhaq), and divine success (tawfiq), beyond mere

rational instruments. AI, operating on data, logic, and probabilistic models, cannot capture these dimensions. This aligns with critiques of technology that quantify spiritual and social phenomena. AI thus serves as a complement in truth-seeking, not its arbiter. (Rubin, 2022) Shariah's ethical boundaries on AI in religious decision-making hinge on AI's inability to replace humans in moral responsibility, spiritual depth, and maqasid comprehension. AI can support scholarship and dawah but must remain under rational, knowledgeable human oversight, positioned proportionately within maqasid and accountability principles. Its use in fatwas and Islamic law demands caution, scholarly accountability, and spiritual awareness.

## Conclusion

The development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) prompts profound reflection, particularly within the framework of maqashid al-shariah. From a maqashid perspective, human intellect (ḥifẓ al-'aql) occupies a central position as the foundation of taklif (legal accountability) and the primary means for comprehending revelation while fulfilling the role of khalifah on earth. Although AI lacks consciousness, moral responsibility, and ijtihad capacity, it excels at mimicking human cognitive processes. Consequently, AI must not supplant human intellect as the authoritative bearer of knowledge and spirituality in Islam. Human reason remains the primary foundation for value-laden, welfare-oriented decision-making benefiting the ummah.

Regarding religious decision-making and legal determination, shariah establishes clear boundaries: AI cannot act as a human (mujtahid or mufti). Its role is limited to data compilation, literature access, and facilitating legal research, without replacing ijtihad—which demands deep comprehension of textual evidences (nash), maqashid, social contexts, and spiritual intuition unique to humans. Shariah ethics require fatwas and religious rulings to emerge from sound intellect, pure intent, and profound understanding, elements irreducible to algorithmic systems. Thus, AI's role in religious spheres must be circumscribed to prevent epistemic and spiritual harm.

Nevertheless, AI holds immense potential to realize public welfare (taḥqīq al-maṣlaḥah) when employed judiciously within Islamic values. It can enhance healthcare, education, shariah finance, and dawah dissemination—all aligned with shariah's core objectives of preserving religion, intellect, life, and property. Under rigorous ethical guidance and oversight, AI becomes a vital instrument for building a more intelligent, just, and prosperous Muslim society. The challenge for Muslims lies not in accepting or rejecting AI, but in constructively integrating it within a visionary maqashid framework.

## Acknowledgement

## Conflict of Interest

This article has no conflicts of interest.

## References

Asman, A. (2020). Keluarga Sakinah Dalam Kajian Hukum Islam. *Al-Qadha : Jurnal Hukum Islam Dan Perundang-Undangan*, *15*(1). https://doi.org/10.32505/qadha.v7i2.1952

Auda, J. (2008). *Maqasid al-Shariah as philosophy of Islamic law: a systems approach*. International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT).

Azwar, A., & Abur Hamdi Usman. (2025). Artificial Intelligence in the Halal Industry: Trends And Global Research Opportunities. *International Journal of Halal Industry*, *1*(1), 46–67. https://doi.org/10.20885/IJHI.vol1.iss1.art4

Belal, Y. (2018). Islamic Law, Truth, Ethics. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, *38*(1), 107–121. https://doi.org/10.1215/1089201x-4390015

Clocksin, W. F. (2003). Artificial Intelligence and the Future. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London. Series A: Mathematical, Physical and Engineering Sciences*, *361*(1809), 1721–1748. https://doi.org/10.1098/rsta.2003.1232

Coeckelbergh, M. (2020). Artificial Intelligence, Responsibility Attribution, and a Relational Justification of Explainability. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, *26*(4), 2051–2068. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-019-00146-8

Fauzan, H. (2023). Pemikiran Maqashid Syariah Al-Tahir Ibn Asyur. *Al-Mawarid Jurnal Syariah Dan Hukum (JSYH)*, *5*(1), 101–114. https://doi.org/10.20885/mawarid.vol5.iss1.art7

Imamah, Y. N. (2025). Ijtihad Artificial Intelligence: Prospects and Ethics of Using Artificial Intelligence in Creating Contemporary Islamic Fatwas. *Journalum Juris Islamicum Contemporaneum*, *1*(1 SE-Articles), 22–41. https://e-journal.darulquranafandi.sch.id/JJIC/article/view/7

Jalili, A. (2021). Teori Maqashid Syariah Dalam Hukum Islam. *TERAJU*, *3*(02), 71–80. https://doi.org/10.35961/teraju.v3i02.294

Mahmudulhassan, M., Waston, W., Muthoifin, M., & Ahmed Khondoker, S. U. (2024). Understanding the Essence of Islamic Education: Investigating Meaning, Essence, and Knowledge Sources. *Solo Universal Journal of Islamic Education and Multiculturalism*, *2*(01), 27–36. https://doi.org/10.61455/sujiem.v2i01.115

McCarthy, J. (2022). Artificial Intelligence, Logic, and Formalising Common Sense. In *Machine Learning and the City* (pp. 69–90). Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119815075.ch6

Muhaki, M., & Aziz, H. (2024). Maqashid al-Syari 'ah Sebagai Instrumen Pembaruan Fiqh Sosial Kontemporer. *Al-Ibrah: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Keilmuan Islam*, *9*(2), 125–152.

Muhsin, S. M., Hashi, A. A., Gounjaria, N., Alashaikh, M. H., & Chin, A. H. B. (2025). Can Global Bioethics Benefit From Islamic Jurisprudential Principles? *Bioethics*. https://doi.org/10.1111/bioe.70035

Nabilah, W., & Hayah, Z. (2022). Filosofi Kemaslahatan Dalam Aksiologi Hukum Islam (Telaah Kitab Maqashid Syariah). *El -Hekam*, *7*(1), 39–49. https://doi.org/10.31958/jeh.v7i1.5810

Nabilah, W., Putra, R., Afroo, F. A., Nurjanah, N., & Wahyuni, E. (2025). Between Protection and Permissiveness: A Fiqh Siyasah Reexamination of Marriage Dispensation in Indonesia. *JURIS (Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah)*, *24*(1), 137–151. https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v24i1.11882

Nikmah, M. (2025). God-Conscious AI: Maqasid al-Shari'ah in Algorithmic Design. *Salam Institute Islamic Studies*, *2*(1), 13–20.

Parrey, I. A. (2024). The Interplay Of Ijtihād And Maqāṣ id Al-Sharī'Ah In Pre-Modern Legal Thought: Examining The Contributions Of Al-Ghazali And Al-Shatibi. *Hamdard Islamicus*, *47*(2), 37–59. https://doi.org/10.57144/hi.v47i2.894

Rubin, V. L. (2022). Philosophies of Truth. In *Misinformation and Disinformation* (pp. 95–120). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-95656-1_4

Tohari, I., & Kholish, M. A. (2020). Ijtihad Berbasis Maqashid Syari'ah Sebagai Pijakan Konseptual Dalam Pembaruan Hukum Keluarga Islam Indonesia. *Jurnal Hukum & Pembangunan*, *50*(2), 462. https://doi.org/10.21143/jhp.vol50.no2.2587

Zainuri, R. D., Suryadi, I., & Helmawati, H. (2025). Pemikiran Islam tentang Teknologi Modern: Tinjauan Etika terhadap Penggunaan AI dalam Kehidupan Manusia. *Edukasiana: Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan*, *4*(4), 1737–1742. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.56916/ejip.v4i4.2209

Zulkefli, M. Y., Dimon, Z., Kamaruddin, N., & Abdul Wahab, N. (2025). Aplikasi Maqasid Ḍaruriyyāh Dalam Masalah Ihdād Wanita Islam Berkerjaya. *Journal of Muwafaqat*, *8*(2), 42–54. https://doi.org/10.53840/muwafaqat.v8i2.193