

# Ethics of Social Media from *Maqashid Syari'ah* Perspective

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## Abstract

Nowadays, social media can replace communication interactions in the real world to cyber interactions. but the large amount of content circulating on social media contains insults, hate speech against SARA differences, blasphemy against political choices, causes society to be polarized and overrides ethics in social media. Humanitarianly the content is troubling, frightening and deprives people of freedom of choice, religion, and opinion. So, the purpose of this study is to formulate the concept and application of ethics in social media in accordance with Maqashid Syariah. Qualitative research with this descriptive approach uses observational and documentation data collection techniques. This research examines how social media ethics with the perspective of Maqashid Syariah (religion, soul, reason, descendants, and property) can maintain and find their position to build social media activities based on Islamic values in creating benefits for all mankind.

**Keywords:** ethics, social media, maqashid shari'ah

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## 1. Introduction

The development of communication technology is directly proportional to the changing times that make time and space no longer a meaningful obstacle to human social life. Social media can allow a person to dismiss differences in distance and time and bring social relationships closer together. This internet-based communication tool is now used to communicate in work affairs and personal affairs, so that communication that used to use correspondence, switched to more modern communication media, namely social media such as sms, whatsapp, twitter, line. Social media can replace communication interactions in the real world to cyber interactions. So, it is appropriate that technology is considered to bring the far away away from the near. (Afriani & Azmi, 2020) through social media, a lot of information, both positive and negative, will be quickly conveyed to all social media users, so that responses and backlashes are also immediately felt, both positive and negative responses depending on social media users responding to it.

Information can have a positive impact, as well as a negative one, the positive impact is the formation of a student community, business, and several other positive things. While the negative impact is that if social media users accept and abuse for a specific purpose, and some become victims of such abuse, this is very unfortunate because of the absence of vigilance and clear information. The occurrence of disputes and divisions due to interactions using social media is also no less numerous, for example, fake news (hoaxes), hate speech, cyber, and bullying have spread widely due to the low public filtering of information received on social media.

Social media is no longer a medium used to share information, but only to spread various sensations. So sometimes it overrides ethics in conveying information. Cyberspace has made the human mindset shift, sometimes the ethics that used to be upheld by Indonesian society, become invincible because of the demands of the times. It is evident that the ease of accessing and using social media has unwittingly been caught in an ethical downturn. Whereas for eastern countries, the ethics of people who do not have good ethics are considered immoral because their actions do not see the impact that will occur. The absence of filters that consider good and bad values and whether they are appropriate and whether is the beginning of a disaster in the use of social media. The ethics of communication on social media if applied, among others, can be seen from polite communication. This reflects the politeness of personality in communicating on social media.

The large amount of content circulating on social media containing insults, hate speech against SARA differences, blasphemy against political choices causes people to polarize and override ethics in social media, which is certainly humanitarily troubling, scary and depriving people of their freedom of choice, religion, and opinion, the government through the Ministry of Communication and Informatics has handled content regarding ethnic, religious, racial and intergroup (SARA) speech as much as 3,640 content since 2018. Ministry of Communication and Informatics Spokesperson Dedy Permadi said the content had been cut off or takedown. (Kominfo Press Release April 26, 2021, n.d.) This shows that the government is firm in dealing with content that causes damage to the unity and unity of the nation. If communication on social media has been transformed into a medium to insult other groups, such as ethnicity, religion, race, causing fear that it will cause huge turmoil, such as disputes between groups, clashes, and so on, then the role of the government and social media users is needed to deal with it. In the context of the negative impacts caused by social media activities today, a new analysis is needed using the concept of maqashid shari'ah, so that there are no violations of the use of social media, both violations that give rise to personal mafsadat and mafsadat in general. One of the figures who focused on the discussion of maqashid shari'ah was Ibn 'Assyria, where in the thought of Ibn 'Assyrian maqashid shari'ah had universality that must be realized through the application of Islamic law. In this universality includes realizing the benefit personally and publicly.

## **2. Research Methods**

This research uses qualitative research methods with a descriptive approach. Therefore, the data collection techniques used are observation and documentation. The results of the observations and documents that have been successfully collected are then analyzed, compared, and combined so that a systematic, solid, and complete study results are formed. According to Sugiyono (2005: 83) document studies are complementary to the use of observation and interview methods in qualitative research. Even the credibility of qualitative research results will be higher if it involves / uses document studies in qualitative research methods (Nilamsari, 2014)

## **3. Results and Discussion**

### **3.1. Definition of Ethics**

In Arabic ethics means akhlaq, etymologically derived from the Greek word, ethos, meaning 'customary custom' or 'pattern of behavior'. In general, social procedures, rules of behavior, human customs in society and the determination of good and bad values are called ethics (Kismiyati, 2010).

Ethics examines why one should follow a certain morality, or how one takes a responsible stance in sharing morality, so ethics in this case belongs to moral philosophy. (Afriani & Azmi, 2020)

### **3.2. Social media**

The word media which has a technological and social meaning which means interaction, it can be said that the definition of social media is a channel on the internet that allows users to present themselves and interact, work together, communicate with other uses, and form social virtually (Ihsani & Febriyanti, 2021)

### **3.3. Maqasid shari'ah**

The word maqashid is the plural form of maqshad which means "purpose and purpose". Meanwhile, sharia means "the laws of God that are decreed for man to be appointed to be appointed to achieve the happiness of living in the world and the Hereafter". Ibn Ashur defines maqashid sharia as a value or wisdom that concerns Shari'a in the entire content of Shari'a, whether detailed or global. (Musolli, 2018)

Al-Ghazali argued that Maqasid Sharia is reflected in five main things, namely preserving religion, soul, reason, descent and treasure. (Sarwat, Ahmad, Lc., 2019) Any law or rule that contains these five principles, then it is called *maslahat*. Etymologically, *maslahah* is equal to benefit, both in terms of pronunciation and meaning. The impact that will be caused if *maqashid al sharia* does not manifest itself in daily life is that many of the benefits of the people are not achieved. Many people commit crimes to obtain property or necessities. In the *mushaf* of the scholars about *maqashid shari'ah* there is in the books (*turast*) of several generations that discuss *maqashid shari'ah*.

### 3.4. Social media Between Maslahah and Mafsadat

*Hablum minannas* teaches us as Muslims to relate and interact as social beings who facilitate communication effectively and well. Islam teaches to communicate well, be polite, not to hurt the opponent of communication, and not to lie. In today's digital era, communication through cyberspace and social media is very commonplace. Social media applications such as Whatsapp, Twitter and Facebook are experiencing very rapid development in all circles. As a social media application, this certainly has a new impact, both positive and negative impacts. The positive impact of the existence of social media in the development of telecommunications brings many advantages, for example to facilitate communication, obtain information, do business, and so on. Whatsapp, Twitter, Facebook and other social media networking sites are currently very popular applications by all circles. With the help of this networking site, everyone can expand their friendships, both in terms of family and with other people and the wider community. Not only in the scope of the surrounding environment of the residence, but from various circles of the environment further away, even at the state and international levels. But there are also negative impacts, among others; reduced direct interpersonal interaction, addiction, as well as ethical and legal issues, due to content that contains violations of morals, privacy, and government regulations (ITE Law). So that in the end it will give birth to a new culture in society about the use of time without having to be accompanied by social media. Today's social media users are not only carried out in leisure time, but also carried out at peak times, as they are used to work. The limitations of time, space and range are lost, so the echo becomes as wide without obstacles as in the effects of conventional media. Therefore, wisdom in the use of social media must be considered because its impact is very difficult to predict and detect, especially if the content violates decency, ethics, social norms, culture, and others.

### 3.5. Maqashid Shari'ah: Social media ethics perspective in Maqashid Shari'ah

Social media is relatively abstract so that an approach from Shari'a is needed, so that social media activities do not seem rigid and do not fall into things that are contrary to the goals of *shari'ah maqashid shari'ah* (Nur & Muttaqin, 2020). A person in delivering news on social media must have a consideration of benefit (*maslahah*), and not cause hatred (*mafsadat*), because the essence of *maqashid shari'ah* is to realize benefit and reject damage. The signs of conveying this news are in accordance with what was conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad SAW, "A true Muslim is someone who saves other Muslims from the mouth and some problems and problems of communication on social media are caused by low literacy and digital knowledge and lack of ethics in communicating.

In terms of information, information can be true if it is considered to have a positive or negative impact if the information is disseminated, especially through social media. As in the occasion of the Messenger of Allah when he told Mu'adz bin Jabal about Allah's right to His servants that they should worship Him and not associate Him with other things. On the other hand, the right of God's servant is not to torture a servant who is united and does not associate with anyone. At that time Mu'adz bin Jabar asked the Prophet for permission to tell the matter to the other companions. But the Prophet forbade it by saying, "Do not preach to them about this, it is feared that they will misunderstand". (HR Bukhori).

The information and news are true, but the Messenger of Allah has other considerations, he is worried that the information is dangerous and there will be mutual slander between them. Because the condition of the people at that time was not ready to receive this information.

Because not everyone has the same understanding, as Mu'adz bin Jabal has understood. This incident shows and emphasizes that social media activities need to apply considerations that bring benefits in the form of Islamic sharia goals (*maqashid shari'ah*).

According to al-Syatibi *Maqashid shari'at* which is summarized in five basic things (*dharuriyat* or *kulliyat al-khams*) (Khatib, 2018) is like a symbiosis of mutualism between the existing and the non-existent. If human existence is maintained then this life will be preserved as well, but if man is wiped out or perished then life will also end and disappear. So these five fundamental elements are the basic principles of human rights (HAM) in Islam (*kutbudain aibak*, n.d.). The application of social media ethics in the perspective of *maqashid sharia* should look at the five basics of *maqashid sharia*, namely:

1. *Hifz al-din* (keeping religion) is a form of preservation of the faith, Islam and *ihsan*. That a Muslim should be able to guard his religion and beliefs from everything that could damage him. Thus making social media a means of maintaining *hifz al-din* and respecting the differences in worship of other religions.
2. *Hifz al-nafs* (maintenance of the soul). Social media should be able to preserve the safety and life of people, and guard against anything that can be harmful and threatening such as murder.

3. Hifz al-'aql (keeping reason). Social media should be a means to improve science so as to keep its wits from damaging things.
4. Hifz al-nasl (raising offspring). The communication created between parents and children is an effort to maintain offspring so that it is hoped that communication will be effective to maintain family harmony.
5. Hifz al-mal (guarding treasures). Making social media as a supporting part / means of work, makes us avoid a shortage of wealth.

Apart from the above concepts, the concept of classical shari'a maqashid is more about the outline of the purpose of the birth of the law of shari'a and the mechanism of taking laws by relying on the principles of maqashid. Along with the times, there has been a shift in understanding of the meaning and paradigm of maqashid shari'ah. This shift in the meaning and paradigm of maqashid arises along with the changing conditions and situations of the times.

The paradigm shifts of maqashid from classical to modern lies in the focus of its pressure points and studies. The focus of classical maqashid theory is more on protection and preservation. Meanwhile, modern maqashid theory, in addition to paying attention to these aspects, the discussion is getting wider and broader by referring to aspects of development and human rights. Then this modern maqashid paradigm produces aspects of development and development in the form of hifz al-bi'ah (maintaining the environment) and on the development of human rights in the form of hifz al-'ird (maintaining self-esteem).

#### **4. Conclusion**

Technological advances are unavoidable by the current generation, so the use of social media which is the impact of technological advances is very commonplace and commonplace. However, the use of social media still tends to be abused for negative things. This can be found in several cases that lead to violations of the law stemming from the use of social media that does not use ethics. Maqashid shari'ah as the spirit of Islamic law studies has been able to find its position to build social media activities based on fundamental values in creating benefits for all mankind, namely maintaining religion, soul, reason, offspring, property, environment, and honor.

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