The Theory of Maqasid al-Shari’ah-A literature Review and Research Agenda

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MAQASID AL-SHARI'AH
KONSEP & PENDEKATAN

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Maqasid al-Shari’ah: Konsep dan Pendekatan
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# Daftar Isi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Daftar Isi</th>
<th>Halaman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pendekatan Maqasidi Dalam Menangani Kepelbagaian Aliran Pemikiran Hukum Di Malaysia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Salah Faham Terhadap Standard Maslahah Dan Mafsadah Dalam Menangani Isu-Isu Semasa Di Malaysia</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Salah Faham Terhadap Aplikasi Maqasd Al-Shari’ah Dalam Ijtihad Semasa</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Aplikasi Maqasid Al-Shari’ah Dalam Isu-Isu Kewangan Islam</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ta’arud Antara Maqasid Dan Kesannya Terhadap Fatwa</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pemakaian Maqasid Al-Shariah Sebagai Seismograf Dalam Penilaian Isu Semasa</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Theory of Maqasid al-Shari’ah: A Literature Review and Research Agenda
Abu Talib Mohammad Monawer & Noor Naemah Abdul Rahman

8 Kepentingan I’tibar Al-Ma’al Dalam Istinbat Hukum Dan Aplikasinya Dalam Fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia
Akbar Sarif & Rizwan Ahmad

9 المقاصر الشرعية بين الإفراط والتفريط: دراسة في الوضاط
أمين أحمد البهاري

10 التعليل بمقاصر الشرعية
نعمان جعيم

11 طرق الكشف عن المقاصر عند البوطي دراسة وتطبيق
مناظق صادق محمود المليكي

12 إخراج القيمة في زكاة الفطر
الصادق المبروك الصادق

13 حكم موت الراحة في الشريعة الإسلامية رؤية تحليلية
أحمد محمد حسين & نور فاطم عليم الدين
The Theory of Maqasid al-Shari‘ah: A Literature Review and Research Agenda

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Introduction

The concept of ‘Maqasid al-Shari‘ah’ refers to the objectives of shari‘ah (Islamic law) that promote human welfare through acquisition of every possible benefit (manfa‘ah) and avoidance of any kind of harms or injuries (wada‘arah). Ibn Ashur said: “The overall objective (maqasid ‘amm) of Islamic legislation is to preserve the social order of the community and insure its healthy progress by promoting the well-being and virtue (sala‘ah) of the human being. The sala‘ah of human beings consists of the soundness of their intellects and the righteousness of their deeds, as well as the goodness of the things of the world in which they live that are put at their disposal” (Ibn-Ashur, 2006). In order to achieve those objectives the lawgiver (shari‘a) - Allah swt prescribed many ahkam (provisions and rulings) since the inception of sending prophets and messengers which meet at some divinely common purposes that could help mankind to live a systematic and peaceful life on this earth (al-Qavyim, 1973; Kamali, Khan, & Al Shaikh-Ali, 2008; Mohamad Akram Laldin & Hafas Furqani, 2013). This is the very meaning of the concept of maslahah (in singular, plural is masalih) as known in Islamic Jurisprudence (al-fiqh al-Islami).

The application of maqasid al-shari‘ah is evident in the ijtihad (individual reasoning) of Muslim jurists (fuqaha) beginning from the companions (sahabah) of the prophet (PBUH) and more evidently it is found in the ijtihad of ‘Umar- the caliph of Islam Islam (al-Dehlawi, 2005; al-Jundi, 2008). Maqasid al-shari‘ah was well considered by almost all later fuqaha (jurists of Islamic jurisprudence) particularly Abu Hanifah (150H), Malik (178H), Shafi‘ie (204H) and Ahmad (241H), Imams of four popular Sunni madhahib (schools of Islamic legal thought) in their ijtihad as found in their fiqh legacy (al-Furuji, 2001; Ibr-Mukhtar, 2014; Kamali et al., 2008).
Hence, the concept of maqasid al-shari'ah and its applications are not something innovated by the later fuqaha rather it is the core concept of shari'ah since its inception; and the Qur'an and the Sunnah are the first sources that explicitly stated masalih in the provisions and legal rulings (ahkam) of shari'ah (al-Qayyim, 1973). Shah Wali al-Allah al-Delhiwii (2005) affirmed the consideration of masalih in the ahkam of shari'ah substantiating with the Sunnah and the consensus (ijma') of people of three best centuries (khayrut Qurun). The concept of masalih was considered in the ijtihad of previous scholars regardless of its theorization, and it was also considered in the ijtihad of other scholars who were not studied by contemporary researchers yet. In addition, scholars of ahl al-Ra'y, who are more popular for causation and rationalization (ta'il) of Shari'ah, were to be considering masalih in their ijtihad.

However, it became a fact that Shatibi is mentioned whenever maqasid is discussed; and the study of this subject linked to the repetition of Shatibi's discourse. Meanwhile, Shatibi's discourse is linked to the theory of al-Ghazali which received full reservation. The subject again remained the same until Ibn Ashur (1379H) who included it as a new knowledge and added a new dimension to previous categorizes of maqasid. Meanwhile, the development and evolution of maqasid al-shari'ah as a discipline requires study of all discussions contributed to this discourse by the pioneers, contemporaries as well as the later scholars in order to discover new information about the Islamic law and its dynamism to respond to the contemporary needs of the society. More importantly, the thoughts of pioneer scholars need to be examined, because the later additions are mostly benefitted from the earlier contributions. At this very point, the contribution of earlier fuqaha i.e. scholars before Shatibi (790H) comes to the focus.

The objective of this paper is to review the contemporary literature on the contributions of the earlier fuqaha along with the evolution of the maqasid theory. It will also find out the gaps in the literature to propose some directions for future research. In this review, the authors selected the fuqaha who contributed to maqasid al-Shari'ah whether by application or by theorization since its emergence until Shatibi (790H) during the period between 2nd and
8th centuries. The paper will exclude four scholars whose contributions have been studied enough to the extent that their names i.e. al-Juwayni, al-Ghazali, al-Shatibi and Ibn Ashur, are repeated whenever the theory of maqasid al-shari‘ah is discussed.

To collect data, the researchers used Google Scholar search engine using the keywords: maqasid, maqasid, maslahah, maslahah, maslah, Ta‘lil, Taqsid, ’I‘tidal al-Ma‘al, Daruriyyat. This is because these keywords are frequently mentioned by contemporary researchers and scholars after the discourse of maqasid al-Shari‘ah was theorized. This paper will use different dimensions of maqasid theory in order to highlight the maqasidic thinking of the selected fuqaha. The dimensions are such as three levels maqasid al-shari‘ah: Daruriyyat (necessities), Haijiyyat (needs) and Tahsiniyyat (luxuries); five necessities: protection of Deen, life, progeny, intellect and property; three types of maqasid: general, specific and partial; ’I‘tidal al-Ma‘al (consideration of consequences) etc.

This paper is divided into three parts. The first part will discuss the terminologies, theorization and evolution of maqasid al-shari‘ah. The following part will deal with the contemporary studies on the contributions of early classical fuqaha and indentify the gaps in the literature. The final part will put the limitations of the present research and will provide some directions for future research.

The Terminology of Maqasid al-Shari‘ah

The word maqasid al-shari‘ah is later used by the scholars whereas other different words were used by the earlier scholars to mean the same concept. It is to be noted that terminologies are the innovations of systematic study of later scholars. The same applies to the term of maqasid al-shari‘ah. Among the terms used by the early scholars are Hikam (wisdom), Asrar (secrets), Ma‘ani (underlying insights), Mabahith (aims), Ilm (reasons), Ma‘qaza (purport/gist), Murad al-Shar‘ (purport of law), Gharad al-Shar‘ (goal of law), Murad Allah (purport of Allah), Murad Rasulhi (purport of His Messenger), Maqasid (end), Maqasid (intent) etc.

As for the technical term maqasid was used by scholars like al-Hakim al-Tirmizi (320H) as a key word in the title of his book al-Salat wa