

Reconstructing Social Assistance Distribution: *Tafsir* on Quranic Verses of Distributive Justice

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Abstract: This article seeks to reevaluate the concept and distribution of social assistance as a means to achieve distributive justice. Utilising the *Tafsir Maqāṣidī* approach — an interpretation that reflects God's intentions—this study reconstructs the principles and methods of distributing social assistance to effectively realise distributive justice. The primary focus is on Qur'an *Surah Al-Hashr* [59]: 7, which delineates the guidelines for distributing wealth collected by the government, referred to as *al-Fai'*. The findings indicate that the distribution of *al-Fai'* in the form of social assistance is designed to prevent the concentration of wealth among affluent groups, ensuring that resources are shared with the poor and marginalised (*du'afā'*), thereby mitigating societal inequality. From the perspective of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, the provision of social assistance aims to safeguard religion (*Hifẓ al-Dīn*), life (*Hifẓ al-Nafs*), and the state (*Hifẓ al-Dawlah*). Furthermore, social assistance embodies principles of justice (*al-'Adālah*), humanity (*al-Insāniyyah*), equality (*al-Musāwāh*), freedom (*al-Hurriyah*), and responsibility (*al-Mas'ūliyyah*). Consequently, it is deemed unacceptable for the distribution of social assistance to be exploited for personal gain or to secure public office. Additionally, applying the *Tafsir Maqāṣidī* approach in this context demonstrates how the *maqāṣidī* - based normative framework can evaluate the ethical soundness of government-initiated programs like social assistance. This research contributes to developing public policy by using the tafsir approach, in this study using *Tafsir Maqāṣidī*.

Keyword: *Al-Fai'*, Distributive Justice, Social Assistance, *Tafsir Maqāṣidī*

Abstrak: Artikel ini bertujuan mengkaji ulang konsep dan pendistribusian bantuan sosial sebagai instrumen untuk mewujudkan keadilan distributif. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan Tafsir Maqāṣidī untuk merekonstruksi konsep dan metode pendistribusian bantuan sosial sebagai instrumen dalam mewujudkan keadilan distributif. Objek utama dari kajian ini adalah Surah *Al-Hashr* [59]: 7 mengenai aturan dalam mendistribusikan harta benda yang dikumpulkan oleh pemerintah yang dikenal dengan sebutan *al-Fai'*. Temuan dari kajian ini menunjukkan bahwa distribusi *al-Fai'* dalam bentuk bantuan sosial dimaksudkan agar tidak terjadi penumpukan harta benda pada kelompok kaya semata, tetapi terdistribusi ke dalam kelompok miskin dan kaum lemah (*du'afā'*) sehingga mengurangi ketimpangan dalam masyarakat. Dalam perspektif *Maqāṣid al-Syari'ah* pemberian bantuan sosial dimaksudkan untuk melindungi agama (*Hifẓ al-Dīn*), jiwa (*Hifẓ al-Nafs*), dan negara (*Hifẓ al-Dawlah*). Selain itu, bantuan sosial juga mengandung elemen keadilan (*al-'Adālah*), kemanusiaan (*al-Insāniyyah*), kesetaraan (*al-Musāwāh*), kebebasan (*al-Hurriyah*), dan tanggung jawab (*al-Mas'ūliyyah*). Oleh karena itu, tidak dibenarkan apabila penyaluran bantuan sosial ditujukan untuk kepentingan pribadi apalagi untuk memperoleh jabatan publik. Selain itu,

penerapan pendekatan *Tafsir Maqāṣidī* dalam konteks ini menggambarkan bagaimana kerangka normatif *maqāṣidī* dapat menilai secara kritis integritas etika program-program yang dipimpin negara, seperti bantuan sosial. Penelitian ini berkontribusi untuk mengembangkan kebijakan publik dengan menggunakan pendekatan tafsir, dalam penelitian ini menggunakan *Tafsir Maqāṣidī*.

Kata Kunci: Bantuan Sosial, *Al-Fai'*, Keadilan Distributif, *Tafsir Maqāṣidī*.

1. Introduction

In the Indonesia presidential and legislative elections in 2024, the distribution of social assistance has intensified, raising significant ethical and political questions (Natalia, 2024). Various stakeholders, from legislative candidates to high-ranking government officials—including the Minister of Trade, the coordinating minister for Economic Affairs, and President Jokowi—are actively involved in this distribution. Alarmingly, these efforts are often accompanied by messages encouraging recipients to support specific candidates, suggesting that the timing and targets of social assistance may align more closely with political agendas than with genuine community needs (Singgih, 2024).

This phenomenon is not unique to Indonesia; it reflects a broader global issue where political motives can overshadow the integrity of social welfare programs (Zucco Jr., 2015). Critics argue that the timing and targets of the assistance appear to align with the government's political agenda rather than being solely based on the recipients' needs. The government may prioritise political gain over the community's actual needs, potentially undermining the integrity of social welfare programs (Pink, 2024).

Evaluating the distribution of social assistance through the lens of Islamic values allows for a deeper understanding of the ethical and moral considerations involved. This approach can reveal whether current practices align with the principles of justice and compassion that are foundational to Islamic tradition (Diana, Thahir, Fitri, & Anggraeni, 2020). In this exploration, the concept of *'adl* (justice) becomes paramount, underscoring the obligation to ensure fairness and equity in resource distribution (Etzioni, 2013).

The Quran strongly emphasizes fulfilling the rights of the weak and ensuring that resources are allocated fairly (Euis Amalia, 2009). Many verses in the Qur'an serve as guidance for the distribution of social assistance and distributive justice, such as QS *al-Dzāriyāt* [51]: 19, QS *al-Nahl* [16]: 90, QS *al-Hashr* [59]: 7, and QS *al-Isrā'* [17]: 29-30 (Euis Amalia, 2009) (Suma, 2018). Furthermore, the Hadith provides practical examples of Prophet Muhammad's commitment to addressing the needs of marginalized and vulnerable members of society, along with guidelines for assisting (Rahman, 2022).

As discussions on the intersection of political interests and social assistance continue, it is essential to examine the ethical implications of utilizing aid for political gain (Omar et al., 2021). By employing the perspective of *Tafsir Maqāṣidī*, this paper seeks to determine whether the current approach to social assistance distribution aligns with the principles of justice and compassion as intended by Islamic teachings (Shaikh, 2022).

This study not only applies the *Tafsir Maqāṣidī* framework normatively but also contributes to its theoretical refinement by contextualizing it in contemporary political and economic structures. It demonstrates how *Maqāṣid*-oriented exegesis can evolve into a critical tool for policy evaluation, particularly in relation to distributive justice in modern states.

In Islam, providing aid and support to those in need is deeply rooted in justice, compassion, and egalitarianism (Khan, 2020). Islamic law (*Shari'ah*) emphasizes that aid should be given without hidden motives or expectations of political gain. The Quran encourages believers to help those in

need sincerely and humbly, regardless of their background or beliefs (Ayuniyyah, Pramanik, Md Saad, & Ariffin, 2022).

When evaluating the ethical implications of utilising aid for political gain within the context of Islamic values, it is crucial to consider whether such actions uphold the fundamental principles of justice and benevolence (Bassiouni, 2012). Furthermore, observing these practices through the lens of *Tafsir Maqāṣidī* provides insight into whether the allocation of social assistance serves the common good in the pursuit of justice or is used for partisan, group, or political interests (Etzioni, 2013).

While the empirical context of this study is Indonesia, the ethical issues it raises are relevant for many developing countries—particularly Muslim-majority nations—where electoral cycles are often accompanied by increased welfare spending. The analytical framework proposed here offers potential for broader application in global discourses on governance, equity, and religion-based public policy.

Therefore, the paper aims to address two primary questions: How does *Tafsir Maqāṣidī* view social assistance from the perspective of distributive justice? Moreover, how should social assistance be distributed to the community according to *Tafsir Maqāṣidī*? By adopting the *Tafsir Maqāṣidī* approach, we can foster constructive dialogue and a deeper understanding of the significance of social assistance in achieving distributive justice within society.

This study employs a descriptive-analytical research design with a qualitative approach. The qualitative approach is particularly suited for this analysis as it allows for an in-depth exploration of the content of Qur'anic verses related to social aid and distributive justice (Suprayogo & Tobroni, 2001). By utilising qualitative methods, the research aims to uncover the nuanced meanings and implications of these texts in the context of contemporary social issues.

The research is categorised as library research, where the data is sourced from existing documentation in literature and relevant references. The data consists of Qur'anic verses, Hadiths (records of the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him/pbuh), and written materials published in books, journals, magazines, and reputable online articles related to the research topic, either directly or indirectly. Specific criteria for selecting texts include their relevance to social assistance and distributive justice, as well as their representation of the *Tafsir Maqāṣidī* approach.

This paper argues that the *Tafsir Maqāṣidī* approach provides not only a normative foundation but also a functional interpretive framework for conceptualising and operationalising distributive justice in the context of social assistance. By interpreting Qur'anic verses through the lens of higher objectives (*Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*), this study contends that social assistance must be directed toward empowering human dignity, alleviating structural inequality, and ensuring the equitable fulfilment of basic needs. In doing so, it offers a novel synthesis between classical Islamic moral theory and contemporary policy critique, thereby enriching both Islamic studies and international ethical debates on aid, equity, and governance. Theoretically, this paper contributes to the discourse by bridging Islamic exegesis with contemporary social justice theories, offering an integrative framework that aligns divine intent with public policy design and implementation.

2. Distributive Justice in Secular Thought

The concept of distributive justice has been widely debated within secular political philosophy as scholars seek to define what it means for a society to allocate resources and opportunities fairly. Among the most influential voices in this discourse is John Rawls, whose theory of *justice as fairness* emphasises the importance of constructing just institutions. In his seminal work *A Theory of Justice* (Rawls, 1971), Rawls introduces the idea of the “original position” behind a “veil of ignorance,” a hypothetical scenario in which individuals, unaware of their social status, choose principles of justice that are fair to all. From this position, Rawls proposes two principles: equal basic liberties for all, and

the “difference principle,” which allows social and economic inequalities only if they benefit the least advantaged. For Rawls, justice is primarily about fairness embedded in the basic structure of institutions, not necessarily achieving equality of outcomes.

In contrast, Amartya Sen (Sen, 2009) critiques Rawls focus on ideal institutions and abstract principles, advocating instead for a more grounded and people-centred approach to justice. Through his capabilities approach, articulated in works like *Development as Freedom* (Sen, 1999) and *The Idea of Justice* (Sen, 2009), Sen shifts the focus from the distribution of resources to the actual freedoms individuals have to lead lives they value. Justice, in Sen’s view, should be evaluated by whether individuals have real opportunities — or “capabilities” — to function effectively in society. For example, equal access to education is not meaningful if a child is too malnourished to learn. Sen emphasises pluralism, comparative reasoning, and public debate, and argues that rather than seeking a perfectly just society, we should seek to remove clear injustices and expand people’s freedoms.

Ronald Dworkin, another major figure in liberal theory, introduces the idea of *equality of resources*. In *Sovereign Virtue* (Dworkin, 2000), Dworkin proposes that justice requires distributing resources in a way that respects both personal responsibility and the need to neutralise the effects of brute luck — such as disabilities or circumstances of birth. He envisions a hypothetical insurance market in which individuals insure themselves against disadvantages, producing a fair baseline for distribution. For Dworkin, people must be treated with equal respect and concern, but he insists that justice should reflect the choices people make, not merely their outcomes. Thus, individuals should bear the consequences of their ambitions, provided the starting conditions are fair.

In comparing these three thinkers, we see a spectrum of emphasis within secular theories of distributive justice. Rawls focuses on fairness in the design of institutions, Sen emphasises real-life capabilities and the practical elimination of injustice, while Dworkin seeks to balance equality with personal responsibility by correcting for unchosen disadvantages. While they differ in methodology and focus, all three reject simplistic notions of equality and seek a more nuanced understanding of what justice demands in a complex society. Together, they provide a rich foundation for contemporary debates on how to construct a just and equitable world.

3. The Concept and Application of *Tafsīr Maqāṣidī*

The *Tafsīr Maqāṣidī* approach is utilised as a method of interpretation that seeks to extract the true meanings and purposes of the Qur'anic texts (Abu Zayd, 2020). This approach emphasises that the meanings contained within the texts extend beyond general matters to include specific applications that promote human welfare. The following steps will be employed to elicit the *maqāṣid* (goals) of the Qur'an. The *first* step involves identifying several verses related to the topic of social aid and distributive justice. This inventory will help uncover the intended meanings (*maqāṣid*) of these verses.

The *second* step entails a detailed analysis of the identified Qur'anic verses to discern their general purposes (Abu Zayd, 2020). This analysis will focus on key themes and messages related to social assistance. The *third* step involves confirming the *maqāṣid* of the discussed verses by applying Quranic sciences such as syntax (*Naḥwu*), morphology (*Ṣarf*), meanings (*Ma'ānī*), rhetoric (*Balāghah*), and contextualisation (Hermeneutics). This will also consider *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* (circumstances of revelation) to provide context for the verses.

The *final* step is to summarise the *maqāṣid* derived from the verses, including general *maqāṣid*, specific *maqāṣid*, and *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*. At this stage, the principle of "realising benefits and rejecting harm" (*Jalb al-Maṣāliḥ wa Dar' al-Mafāṣid*) will be applied, which is central to the *Tafsīr Maqāṣidī* framework. This includes general *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* such as *Ḥifẓ al-Dīn* (preservation of religion), *Ḥifẓ al-Nafs* (preservation of life), *Ḥifẓ al-'Aql* (preservation of intellect), *Ḥifẓ al-Nasl* (preservation of

lineage), and *Hifz al-Māl* (preservation of property), as well as *Hifz al-Bī'ah* (protection of the environment) and *Hifz al-Dawlah* (protection of the state's sovereignty) (Mustakim, 2019).

Studies on interpreting Quranic verses using the *Tafsir Maqāshidī* approach have become increasingly prevalent in addressing societal issues in Indonesia. This literature review examines how this interpretative framework has been applied to various pressing topics, highlighting its relevance to the concept of distributive justice, particularly in the context of social assistance.

One notable issue is the emergence of child influencers, where public figures often involve their children in their work as a source of income. This practice raises concerns about the potential exploitation of children. Through a literature study using the *Tafsir Maqāshidī* approach, Hidayat, Munshihah, and Faizah (Hidayat et al., 2023) interpreted the Quranic verse from Surah Al-Furqan, verse 74, to dismantle its moral objectives and ideals. The study found that this verse underscores the moral imperative of desiring children who provide comfort to their parents, emphasising the importance of embodying this ideal in everyday life through appropriate roles shared between parents and children. This interpretation reflects key *maqāshid* elements, such as preserving life (*Hifz al-Nafs*) and lineage (*Hifz an-Nasl*), which are essential in evaluating the ethical implications of child involvement in public life.

Another relevant trend is the growing interest in hijab fashion among Muslim women. The availability of diverse styles and high-quality materials has encouraged women to embrace fashion trends while fulfilling the Islamic requirement to cover their *aurat* (the body parts that must be covered). Syahridawaty (Syahridawaty, 2020) examined this phenomenon through the *Tafsir Maqāshidī* lens, concluding that the act of wearing a hijab is integral to preserving dignity (*Hifz al-Karāmah*). The study highlights that clothing compliant with Islamic law serves not only to cover physical modesty but also to protect against environmental hazards and social harm while enhancing one's appearance.

The application of *Tafsir Maqāshidī* in the realm of health law has also garnered significant attention. With advancements in healthcare technology, new ethical dilemmas have arisen, such as organ transplantation. This practice, viewed as a vital solution to various health issues, remains contentious among scholars regarding its permissibility. Maula Sari (Sari, 2020) analysed this topic using the *Tafsir Maqāshidī* approach and concluded that organ donation is permissible only in emergencies, provided it does not harm the donor and that the organ is not vital to the donor's life. This perspective emphasises the *maqāshid* principle of preserving life (*Hifz al-Nafs*) as a fundamental objective of such ethical considerations.

The phenomenon of body shaming (the act of insulting someone's physical condition) has resurfaced with increasing intensity. Mocking comments about body size, shape, and skin colour have occurred in the past and are now becoming more prevalent with the rise of social media (Aulana, Arizki, & Mundzir, 2021) analysed the perspective of *Tafsir Maqāshidī* regarding body shaming and the value of the public interest in prohibiting body shaming when viewed through the lens of *Tafsir Maqāshidī*. The value of public interest behind the prohibition of body shaming is that individuals should always speak kindly to maintain their sense of humanity. Furthermore, individuals should act justly and respect others, as every behaviour has consequences. From the perspective of *maqāshid*, the prohibition of body shaming is intended as *Hifz al-Nafs* (valuing others to prevent conflict), *Hifz al-Aql* (thinking before acting to ensure measured actions), and *Hifz al-Dīn* (appreciating God's creations). These principles advocate for a society that values compassion and mutual respect.

Lastly, the prevalence of child marriage in Indonesia raises concerns and compassion. Marriages conducted without physical, mental, and economic readiness can lead to various issues, including the inability to educate and raise children, economic limitations due to partners not being ready to work, and psychological immaturity, often resulting in divorce (Ubaidillah & Widiastutik, 2024). Hani

Fazlin (Fazlin, 2023) conducted a study examining marriage verses through the *Tafsir Maqāshidī* approach. The study found that marriage should protect essential values: religion (*Hifz al-Dīn*), life (*Hifz al-Nafs*), intellect (*Hifz al-'Aql*), lineage (*Hifz al-Nasl*), property (*Hifz al-Māl*), and the state (*Hifz al-Dawlah*). Early marriages are believed to be unable to achieve these goals optimally. Therefore, the state has established regulations that marriage should occur when individuals reach the age of 19, ensuring they are physically and psychologically prepared.

Despite the growing body of literature applying the *Tafsir Maqāshidī* approach to these contemporary issues, there remains a notable gap in research specifically addressing the distribution of social assistance with political motives. This literature review underscores the need for further exploration of how social assistance can be understood within the framework of distributive justice as prescribed by the Quran. A comprehensive understanding of the implicit objectives of Quranic verses can be achieved through the *Tafsir Maqāshidī* approach. This study aims to address the recurring issue of politically motivated distribution of social assistance during political events in Indonesia.

Additionally, all three thinkers agree that equality alone is not sufficient—justice must involve ensuring fairness while recognising the diversity of human needs, values, and circumstances. Rawls emphasises the importance of fair institutional rules, Sen focuses on the realisation of substantive freedoms, and Dworkin highlights the need for fair compensation alongside individual responsibility. In light of these secular theories, it becomes pertinent to ask: how does the Qur'an, particularly when interpreted through the *Tafsir Maqāshidī* approach, conceptualise distributive justice? Furthermore, what guidance does it offer for achieving justice in a way that aligns with divine intent and the public good (*Maṣlaḥah*)?

4. Distributive Justice and Social Assistance: An Islamic Perspective

In Islamic thought, distributive justice is a multi-dimensional and intricate concept that integrates various teachings and principles of the faith (Iqbal, 2018). The Quran views justice as a pivotal principle that should permeate every aspect of human existence, including economic and social realms (Mashhour, 2005). Islam underscores the significance of a balanced and harmonious society, where all elements are positioned as intended by the Creator (Al-Hawary et al., 2022). This perspective addresses economic disparities and promotes empathy and solidarity among individuals, ultimately fostering a more just and equitable society.

The principle of justice is founded on the belief that all resources and wealth are, in essence, owned by God, with humans tasked with their fair and equitable stewardship (Iman, Santoso, & Kurniawan, 2021). The Quran persistently emphasises the necessity for just resource distribution and criticizes the accumulation of wealth by a select few at the expense of the majority. As a holistic guide to life, Islam places substantial emphasis on social welfare and encourages those with the means to support those in need (Hamzah, Saiti, & Saefurrohman, 2023).

A key mechanism for achieving distributive justice in Islam is the Institution of Zakāh, which mandates Muslims to allocate a specific portion of their wealth to aid the less fortunate (Syamsuri, Sa'adah, & Roslan, 2022). *Zakāh* transcends mere charity; it is an obligation that purifies the souls of both the giver and the recipient and fosters social solidarity and brotherhood (Powelt, 2009). Through *zakāh*, Muslims are called to actively contribute to societal betterment, assuring that the needs of the less fortunate are addressed, thereby advancing a more equitable and just world.

In addition to the formal *Zakāh* system, Islam encourages voluntary charitable acts, such as *ṣadaqah*, to assist those in need. Unlike *zakāh*, *ṣadaqah*, *infāq*, *waqf*, gifts, and donations are voluntary, offering additional opportunities for Muslims to promote social welfare (Johari, Muhammad, Ibrahim, & Mohd Ali, 2013). The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) once said, "*Charity does not decrease wealth*," highlighting the spiritual and material benefits of giving (Suseno, 2021). This perspective

emphasises that charity enriches both the giver and the recipient, fostering a spirit of community and compassion.

In Indonesia, the instruments of distributive justice in Islam are implemented by individuals, community organisations, and state-established institutions, such as the National Zakat Agency (BAZNAS) and the Indonesian Waqf Board (BWI). Social assistance, in particular, is managed by the Government of Indonesia (GOI) at both the central and regional levels and is delivered through various ministries and agencies. The GOI provides social assistance through programs such as the Family Hope Program (PKH) and other initiatives aimed at offering financial aid to low-income families, enabling them to access education, healthcare, and meet other basic needs (Iryani, Ali, & Rosyadi, 2021).

From 2014 to 2022, President Jokowi's administration launched various assistance forms to improve community welfare. At the beginning of his presidency in 2014, President Jokowi introduced the Family Prosperity Savings Program, the Healthy Indonesia Program, and the Smart Indonesia Program. Besides, President Jokowi provided various cards to Indonesian citizens, including the Family Welfare Card (KKS), the Healthy Indonesia Card (KIS), and the Smart Indonesia Card (KIP) (CNBC Indonesia, 2024). These initiatives aimed to enhance access to essential services and support for those in need, thereby enhancing the overall social welfare landscape in Indonesia.

In addition to the three cards, when COVID-19 emerged in 2020-2023, the GOI provided various forms of Cash Direct Assistance (BLT), such as the Wage Subsidy (BSU), BLT for Fuel, BLT for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, Village Fund BLT, BLT for Street Vendors and Small Shops, Cooking Oil BLT, and El Niño BLT (Nina Susilo, Cyprianus Anto Saptowalyono, 2024). As of 2024, the GOI distributes social assistance in the form of 10 kilograms of rice, a program that began in April 2023 and will continue until June 2024. This latest social assistance is perceived as an effort by the GOI to garner political support for the presidential and vice-presidential candidates in the upcoming elections (Antara, 2024).

Interpretation of the Verse on Distributive Justice

The verse in the Quran that explains distributive justice is Surah *Al-Hashr* [59] verse 7. Allah says:

مَا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ

"What Allah gave as booty (*al-Fai'*) to His Messenger (Muhammad pbuh) from the people of the townships—it is for Allah, His Messenger, the kindred (of Messenger Muhammad pbuh), the orphans, the poor, and travellers in need, so that it may not [merely] circulate among those who are rich among you..." (Quran 59:7) (Al-Hilali, n.d.).

The verse was revealed following the expulsion of the Jewish tribe Banu Nadir from Medina by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and his companions. The Banu Nadir had breached their agreement with the Muslims and conspired to harm the Prophet, leading to their expulsion and the confiscation of their assets. This tribe had previously exhibited hostility towards Muslims, culminating in their banishment after failing to honour their commitments and plotting against the Muslim community (Shihab, 1999).

The Banu Nadir's expulsion was not merely a military action but a response to their betrayal and alliances with enemies of Islam. They had engaged in conspiracies against the Prophet, including

attempts on his life, which justified their removal from Medina. This context clarifies why Allah decreed specific rules about spoils, emphasising justice for the oppressed Muslims and serving as a warning to those who defy divine commands (Al-Mawardi, 2014).

In this verse, three significant terms are highlighted: *al-Fai'* (the wealth acquired without battle), *al-Dûlah* (something that circulates and is obtained in turn), and *al-Aghniyā'* (the wealthy) (Suma, 2018). Islamic scholars differentiate *al-Fai'* (*Fai'*) from *Ghanîmah* based on how it is acquired and distinguish it from *Zakāh* in terms of distribution (Al-Mawardi, 2014). Both *Fai'* and *Ghanîmah* are obtained from non-Muslims but through different means. *Fai'* is acquired voluntarily or without conflict, while *Ghanîmah* is taken by force (Az-Zuhaili, 2013). Understanding this distinction is crucial in the context of distributive justice in Islam, where each type of wealth has specific rules and distribution methods aligned with *Sharia* principles. Thus, *Fai'* serves as a source of revenue for the Muslim community and reflects the values of justice and social responsibility that must be upheld.

Regarding its distribution, *Fai'* was designated for the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) during his lifetime to fulfil his personal needs, as well as those of his family and for his overall welfare. The second group consists of the Prophet's relatives. Scholars (*fuqahā'*) have differing opinions regarding the rights of the Prophet's relatives today; some assert these rights still exist, while others contend they have lapsed. The third group includes orphans from low-income families. The fourth group of recipients of *Fai'* is the poor. Finally, the recipients of *Fai'* also include *ibnu al-Sabil*, referring to travellers who have exhausted their provisions during their journey (Al-Mawardi, 2014). This structured distribution of *Fai'* reflects Islamic principles of social justice and responsibility, ensuring that assistance reaches those most in need within the community.

Since this property is acquired without physical conflict, it is classified as *Fai'*. According to Islamic law, *Fai'* does not need to be distributed like war booty (*Ghanîmah*), where soldiers receive a share. Instead, it is directly managed by the Prophet (pbuh) or the state and is intended for the community's welfare (Al-Mawardi, 2014). This distinction is significant because it reflects the different acquisition methods and the intended use of the resources. While *Ghanîmah* is obtained through conflict and requires specific distribution among combatants, *Fai'* is obtained through peaceful means and is intended to benefit the wider Muslim community, ensuring that its advantages are directed towards communal welfare instead of individual profit. This perspective highlights the Islamic values of justice and social responsibility, stressing the significance of using resources for the benefit of the community as a whole (Al-Mawardi, 2014).

Although some groups of *Fai'* recipients overlap with those who receive *Zakāh*, a clear distinction exists between the two, meaning *Fai'* should not be given to *Zakāh* recipients and vice versa. The acquisition and distribution of *Zakāh* are explicitly defined in the Quran, leaving no room for *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) by the Caliph (Al-Mawardi, 2014). In contrast, the distribution of *Fai'* and *Ghanîmah* can be entirely based on the *ijtihad* of the Caliph. This flexibility allows the Caliph to make decisions regarding the equitable distribution of these resources in a manner that best serves the community's needs. This differentiation highlights the structured nature of Islamic law regarding *Zakāh* and the more discretionary approach applied to *Fai'* and *Ghanîmah*, emphasising the importance of context and communal welfare in resource allocation (Al-Mawardi, 2014).

This verse emphasises that wealth obtained in such a manner should not simply enrich the affluent but should also support the vulnerable members of society, including orphans, the poor, and travellers. This guidance establishes a model for equitable resource distribution, aiming to prevent wealth concentration among the rich and to provide communal support to those in need (Shihab, 1999). The principle of equitable distribution is crucial for fostering a just society, as it ensures that all individuals have access to essential resources necessary for a dignified life.

Thus, the verse directs the fair distribution of wealth and highlights the values of social justice, communal responsibility, and compassion within Islam. Additionally, it serves as a critical reminder of divine justice, social equity, and ethical governance within the community, especially following a significant conflict with a hostile tribe. This emphasis on equitable wealth distribution is fundamental to Islamic teachings, which advocate for the protection and support of the vulnerable members of society. By ensuring that resources are shared fairly, the verse reinforces the idea that wealth should benefit the affluent while uplifting those in need, such as orphans, the poor, and travellers.

Given that the distribution of *Fai'* is entirely under the state's control, the role of the government is crucial in ensuring the smooth allocation of these resources. The state has various options in the form of policy instruments (legislation) and other tools to facilitate this process. Its role is to ensure that citizens' behaviour aligns with the realisation and fulfilment of these values (Euis Amalia, 2009). The government also formulates and implements regulations and policies that promote equitable distribution and support the welfare of vulnerable groups within society. By actively engaging in this process, the government can help foster a sense of communal responsibility and ensure that resources are allocated effectively to individuals who require assistance, thereby reinforcing the values of social justice and compassion central to the teachings of Islam.

The verses of the Quran related to the distribution of wealth among the community, such as Surah *Al-Anfāl* [8]: 1, Surah *Al-Hashr* [59]: 7, Surah *Al-Ḥadīd* [57]: 7, and Surah *Al-Taubah* [9]: 60 (Euis Amalia, 2009), strongly prohibit the concentration of wealth or essential goods in the hands of a few individuals. An unfair and unequal allocation of resources can lead to the rich becoming wealthier while the poor become increasingly impoverished. Moreover, the financial power held by the wealthy can be exploited for political gain, such as purchasing votes from the less fortunate to secure electoral advantages in presidential, regional, and legislative elections. This scenario not only intensifies social inequality but also undermines the democratic process, allowing wealth to sway political outcomes and threatening the values of justice and equity that are central to the teachings of Islam. The emphasis on fair distribution serves as a reminder of the ethical responsibilities associated with wealth, urging both individuals and the state to prioritise the welfare of the community and ensure that resources are shared equitably among all members of society.

In addition, in Surah *Muḥammad* [47]: 36-37, Allah warns those who withhold their wealth from the poor and needy, suggesting that such actions can breed resentment among the less fortunate towards the wealthy (Shihab, 1996: 457). This situation can lead to what social sciences refer to as social jealousy, which arises from a lack of attention, compassion, and solidarity among different social groups and classes (Afifi, 2019: 16). This warning serves as a reminder of the ethical obligation to support those in need and highlights the potential social consequences of neglecting this responsibility. When wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few, it can create divisions and breed animosity, undermining social cohesion. Therefore, promoting an equitable distribution of resources is essential for fulfilling religious obligations and maintaining harmony and solidarity within the community. This approach encourages a culture of empathy and mutual support, which is vital for establishing a just and balanced society.

Tafsīr Maqāṣidī on Social Assistance Distribution: Promoting Ethical Governance, Social Equity, and Justice

Tafsīr Maqāṣidī encompasses two primary aspects: *Maqāṣid Al-Qur'an* and *Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah*. The purpose of *Tafsīr Maqāṣidī* is to reveal specific meanings that reflect the goals or intentions of God in the Quran, based on the interpretation derived from its text. To uncover the Quran's intentions, human reasoning must be applied to extract rational meanings that ultimately benefit humanity (Wijaya & Muzammil, 2021).

Meanwhile, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* serves as a fundamental component of *Tafsīr Maqāṣidī*, referring to the goals and meanings sought by *syara'* as a framework for promoting human welfare (Rusydiana, Sukmana, Laila, & Avedta, 2022: 340). These objectives include the *al-Uṣūl al-Khamsah* (the five essentials): the preservation of religion (*Hifẓ al-Dīn*), life (*Hifẓ al-Nafs*), intellect (*Hifẓ al-Aql*), offspring (*Hifẓ al-Nasl*), and property (*Hifẓ al-Māl*). Additionally, two further objectives include the preservation of the state (*Hifẓ al-Dawlah*) and the protection of the human environment (*Hifẓ al-Bī'ah*). According to Imam Al-Ghazali, actions aimed at maintaining these objectives (the five essentials and the two additional objectives) are deemed beneficial (*al-Maṣlaḥah*), while anything that contradicts them is considered harmful (*al-Maṣṣadah*) (Nur & Puspitasari, 2023: 167).

The distribution of social assistance aims to address the needs and interests of the poor, enabling them to live with dignity and respect. Therefore, social assistance is essential for ensuring that basic needs (*al-Ḍarūriyyah*) are met, thereby preserving the five aspects of *Uṣul Fiqh*: religion, life, intellect, honour, property, and the state and environment. Individuals cannot lead dignified lives if their basic needs are unmet. Thus, it is the responsibility of individuals, society, and government to ensure that the basic needs of less fortunate citizens are fulfilled. Social welfare policies are essential for assisting individuals in society to fulfil their basic needs, including food and housing. These programs are designed to assist individuals and families in need, mitigating the adverse effects of socioeconomic disadvantage. By fulfilling these basic needs, social assistance enhances individual dignity and contributes to the overall stability and health of the community.

The elementary objective of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* is to safeguard religion (*Hifẓ al-Dīn*). This principle emphasises the importance of protecting faith as a fundamental aspect of human welfare and societal stability. A person living in poverty may struggle to fulfil religious obligations such as prayer, almsgiving, fasting, and pilgrimage if they lack the essential means of living. Poverty can hinder their ability to perform these religious duties. Therefore, aiding those experiencing poverty is a religious command that applies to both individuals and the state. Fulfilling this command helps maintain the sanctity of faith. By guaranteeing that the primary needs of the underprivileged are fulfilled, society upholds the values of compassion and solidarity, which are vital for a harmonious community. This approach aligns with the broader objectives of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, which aim to promote the welfare and prevent harm, thereby enhancing the overall well-being of society.

The second goal of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* is to guarantee the protection of life (*Hifẓ al-Nafs*). Wealth is crucial for individuals to lead decent lives and meet their primary needs (*al-Ḍarūriyyah*). If these needs are unmet, a person's life may be at risk, leading to weakness or even death. Necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter are essential for survival. By fulfilling these needs, individuals can live with greater dignity. This aspect underscores the importance of economic stability and access to resources, which are essential for maintaining physical well-being and overall quality of life. Ensuring that everyone has access to these necessities is a fundamental responsibility of society and government, reflecting ethical principles of compassion and mutual support.

Thus, the government's efforts to distribute *Fai'* to the poor and those entitled to receive it are part of its initiative to sustain citizens' lives, as mandated by the constitution. The goal is to ensure that impoverished individuals can satisfy their primary needs, including food, garments, and housing. This approach demonstrates a commitment to social welfare and the state's responsibility to protect the rights and dignity of its citizens. By assisting, the government addresses immediate needs and contributes to the overall stability and well-being of society. Ensuring that everyone has access to essential resources is crucial for fostering a just and equitable community where all individuals can live with dignity and security.

According to *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, the third objective is to protect the state (*Hifẓ al-Dawlah*). The government must manage its resources and distribute them fairly among all citizens and regions. Just

treatment by the government fosters a sense of value and recognition among citizens. Moreover, the government's significant attention to society encourages public participation in governance and development activities. Ultimately, this strengthens national unity and cohesion, resulting in a strong, prosperous, and thriving nation. By ensuring equitable resource distribution and encouraging citizen engagement, the government plays an essential role in fostering social stability and improving the general well-being of its citizens.

From the perspective of *Maqāṣid* Values, the verses regarding distributive justice embody principles such as justice (*al-'Adālah*), humanity (*al-Insāniyyah*), equality (*al-Musāwāh*), freedom (*al-Hurriyah*), and responsibility (*al-Mas'ūliyyah*). The government's realisation of distributive justice through social assistance not only reflects the recommendation for leaders to act justly towards their followers but also honours humanity, particularly the less fortunate. By receiving social assistance, a poor person can lead a more dignified life by meeting their basic needs, thus avoiding reliance on others. Furthermore, by providing social assistance, the government demonstrates its responsibility to care for, protect, and support its citizens. This means that the government's distribution of social assistance embodies the values inherent in *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*. This approach emphasises the importance of social justice as a fundamental principle in governance, ensuring that all members of society can thrive and live with dignity.

The provision of social assistance or charity to the poor and marginalised groups (*Du'afā'*) is outlined in several verses of the Quran, such as in Surah *Al-Baqarah* [2] verses 262, 263, 264, 267, and Surah *Al-Nisā'* [4] verse 8. Those who give social assistance (charity) are instructed not to mention their donations or hurt the feelings of the recipients. In other words, material support should be accompanied by kind words. Additionally, the charity given should come from lawful earnings and should not be intended for show or personal gain, especially not for public positions such as head of state, regional leaders, or legislative members. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) emphasised in an authentic hadith the importance of not seeking leadership positions through ambition. "*Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari reported that he, along with two cousins, went to the Prophet (pbuh). One of them said, 'O Messenger of Allah, grant us a position from what Allah has entrusted to you.'* The other said the same. The Prophet replied, '*By Allah, I will not appoint anyone to a position who asks for it or shows ambition for it*'" (Nawawi, 2013). This guidance underscores the importance of sincerity and humility in charitable acts and public service, ensuring that such actions are motivated by genuine concern for others rather than personal gain.

In the Indonesian context, several structural and cultural factors exacerbate the politicization of social assistance. These include a patron-client political culture, limited public access to welfare transparency, and the use of social aid as an electoral strategy by incumbents. Moreover, the centralization of aid distribution in executive hands often blurs the boundary between public service and political campaign. From the perspective of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, such practices contradict the principles of justice (*'Adl*), trust (*Amanah*), and sincerity (*Ikhlas*). To address these issues, a *maqāṣid*-based framework can be operationalized by enforcing transparent targeting mechanisms, ensuring equal access across political affiliations, and establishing independent monitoring bodies grounded in ethical values. Embedding *Maqāṣid* Principles into regulatory and bureaucratic structures—such as mandating fair eligibility assessments and preventing political branding of aid—can serve as practical steps to uphold distributive justice in both policy and implementation. This contextual application shows how Islamic ethical philosophy can guide not only individual morality but also institutional reform in developing democracies like Indonesia.

5. Conclusion

The social assistance provided by the government to the community serves as a key instrument for realising distributive justice. However, in practice, this assistance is often misused for purposes that deviate from its intended goal of equitable welfare distribution. Such misuse is especially evident during political events such as presidential and regional elections, as well as legislative contests for the House of Representatives (DPR) and the Regional Representative Council DPD. These political motivations compromise the ethical foundations of social assistance.

An analysis of Qur'anic verses related to distributive justice reveals that the provision of social assistance is intended to promote fairness and reduce inequality. The Qur'an emphasises the importance of supporting the poor, orphans, and travellers as a means of ensuring that all individuals have their basic needs fulfilled, enabling them to live with dignity. From the standpoint of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, social assistance serves to protect religion (*Hifẓ al-Dīn*), preserve life (*Hifẓ al-Nafs*), and maintain the stability of the state (*Hifẓ al-Dawlah*). When basic needs are met, individuals are safeguarded from hunger, allowing for the preservation of both physical and spiritual well-being, and thereby enabling them to fulfil their religious obligations. Moreover, the achievement of justice fosters social harmony and helps prevent discontent or rebellion.

The government's realisation of distributive justice through social assistance this aligns with key *maqāṣid*-based values such as justice, humanity, freedom, equality, and responsibility. Proper implementation reflects the ethical duty of leadership to govern with fairness and compassion, especially toward vulnerable members of society. However, if the distribution of social assistance is carried out in a way that humiliates recipients or is exploited for political gain, it contradicts the will of Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) and fails to fulfil the essential objectives of Islamic legal governance.

These findings also offer a meaningful contribution to the development of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* theory. They demonstrate that the objectives of Islamic law should not be confined to abstract legal or theological discussions but must also be applied in evaluating public policies within modern governance structures. The use of the *Tafsīr Maqāṣidī* approach in this context illustrates how the normative framework of *maqāṣid* can critically assess the ethical integrity of state-led programs such as social assistance. In doing so, it expands the relevance of *maqāṣid* theory as a tool for promoting ethical governance, social equity, and justice in the contemporary world.

By connecting traditional Islamic legal objectives with contemporary policy analysis, this study offers valuable insights that contribute significantly to the advancement of *Maqashid al-Sharia* theory. This study moves beyond normative assertions to propose a functional framework through which *Tafsīr Maqāṣidī* can be operationalized in modern governance—particularly in evaluating the distributive ethics of public welfare programs. By applying *maqāṣid* to the empirical case of social assistance in Indonesia, this paper expands its theoretical horizon and introduces a contextualised methodology that may serve as a model for similar inquiries in other Muslim-majority and developing countries. Academically, this study not only reinforces *maqāṣid* as a dynamic interpretive paradigm within Qur'anic exegesis but also positions it as a viable critical lens in interdisciplinary discourses on social justice, policy ethics, and public administration. In doing so, it opens new avenues for Islamic intellectual contributions to global conversations on equitable governance and ethical policymaking.

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