

Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah Review of Government Policy on the Free Nutritional Meal Program (MBG): A Comparative Study in Uṣūl al-Fiqh

Neng Yani Nurhayani

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia
nengyaninurhayani@uinsgd.ac.id

RR. Rita Erawati

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia
ritaerawati7@gmail.com

Erika Rishan Adillah

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia
rishanerika@gmail.com

Ending Solehudin

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia
endingsolehudin@uinsgd.ac.id

Syahrul Anwar

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia
syahrulanwar@uinsgd.ac.id

Suggested Citation:

Nurhayan, Neng Yani; Erawati; RR. Rita; Adillah, Erika Rishan; Solehudin, Ending; Anwar, Syahrul. (2026). Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah Review of Government Policy on the Free Nutritional Meal Program (MBG): A Comparative Study in Uṣūl al-Fiqh. *Jurnal Iman dan Spiritualitas*, Volume 6, Number 3: 883–896. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jis.v6i3.55940>

Article's History:

Received May 2026; *Revised* May 2026; *Accepted* July 2026.
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Abstract:

This study examines the alignment of Indonesia's Free Nutritious Meals (MBG) policy with the principles of Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah through a normative juridical and comparative uṣūl al-fiqh approach. Focusing on *hiḏ al-naḑs* and *hiḏ al-māl*, it finds that although MBG supports the preservation of life, its technocratic implementation has yet to embody maqāṣid values comprehensively, particularly regarding distributive justice, prioritization of benefits across *ḑarūriyyāt*, *ḥājiyyāt*, and *taḥsīniyyāt*, and long-term social welfare. The study highlights gaps such as unequal distribution, budget constraints, and weak monitoring, and argues for more adaptive, welfare-oriented policy formulation that integrates both classical emphases on basic needs and contemporary concerns for structural justice and sustainable welfare.

Keywords: comparative Usul Fiqh; Free Nutritious Meals; Government Policy; Maqasid Shari'ah.

INTRODUCTION

Maqasid Shari'ah is understood as the core purpose of establishing Islamic law, which is oriented towards the overall welfare of humanity. This concept not only addresses normative rules but also contains a philosophical dimension that explains why a law was established and how it provides tangible benefits to life (Intan et al., 2024). In the development of Islamic thought, maqasid has become an important foundation for bridging religious texts with ever-changing social realities (Priyatno et al., 2026). The relevance of this concept is even stronger when faced with the complex dynamics of modern life, necessitating an approach that is not merely textual, but also contextual and adaptive to societal needs.

Public policy within the modern state plays a strategic role in regulating and ensuring the welfare of society at large. The free nutritious meal program is one form of state intervention in addressing fundamental issues such as malnutrition, poverty, and social inequality. This program is not merely seen as an administrative policy, but as part of a systematic effort to improve the quality of human resources (Silaban et al., 2026). The focus on nutritional fulfillment demonstrates attention to individual health and development, which in the long term impacts a nation's productivity and progress.

Islamic values place great emphasis on the continuation of a decent and dignified human life. This principle is reflected in the words of Allah SWT in the Quran, Surah An-Nisa', verse 29:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا.

“O you who believe, do not consume your neighbor's property unjustly, except in the form of trade by mutual consent between you. Do not kill yourselves. Indeed, Allah is Most Merciful to you.” (Soenarjo, 2019)”

This verse prohibits harming or endangering oneself. This message demonstrates that preserving life is not only an individual obligation, but also a collective one. This understanding opens up the possibility that efforts to maintain health and survival through public policy are part of the implementation of Islamic values, which are universal and relevant throughout time.

The meaning of preserving the soul or *hifz al-nafs* is one of the pillars of Maqasid Shari'ah, which has broad implications for social life. Fulfilling basic needs such as food and nutrition is an integral part of efforts to maintain human survival (Muhyidin & Syarofi, 2026). Reality shows that nutritional problems not only impact physical health but also affect the overall quality of life. Understanding this concept encourages the need for an approach that focuses not only on meeting needs but also on the quality, distribution, and sustainability of policies implemented by the government. The hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasizes the responsibility of leadership in managing community affairs fairly and wisely. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، فَالْإِمَامُ رَاعٍ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ فِي أَهْلِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَالْمَرْأَةُ رَاعِيَّةٌ فِي بَيْتِ زَوْجِهَا وَمَسْئُولَةٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهَا، وَالْخَادِمُ رَاعٍ فِي مَالِ سَيِّدِهِ وَمَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، فَكُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ.

“Each of you is a leader and will be held accountable for those he leads. An imam is a leader and will be held accountable for his people. A man is a leader in his family and will be held accountable for them. A woman is a leader in her husband's house and will be held accountable for it. A servant is a guardian over his master's property and will be held accountable for it. So each of you is a leader and will be held accountable for those he leads.” (H.R. Bukhari dan Muslim).

This hadith illustrates that every leader has an obligation to ensure the welfare of those they lead. This hadith demonstrates that government policy cannot be separated from the moral and ethical responsibility of

ensuring the basic needs of the people. Providing nutritional support through the free nutritious meal program can be understood as part of this mandate, which must be carried out responsibly.

The thinking of classical scholars such as Al-Shatibi places Maqasid Shari'ah as a systematic structure with five main objectives widely recognized in the study of *usul fiqh*. This approach provides a strong foundation for understanding the objectives of Islamic law comprehensively (Hakim, 2017). The emphasis on protecting religion, life, reason, descendants, and property demonstrates a focus on the primary aspects of human life. Classical thought tends to be normative and rooted in texts, thus providing clear legal certainty, although sometimes lacking flexibility in responding to rapid social change. Meanwhile, contemporary thought developed by Jasser Auda presents a new perspective in understanding Maqasid Shari'ah through a systems approach (Rofi'i & Fata, 2025). This approach emphasizes the importance of the interconnectedness of various aspects of life and the need to consider the social context in establishing laws. The concept of maqasid is no longer understood statically, but as a dynamic framework capable of adapting to the needs of the times. This view opens up opportunities to integrate maqasid values into public policy in a broader and more applicable manner.

The differences between the classical and contemporary approaches reflect significant developments in the study of *usul fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). The classical approach provides a strong normative foundation, while the contemporary approach offers flexibility in application. Comparing the two is crucial for a more comprehensive and balanced understanding. Integrating the two approaches can result in policy formulations that are not only compliant with sharia principles but also relevant to evolving social conditions.

The free nutritious meal program is directly linked to the principles of Maqasid Shari'ah, particularly in maintaining the soul and mind. Good nutrition plays a crucial role in improving an individual's physical health and cognitive abilities. The positive impact of this program is not only felt in the short term but also influences the quality of future generations (Zaimsyah, 2026). This perspective demonstrates that food policy cannot be separated from comprehensive human development efforts. The reality on the ground shows that the implementation of food policies often faces various complex challenges. Inequality in distribution, limited resources, and differences in community economic conditions are factors that influence program effectiveness. These conditions indicate that policy success is determined not only by planning but also by the ability to integrate various interrelated aspects. An overly technical approach has the potential to ignore the dimension of welfare (*Maslahah Mursalah*), which is the primary objective of Maqasid Shari'ah.

Conceptually, Maqasid Shari'ah and *Maslahah Mursalah* do have a close overlap, because both are oriented towards achieving the welfare of the people. However, their epistemological positions are fundamentally different. Maqasid Shari'ah occupies a position as a "legal philosophy" or the why of law—it is the noble goals that the sharia wants to achieve universally, which are formulated in five basic principles (*al-kulliyat al-khams*): protecting religion, life, intellect, descendants, and property. Meanwhile, *Maslahah Mursalah* functions as a "method of *istinbath*" or the how of law—a technical instrument used by *mujtahids* to determine the law on issues not explicitly regulated by the texts, as long as it brings benefits and prevents harm. Thus, Maqasid is more macro, objective, and structured, while *Maslahah Mursalah* tends to be micro, contextual, and dependent on the *mujtahid's* subjective assessment of a particular situation.

Previous research shows that studies on Maqasid Shari'ah are still dominated by conceptual and methodological approaches. Hasan (2020) emphasized that maqasid is closely related to *usul fiqh* as the basis for establishing law, but its application is still limited to the theoretical realm (Hasan, 2020). Azizatur Rahmah (2025) found that the differences in the thinking of classical scholars such as Al-Shatibi and Ibn 'Abd al-Salam lie in the emphasis on the benefit aspect, but have not been linked to the context of modern public policy (Rahmah & Said, 2026). Alias et al. (2024) showed that maqasid can be formulated through a scientific approach based on inductive analysis that aligns with modern research methods, but the focus is still on strengthening the methodology, not policy implementation (Alias et al., 2024). Agnes (2025) revealed that maqasid is relevant in facing the challenges of the modern era, although her study focuses more on digital transformation (Manalu et al., 2025). Indah Nuraini (2025) emphasized the shift from a textual to a contextual approach in maqasid thinking, particularly through a comparison between classical and contemporary scholars, but has not yet been directed at concrete welfare issues such as food policy (Nuraini et al., 2025).

The connection between the aforementioned studies and this research lies in the similarity in the use of the Maqasid Shari'ah concept and the *usul fiqh* approach as an analytical framework. However, this study has significant differences because it does not only stop at the conceptual level or compare the thoughts of scholars, but also directly examines concrete government policies, namely the free nutritious meal program. This study seeks to integrate the normative maqasid approach with actual public policy analysis, while simultaneously combining the perspectives of classical and contemporary scholars within a single comparative *usul fiqh* framework. The focus on food policy makes this study more applicable and contextual compared to previous studies that tend to be abstract. This study offers novelty in the form of an integrative analysis of maqasid theory, *usul fiqh* methodology, and public policy practice, thus providing a more comprehensive contribution to the development of public policy studies based on the benefit of the community. The expected results can contribute to the development of public policies that are more oriented towards the benefit of the community and enrich academic studies in the fields of *usul fiqh* and Maqasid Shari'ah.

A study of government policy in the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) from the perspective of Maqasid Shari'ah shows that public policy cannot be separated from the goal of public welfare which is the core of Islamic law. Maqasid Shari'ah itself in the classical *usul fiqh* tradition, as formulated by Al-Shatibi, emphasizes five main goals: protection of religion (*hifz al-din*), life (*hifz al-nafs*), reason (*hifz al-'aql*), descendants (*hifz al-nasl*), and property (*hifz al-mal*). In the modern context, these five principles serve as analytical instruments in assessing whether a public policy truly brings benefits or instead creates *mafsadah*. Therefore, the MBG Program can be positioned as a policy that is not only administrative, but also has strong moral and religious dimensions. From the perspective of comparative *usul fiqh*, there are differences in the approaches of classical and contemporary scholars in understanding maqasid. Classical scholars such as Al-Shatibi emphasized a text-based inductive approach and maintained legal stability through strict universal principles. Meanwhile, contemporary scholars such as Jasser Auda developed maqasid as a more dynamic, open, and contextual system, thus able to respond to modern social developments such as public policy, economics, and social welfare. This difference is important in analyzing MBG, because this policy represents a form of state intervention in the complex field of food and nutrition and involves many social, economic, and political aspects.

In its implementation, the MBG Program aims to improve the quality of human resources by fulfilling nutritional needs, especially for school children and vulnerable groups. In terms of maqasid (objectives of the law), this program is directly related to *hifz al-nafs* (the basic needs of the self) because it aims to maintain human survival by fulfilling basic needs in the form of nutritious food. Furthermore, this program is also related to *hifz al-'aql* (the basic needs of the self) because good nutrition influences children's cognitive development, learning ability, and educational quality. Several studies have shown that nutritional status is closely related to cognitive development in early childhood, so this policy has a strong theoretical basis in maqasid. MBG is also related to *hifz al-nasl* (good deeds) because fulfilling children's nutritional needs will determine the quality of future generations. A physically and mentally healthy generation will be better able to continue the sustainability of society. Furthermore, the *hifz al-mal* aspect can also be seen from an economic perspective, as this program helps ease the burden of expenses for poor households. In this context, state policy functions as a form of welfare redistribution (redistribution of wealth) in line with the principle of justice in Islam. Furthermore, from a *hifz al-din* perspective, fulfilling basic human needs such as food also supports an individual's ability to properly perform religious duties, as health is a crucial prerequisite for religious activities.

Literature reviews also show that the implementation of the MBG is not entirely ideal when viewed from a comprehensive perspective of the maqasid (objectives of the law). Several policy studies highlight challenges in distribution and food quality monitoring, as well as potential implementation disparities across regions. In some cases, issues such as inconsistent food quality, limited oversight, and the risk of budget inefficiency were identified. This suggests that while the program's objectives align with the maqasid (objectives of the law), implementation on the ground still faces various structural and technical obstacles. From a comparative Islamic jurisprudence (*usul fiqh*) perspective, a classical approach might evaluate this policy based on its fulfillment of basic objectives such as preserving life and mind. As long as food is provided and basic needs are met, the policy can be considered in accordance with the maqasid (principles of welfare). However, a more critical contemporary approach examines systemic aspects such as distributive justice, budget transparency, program sustainability, and long-term social impact. Thus,

evaluation focuses not only on the final outcome but also on the process and its impact on the social system as a whole.

Jasser Auda's systems-based approach also makes a significant contribution by viewing the MBG as part of a complex policy network. From this perspective, policies cannot be viewed in isolation but must be viewed in conjunction with education, economic, health, and social systems. Thus, the success of the MBG is measured not only by the quantity of food distributed, but also by its impact on reducing stunting, improving education quality, and alleviating poverty. The integration of classical and contemporary maqasid provides a more comprehensive analytical framework for assessing MBG policies. The classical approach provides a strong normative foundation, while the contemporary approach offers flexibility in interpreting social realities. By combining the two, public policies can be evaluated not only from a formal legal perspective but also from a substantive perspective. This demonstrates the strong relevance of Maqasid Sharia in developing modern public policy, particularly in ensuring that state policies are truly oriented toward the welfare of society in a just, equitable, and sustainable manner.

METHOD

This research employs a normative juridical approach that focuses on examining Islamic legal norms, principles, and rules derived from the literature of *usul fiqh* and Maqasid Shari'ah, with the aim of understanding how these values can serve as a basis for assessing public policy. This approach goes beyond textual analysis but is also combined with comparative methods to compare the thoughts of classical and contemporary scholars in formulating legal objectives and their relevance to current conditions. Through this analysis, this research seeks to deeply examine the suitability of government policies in the free nutritious meal program with the principles of Maqasid Shari'ah, particularly in safeguarding the lives and well-being of the community. Therefore, the comparative normative juridical approach used is able to bridge the theoretical framework of Islamic law and the practice of public policy, ultimately producing an analysis that is not only normative, but also contextual and applicable in responding to evolving social needs (Sugiyono, 2020).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Maqasid Shari'ah from the Perspective of Classical and Contemporary Usul Fiqh

Maqasid Shari'ah can be understood as the spirit of Islamic law, which not only addresses rules but also the greater goals to be achieved behind each provision (Nasrudin & Solehudin, 2022). This concept helps us view Islamic law more broadly, not merely as a rigid text, but as a living system relevant to human needs. In the study of *usul fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), maqasid serves as a bridge between normative evidence and the ever-evolving social reality. By understanding maqasid, Islamic law can remain contextual without losing its fundamental values.

According to classical Islamic scholars, the Maqasid Shari'ah is systematically structured as the primary objective of sharia, encompassing the protection of five fundamental aspects of human life. Al-Shatibi was a key figure in formulating this concept thoroughly, emphasizing that all Islamic law is fundamentally aimed at safeguarding religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property (Abdurrahman, 2020). This framework provides a strong foundation for understanding Islamic law as a whole. This approach is highly structured, although in practice it relies more on textual content than on evolving social realities. Classical scholars generally employed an inductive method known as *istiqrā'* (Saende et al., 2023). Through this method, various propositions from the Qur'an and hadith are studied in depth to discover their underlying patterns and general objectives. This approach demonstrates thoroughness and carefulness in exploring the meaning of the law. The result is universal principles that serve as the basis for establishing Islamic law. However, this approach sometimes faces limitations when confronted with new issues not directly identified in the text.

Modern developments have given rise to contemporary thought that attempts to reread the maqasid with a more flexible approach. Figures like Jasser Auda offer a new perspective by viewing the maqasid as an interconnected system. This approach extends beyond the five basic objectives to modern issues such as social justice, human rights, and sustainable development (Dahri et al., 2026). In this way, the maqasid is no longer understood statically, but rather as a concept that continues to evolve to meet the needs of the times. The differences between classical and contemporary thought actually demonstrate the richness of the Islamic intellectual tradition. Classical scholars provide a strong and systematic foundation, while contemporary scholars offer flexibility in application. These two approaches need not be in conflict but can be combined to

produce a more comprehensive understanding. A solely textual approach risks rigidity, while an overly liberal approach can potentially lose its direction. Striking a balance between the two is key to a proper understanding of the maqasid.

Comparative *usul fiqh* studies are crucial for understanding how the two approaches complement each other. By comparing the thoughts of classical and contemporary scholars, relevant common ground can be found to address current issues. This approach also helps understand how Islamic law has evolved over time without losing its fundamental principles. Comparative analysis allows for the strengths of each approach while simultaneously addressing its weaknesses. Understanding Maqasid Shari'ah from these two perspectives forms a crucial foundation for this research, particularly in assessing public policies such as the free nutritious meal program. The approach employed focuses not only on textual conformity but also considers their impact on society. By combining classical and contemporary thought, this research seeks to provide a more comprehensive analysis. The results are expected to demonstrate that Maqasid Shari'ah can serve as a strong foundation for formulating policies that truly promote the public interest.

Analysis of Government Policy on the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG)

The government's free nutritious meal program policy is part of the country's strategic efforts to improve the quality of life of the community, particularly vulnerable groups such as children and low-income communities (Lendra et al., 2025). This program is not only oriented towards meeting food needs but also aims to address issues of malnutrition, stunting, and unequal access to healthy food. The presence of this policy reflects the government's role in ensuring the well-being of its citizens through planned and systematic interventions (Ayuni, 2025).

The legal basis for this policy can be seen in the constitution, which affirms the state's obligation to ensure public welfare. Article 28H paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution states that everyone has the right to live in physical and spiritual prosperity and has the right to receive health services. This provision legitimizes that fulfilling nutritional needs is part of the basic rights of citizens that must be fulfilled by the government through concrete and sustainable policies. Another relevant legal basis can be found in Law Number 18 of 2012 concerning Food, which affirms that the state is responsible for ensuring the availability, affordability, and fulfillment of sufficient, safe, quality, and nutritious food consumption. This provision demonstrates that the free nutritious meal policy has a strong legal basis in the national legal system. Fulfilling nutritional needs is not only an individual matter, but also a collective responsibility of the state.

The Islamic legal perspective also provides a basis for policies to meet food needs. Allah SWT says in the Qur'an:

...وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

".... and eat and drink, but do not be excessive. Indeed, He does not like those who are excessive. (Q.S. Al-A'raf Ayat 31) (Soenarjo, 2019).

This verse demonstrates the importance of fulfilling nutritional needs in a balanced and moderate manner. It also conveys the message that good and nutritious consumption is part of Islamic teachings that must be observed in daily life. Fulfilling nutritional needs is part of efforts to maintain balance in human life. The hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also emphasizes the importance of paying attention to basic human needs, especially regarding food. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said that a person is not a believer who is full while his neighbor is hungry. The meaning of this hadith demonstrates a social responsibility in ensuring that food needs are met equitably. This value aligns with the principles of public policy oriented towards social justice and equitable distribution of welfare.

The implementation of the free nutritious meal program in practice involves various aspects such as budget planning, food distribution, and food quality monitoring. This complexity indicates that policy formulation does not stop at policy formulation but also requires an effective system for implementation (Basuki et al., 2026). Challenges often arise from unequal distribution, limited resources, and differences in socioeconomic conditions across regions. Analysis of this policy indicates that the approach used still tends to be technocratic, focusing on quantitative aspects of nutritional fulfillment. Broader dimensions of welfare, such as sustainability, distributive justice, and community empowerment, have not yet been fully prioritized. This situation indicates that there is room to integrate the values of Maqasid Shari'ah so that the resulting policy is not only administratively effective but also socially meaningful. Examining government policies on

the free nutritious meal program is important to determine the extent to which these policies align with legal principles, both from a constitutional and Islamic legal perspective. This analysis provides a basis for evaluating the policy's effectiveness and opens up opportunities for future improvements. This approach is also a basis for research to link public policy with Maqasid Shari'ah through a comparative *usul fiqh* framework.

Relevance of the Free Nutritious Meal Program to the Principles of Maqasid Shari'ah

The free nutritious meal program is closely linked to the principles of Maqasid Shari'ah, particularly in efforts to realize the welfare of humanity as a whole (Nuraini et al., 2025). This policy is not only seen as an ordinary social program, but also as part of a systematic effort to maintain the quality of life of the community. Fulfillment of nutritional needs is one of the important indicators in determining the level of welfare, so the existence of this program can be analyzed through the maqasid framework as the primary goal of every humanitarian-oriented policy. The principle of *hifz al-nafs* or protection of life is the most dominant aspect of the free nutritious meal policy. The availability of healthy and nutritious food plays a vital role in maintaining physical health and preventing various diseases caused by malnutrition (Muhyidin & Syarofi, 2026). This effort demonstrates that the policy is in line with the goals of sharia in maintaining human survival. A healthy community will impact the overall quality of life.

Optimal nutritional fulfillment is also closely related to *hifz al-aql*, or the protection of the mind. Good nutritional intake influences cognitive development, especially in children during their growth period (Pitriani et al., 2021). The quality of education and thinking skills are greatly influenced by adequate health and nutrition. The free nutritious meal program can be seen as a long-term investment in improving the quality of human resources by strengthening intellectual aspects. The dimension of *hifz al mal*, or the protection of wealth, can also be found in this policy. The free nutritious meal program helps alleviate the economic burden on the community, especially low-income families (Fadilah, 2025). Food expenditures can be reduced, allowing household financial allocations to be diverted to other equally important needs. This impact demonstrates that the policy is oriented not only toward health but also toward the community's economic stability. The aspect of *hifz al nasl*, or the protection of offspring, is also a crucial part of this policy analysis. Proper nutrition for children and young people will impact the quality of future generations (Addzaky et al., 2025). policy indirectly contributes to creating a healthier and more productive generation. The link to *hifz al din*, or religious protection, can be seen in an individual's ability to perform religious duties properly when their physical condition and health are maintained. Good health enables a person to optimally fulfill religious obligations. Meeting basic needs, such as food, is a supporting factor in maintaining a balance between the physical and spiritual aspects of human life.

In-depth analysis shows that while this policy strongly aligns with the principles of maqasid (the principle of social justice), its implementation has not fully reflected the integration of these values. The policy still focuses on meeting basic needs without considering aspects of equitable distribution and program sustainability. Inequality of access in several regions indicates that the principle of justice within maqasid has not been fully realized. The approach used in this policy is still dominated by technical and administrative aspects, so the welfare dimension is often not a primary consideration in decision-making. Integrating maqasid values into public policy requires a more comprehensive approach that simultaneously considers social, economic, and cultural aspects. This is crucial for the resulting policy to truly provide equitable benefits to all levels of society.

The relevance of the free nutritious meal program to Maqasid Shari'ah (the principles of Islamic law) demonstrates that public policy can be a means of realizing Islamic values in social life. This analysis illustrates that the integration of the maqasid concept and government policy has significant potential for creating sustainable prosperity. This research emphasizes the importance of utilizing maqasid as a foundation for policy formulation, ensuring that it is not only technically effective but also substantively meaningful for the wider community.

Relevance Review of Maqasid Shari'ah on MBG Policy with Contract Law in Civil Law

The "Review of Maqasid Shari'ah on Government Policy on the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) in the Study of Comparative *Usul Fiqh*" has substantive relevance to contract law in the realm of civil law, both from the perspective of Indonesian positive law and Islamic *fiqh*. The MBG program, although it is a public policy, in its

implementation gives rise to a series of contractual relationships that are subject to the civil law regime: goods/services procurement agreements between the government and catering providers, distribution agreements with educational institutions, to implicit legal relationships between the state and beneficiaries (Hadjon, 2019). Within this framework, Maqasid Shari'ah not only functions as an ethical norm, but also as an evaluative instrument for the validity and substantial justice of these agreements.

In Indonesian civil law, derived from the Indonesian Civil Code (BW), an agreement is valid if it meets four cumulative requirements: agreement of the parties, capacity to act, a certain thing (*een bepaald onderwerp*), and a lawful cause (*een geoorloofde oorzaak*). However, formal validity alone does not automatically guarantee substantive justice. This is where Maqasid Shari'ah offers a deeper layer of analysis: each clause in the MBG procurement contract must be tested to see whether it protects the five core values (*al-kulliyat al-khams*). For example, clauses on nutritional standards relate to *hifzh al-nafs* (protecting the soul) and *hifzh al-'aql* (protecting the mind); budgetary and transparency provisions relate to *hifzh al-mal* (protecting property); while inclusive distribution mechanisms reflect *hifzh al-nasl* (protecting descendants) and *hifzh al-din* (maintaining the value of justice as a manifestation of religion). Thus, Maqasid functions as a "sharia material test" for civil contracts arising from public policy.

The Comparative Usul Fiqh approach enriches this analysis by demonstrating the methodological diversity of Islamic schools of thought in assessing the validity of public interest-based agreements. The Hanafi school, which emphasizes the certainty of the object (*ma'lum*) and clarity of conditions, will demand detailed technical specifications in the MBG contract: nutritional measurements, food safety standards, and measurable monitoring mechanisms ('Abidin, 2000). The Maliki school, with its flexible *maslahah mursalah*, is more open to adaptive clauses that allow menu adjustments based on local conditions, as long as they remain within the corridor of public interest ('Illish, 1990). Meanwhile, the Shafi'i school, which strictly adheres to the textual evidence, will examine whether the MBG financing mechanism avoids the prohibited elements of *riba*, *gharar*, or *dzulm* (al-Nawawi, 2005). In the context of pluralistic Indonesian civil law, this diversity of views actually becomes an analytical strength: researchers can test whether MBG contracts have met the minimum standards of validity across schools of thought, while also identifying potential gaps that can be evaluated through the lens of Maqasid.

The relevance of this study also lies in the concept of standard contracts commonly used in government procurement. In practice, MBG contracts are often drafted unilaterally by the government as the contract drafter, potentially containing exoneration clauses that burden the provider partner or ignore the rights of beneficiaries (Badrulzaman, 2015). Indonesian civil law, through Article 18 of the Consumer Protection Law, limits standard clauses that are detrimental to consumers, but oversight of public contracts remains weak. This is where the principles of *'adl* (justice) and *mas'uliyah* (responsibility) in Maqasid Shari'ah can function as a corrective norm: any clause that has the potential to cause *dharar* (harm) or ignore the rights of the weak must be reviewed for the sake of realizing true benefit (al-Zuhayli, 2009).

Finally, the integration of Maqasid Shari'ah with civil contract law in the MBG study is not merely an attempt to "Islamize" positive law, but rather a theoretical contribution to the development of contract law that is responsive to the values of substantive justice. In the welfare state era, the state is not only required to fulfill administrative procedures, but also to ensure that every public agreement truly realizes the welfare of the people. Maqasid Shari'ah, with its framework of five universal principles, offers a normative measuring tool that can be adopted in the reform of Indonesian contract law—especially in the context of social contracts concerning the basic rights of citizens (Kamali, 2003). Thus, the title of this research is not only academically relevant, but also strategic for strengthening the governance of public contracts that are just and dignified.

Comparative Usul Fiqh Analysis in the Implementation of Maqasid-Based Policies

This approach not only views policy outcomes but also examines the process of policymaking and the underlying values. Usul al-fiqh provides a methodological framework for understanding law, while a comparative approach allows for differences in scholarly perspectives on contemporary issues (Ramadhani et al., 2026). The thinking of classical scholars, such as Al-Shatibi, positions maqasid as a goal that must be maintained through an approach based on texts and general principles of sharia (Abdurrahman, 2020). This perspective emphasizes the importance of maintaining the five main elements of life in a systematic manner. Public policy, from this perspective, should be oriented towards directly and clearly fulfilling basic needs, particularly in the context of preserving human life and survival. The thinking of contemporary scholars, such as Jasser Auda, offers a broader approach, viewing maqasid as an interconnected and

dynamic system (Zahroh, 2021). This approach considers not only the final outcome but also the process, context, and long-term impact of a policy. The free nutritious meal policy in this perspective needs to be seen as part of a complex social system, so that its evaluation is not only limited to the aspect of food distribution, but also to its fairness, sustainability, and effectiveness.

A comparison of these two approaches reveals fundamental differences in understanding public policy. The classical approach tends to assess the suitability of a policy based on its immediate fulfillment of basic principles, while the contemporary approach assesses the extent to which the policy is capable of generating broad and sustainable impacts. This difference provides a richer perspective in policy analysis. The free nutritious meal program has fulfilled some of the principles of maqasid, particularly in preserving life through meeting nutritional needs. Assessments from a classical perspective tend to view this as a form of policy success in meeting basic needs. This fulfillment is considered sufficient to demonstrate compliance with the objectives of sharia, although it does not consider other aspects in greater depth. The contemporary approach provides a more critical assessment of the policy, highlighting aspects of distribution, social justice, and program sustainability. Conditions on the ground show that not all communities have equal access to this program. This inequality indicates that the value of justice in maqasid has not been fully realized. This evaluation emphasizes the importance of viewing policy more comprehensively.

Integrating classical and contemporary approaches is key to producing a more balanced analysis. The classical approach provides a strong normative foundation, while the contemporary approach complements it with more relevant contextual analysis. This combination allows for policy evaluations that not only align with sharia principles but also address real societal needs. Maqasid-based policies require formulations that focus not only on meeting short-term needs but also consider their long-term impact on society. Free nutritious meal programs need to be developed with a more integrative approach to equitably reach all levels of society. This effort is crucial to ensure that the resulting policies truly reflect the values of welfare, the primary objective of Maqasid Shari'ah.

The analysis of the explanations above shows that public policy can be more effective when formulated by considering various scientific perspectives. This approach makes a significant contribution to the development of values-based and welfare-oriented policies. This research confirms that Maqasid Shari'ah is not only relevant theoretically but also plays a strategic role in shaping more just, inclusive, and sustainable public policies.

The concept of Maqasid Shari'ah, from the perspective of classical and contemporary *usul fiqh*, demonstrates that Islamic law essentially functions not only as a normative rule but also as an instrument for realizing human welfare. In the study of *usul fiqh*, maqasid serves as an important foundation explaining the purpose behind each provision of sharia. This understanding demonstrates that Islamic law has a humanistic orientation and is adaptive to the development of social life. The thinking of classical scholars such as Al-Shatibi provides a strong theoretical foundation through the concept of protecting the five basic elements of life: religion, life, reason, descendants, and property. These five elements serve as the main framework for understanding the direction and purpose of Islamic law as a whole. The classical approach has the advantage of being able to build a systematic and consistent legal system based on the texts of the Qur'an and hadith. Through the *istiqlal* method, classical scholars seek to explore the general purpose of sharia by examining various arguments in depth, resulting in universal principles that can serve as the basis for establishing law. However, the development of modern society has given rise to various new issues that are not always explicitly found in classical texts. This situation has given rise to contemporary thought that attempts to broaden the scope of maqasid to make it more relevant to the needs of the times. Figures such as Jasser Auda offer a systems approach that views maqasid as a dynamic, interconnected concept, and open to social development. In this perspective, maqasid is not limited to protecting the five basic elements but also encompasses modern issues such as social justice, human rights, community empowerment, and sustainable development. This contemporary approach provides greater scope for Islamic law to respond to social change without losing its fundamental values. This demonstrates the flexibility of maqasid, allowing sharia to remain contextual in the face of modern challenges.

A comparison of classical and contemporary thought reveals both continuity and differences in approaches to understanding the objectives of Islamic law. The classical approach tends to be more textual and normative, focusing on upholding the basic principles of sharia, while the contemporary approach is more contextual and emphasizes the social dimension of Islamic law. Nevertheless, the two approaches are actually

complementary. The classical approach provides strong normative legitimacy, while the contemporary approach helps to bring practical relevance to modern life. A balance between the two is crucial to prevent Islamic law from becoming trapped in textual rigidity or excessive freedom of interpretation. Maqasid can be understood as a bridge between sharia texts and evolving social realities. In the context of public policy, the concept of maqasid holds significant relevance, particularly in analyzing the government's free nutritious meal program. This program essentially represents the state's responsibility to ensure the welfare of society, particularly vulnerable groups such as children and low-income communities. This policy aims not only to meet food needs but also to address issues of stunting, malnutrition, and unequal access to healthy food. From a national legal perspective, this program has a strong legal basis because it aligns with the constitutional mandate, which affirms the people's right to a prosperous life and access to health services. The state has an obligation to ensure that the community's basic needs, including food and nutrition, are met adequately and sustainably.

From an Islamic legal perspective, the free nutritious meal policy also has a strong foundation because it is directly related to the principle of preserving human life. Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of fulfilling nutritional needs in a balanced and moderate manner, as explained in the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Fulfilling nutritional needs is not only seen as a biological need, but also as part of the social and moral responsibility in creating community welfare. Therefore, the free nutritious meal program can be understood as an implementation of Islamic values that place the welfare of society as the primary objective of the policy. An analysis of the relevance of the free nutritious meal program to the maqasid principle shows that the policy is closely linked to the five main objectives of sharia. The aspect of *hifz al-nafs*, or protection of the soul, is the most obvious dimension because this program aims to maintain public health by meeting adequate nutritional needs. A healthy community will have a better quality of life and be able to carry out social activities optimally. Furthermore, this program is also related to *hifz al-aql*, or protection of the mind, because good nutrition significantly influences cognitive development, especially in children. By fulfilling nutritional needs, the learning ability and quality of community education can increase, thus supporting the development of quality human resources.

The free nutritious meal program is also related to *hifz al-mal*, or wealth protection, because it helps reduce the economic burden on poor families. Household spending on food can be reduced, allowing people to meet other equally important needs. In the long term, this policy can help improve community economic stability and reduce social inequality. Furthermore, the policy supports *hifz al-nasl*, or offspring protection, because good nutrition will impact the quality of future generations. Children who grow up in good health have a greater chance of becoming a healthy, productive, and competitive generation. Meanwhile, the link to *hifz al-din* can be seen in the importance of physical health as a support for the implementation of worship and human spiritual activities. Although the free nutritious meal program has strong relevance to the principles of maqasid (the principle of social justice), its implementation still faces various challenges. One major issue is the unequal distribution of resources, which prevents all communities from gaining equal access to the program. This indicates that the value of social justice, a crucial component of maqasid, has not been fully realized. Furthermore, the policy approach, which tends to be technocratic, often results in the welfare aspect being understood only in administrative and quantitative terms. Policies focus more on meeting food distribution targets than on developing sustainable and participatory systems. This situation demonstrates the need for deeper integration of maqasid values into the formulation and implementation of public policies.

The relevance of maqasid to contract law in civil law is also crucial in the analysis of the free nutritious meal program. The implementation of this program involves various contractual relationships between the government, food providers, educational institutions, and beneficiaries. In civil law, the validity of an agreement is determined not only by the fulfillment of formal requirements but also by the existence of substantive justice. Maqasid Shari'ah provides an additional perspective by assessing whether these contracts truly support the public interest. Clauses regarding nutritional standards, food distribution, budget transparency, and oversight mechanisms can be analyzed through the principles of protecting life, mind, and property. Thus, maqasid serves as a tool for moral and social evaluation of public contracts related to public welfare. The comparative *usul fiqh* approach shows that each school of thought has different methods for assessing welfare-based policies. The Hanafi school emphasizes certainty and clarity of the object of the agreement, so contracts in the free nutritious meal program must have clear technical specifications regarding food quality and oversight mechanisms. The Maliki school is more flexible because it uses the

concept of *maslahah mursalah*, allowing for policy adjustments based on the social conditions of the community. Meanwhile, the Shafi'i school is stricter in ensuring that financing mechanisms and policy implementation are free from elements prohibited by sharia, such as *gharar* and injustice. This difference in views demonstrates that the Islamic legal tradition possesses a rich methodological foundation that can be used to evaluate public policy more comprehensively.

A comparative analysis of Islamic jurisprudence (*usul fiqh*) in the implementation of *maqasid*-based policies demonstrates that classical and contemporary approaches can be combined to produce a more balanced evaluation. The classical approach provides a strong normative basis for upholding sharia principles, while the contemporary approach helps examine the broader social impact and sustainability of policies. Integration of the two is crucial for public policies to be not only administratively effective but also capable of realizing social justice and sustainable welfare. A free nutritious meal program is not only assessed by its success in food distribution but also by its ability to reduce social inequality, empower communities, and improve overall quality of life. This analysis demonstrates that *Maqasid Shari'ah* (the principles of Islamic jurisprudence) is highly relevant to the development of modern public policy. The concept of *maqasid* is not merely theoretical within the realm of Islamic law but can also be applied practically in formulating policies that favor the public good. The free nutritious meal program serves as an example of how sharia values can be integrated with state policies to create social welfare. The comparative Islamic jurisprudence (*usul fiqh*) approach provides a broader perspective in understanding these policies because it combines the strengths of classical tradition with the needs of the contemporary context. By making *maqasid* the main foundation, public policy can be directed not only to meet the basic needs of society, but also to create a more just, inclusive, and sustainable social system.

CONCLUSION

The government's policy of providing free nutritious meals is fundamentally aligned with the principles of *Maqasid Shari'ah* (Islamic Principles). This program is not only seen as an effort to meet the community's food needs, but also as a form of protection for fundamental aspects of human life. From a *maqasid* perspective, this policy contributes to safeguarding the soul (*hifz al-nafs*) by fulfilling adequate nutritional needs, safeguarding the mind (*hifz al-aql*) by improving the community's health and learning abilities, and safeguarding wealth (*hifz al-mal*) by helping to reduce the economic burden on families, especially low-income groups. Thus, this program has significant beneficial value in supporting the development of healthy and productive human resources. Based on an analysis of comparative *usul fiqh*, differences in approach were found between classical and contemporary scholars in viewing this type of social policy. Classical scholars tend to emphasize fulfilling the community's basic needs as a normative obligation of the state to the people. Meanwhile, contemporary scholars view public policy more broadly, considering aspects of social justice, equitable distribution of benefits, program sustainability, and systemic impacts on community welfare. Contemporary approaches also emphasize the importance of effective governance and accountability in policy implementation to optimally achieve public welfare goals. However, this study also shows that the implementation of the free nutritious meal program still faces several challenges. Aspects of equitable distribution, implementation effectiveness, and program sustainability need to be strengthened so that the values of *Maqasid Shari'ah* can be fully integrated into public policy. Therefore, a more comprehensive, adaptive, and long-term policy formulation is needed so that the goals of public welfare can be realized optimally, fairly, and sustainably.

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