

Islamic Rulings and Guidelines for Social Media Influencers: Maqasid Shariah Point of View

Hukum dan Garis Panduan Islam Bagi Pempengaruh Media Sosial: Pandangan Maqasid Shariah

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Abstract: This research examines the ethical and jurisprudential implications of social media influencing from an Islamic perspective, within Maqasid Shariah point of view. As social media influencers increasingly affect public opinion and consumer behaviour, there is an urgent need to evaluate this phenomenon within the framework of Maqasid Shariah. The study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of social media influencing, explore Islamic perspectives on the practice, analyse relevant fiqh rulings, and develop guidelines for Muslim influencers based on Maqasid Shariah. Applying a qualitative methodology, the research performs a systematic literature review of recent studies and fatwas. The analytical framework is grounded in Maqasid Shariah, focusing on the categories of maslahah, the five essential values of Shariah, and the balance between benefits and harms. Findings discover that while social media influencing is generally permissible in Islam, its ethical soundness depends on compliance to Islamic principles and objectives. The study proposes a comprehensive framework based on three critical areas: intentions (al-Qasd), approaches (al-Ada'), and consequences (al-Ma'al), highlighting the importance of generating maslahah rajihah (preponderant interest) over maslahah marjuhah (outweighed interest). This research contributes to the ongoing discussion on digital ethics in Islam and provides practical guidelines for Muslim influencers to direct their roles in alignment with Islamic teachings.

Keywords: Digital ethics, Influencers, Islamic jurisprudence, Maqasid Shariah, Social media;

Abstrak: Penyelidikan ini menangani implikasi etika dan fiqh berkaitan dengan pengaruh media sosial dari perspektif Islam, menggunakan pendekatan Maqasid Shariah. Seiring dengan peningkatan peranan pengaruh media sosial dalam membentuk pendapat awam dan tingkah laku pengguna, terdapat keperluan mendesak untuk menilai fenomena ini dalam kerangka prinsip-prinsip Islam. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan gambaran menyeluruh tentang pengaruh media sosial, meneroka perspektif Islam mengenai amalan ini, menganalisis hukum-hukum fiqh yang berkaitan, dan membangunkan garis panduan untuk para pempengaruh Muslim. Menggunakan metodologi kualitatif, penyelidikan ini melaksanakan ulasan literatur sistematik terhadap kajian dan fatwa terkini. Kerangka analisis berasaskan Maqasid Shariah, yang memberi tumpuan kepada kategori masalah, lima nilai asas Shariah, dan keseimbangan antara manfaat dan kemudaran. Penemuan menunjukkan bahawa

walaupun pengaruh media sosial umumnya dibenarkan dalam Islam, kesahihan etika bergantung kepada kepatuhan kepada prinsip-prinsip Islam. Kajian ini mencadangkan kerangka komprehensif berdasarkan tiga domain kritikal: niat (al-Qasd), pendekatan (al-Ada'), dan akibat (al-Ma'al), dengan menekankan kepentingan menjana masalah rajihah (kepentingan yang lebih besar) berbanding masalah marjuhah (kepentingan yang kurang). Penyelidikan ini menyumbang kepada wacana berterusan mengenai etika digital dalam Islam dan menyediakan garis panduan praktikal untuk mempengaruhi Muslim agar melaksanakan peranan mereka selaras dengan ajaran Islam.

Kata kunci: Etika digital, Pengaruh, Fiqh Islam, Maqasid Shariah, Media sosial;

Introduction

The arrival of social media has transformed the way people communicate, share information, and effect each other on a global scale. Platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok have given rise to a new type of individuals known as social media influencers - persons who, through their online presence, direct the attention and trust of extensive audiences. These influencers wield significant power in shaping public opinion, consumer behaviour, and even cultural norms. As the role of social media influencers continues to grow, it becomes increasingly needed to explore the ethical and religious implications of this phenomenon within the framework of Islamic jurisprudence.

Social media influencers encounter in various activities, from promoting products and services to sharing personal opinions on various topics. Their influence, while often beneficial, can also cause risks, such as promoting materialism, violating privacy, or encouraging behaviours opposing to Islamic values. This dual ability for benefit and harm highlights the need for clear Islamic rulings and guidelines to ensure that the practice of influencing associates with Islamic principles. In particular, this research will focus on the concepts of *maslahah* (benefit) and *mafsadah* (harm), utilizing the Maqasid Shariah point of view to evaluate the ethicality of social media influencing.

The Maqasid Shariah, or objectives of Islamic law, prioritize the preservation of essential values such as faith, life, intellect, lineage, and wealth. These objectives provide a comprehensive framework for appraising contemporary issues, including social media influencing. By examining the benefits and harms associated with influencing through the lens of Maqasid Shariah, this study aims to develop a set of guidelines that ensure social media activities

contribute positively to society and remain within the limits of Islamic ethics.

Based on the above context, this research seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To provide a comprehensive overview of the nature and impact of social media influencing, including its role in modern communication and marketing strategies.
- ii. To explore how Islam views the practice of social media influencing, considering the balance between its potential benefits and harms in light of Maqasid Shariah.
- iii. To analyse Islamic rulings (Fiqh) on social media influencing, including its permissibility as a profession and the ethical considerations involved in content creation and online interactions.
- iv. To justify the requirement for Islamic guidelines specifically fitted for social media influencers, ensuring their activities comply with the objectives of Shariah and contribute to the overall well-being of the Muslim community.

The significance of this research lies in its capability to provide a comprehensive Islamic framework for social media influencers, guiding them to engage in ethical and permissible practices. By offering a Maqasid Shariah-based analysis, this study aims to fill a critical gap in the literature, tackling the critical need for Islamic guidance in the promptly changing digital landscape. The findings are expected to benefit not only influencers but also scholars, policymakers, and the broader Muslim community by promoting a balanced and honourable approach to social media engagement.

Literature Review

Several key themes transpired across the literature review analysis:

Islamic Ethics and Social Media Use

Several studies concentrated on applying Islamic ethics to social media use. Mokhtar and Bahari (2021) examined Instagram use by Muslim university students in Malaysia through an Islamic ethics lens. They found that while most students used Instagram in an Islamic manner, there were concerns about some features and content. Similarly, Shompa et al. (2019) proposed using Islamic values and the concept of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* to guide social media use among Muslim students.

The Indonesian Ulama Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 2017) issued a comprehensive fatwa on ethical social media use, prohibiting behaviors such as spreading gossip, slander, and false information. This fatwa emphasizes the importance of verifying information and practicing *tabayyun* (seeking clarification) before sharing content.

Razali et al. (2024) identified five main purposes for using social media from an Islamic perspective: for Islamic teachings (*da'wah*), building relationships, education, enjoining good and forbidding harm, and maintaining digital well-being. These purposes align with broader Islamic ethical principles and can serve as guidelines for Muslim social media users.

Influencer Marketing from an Islamic Perspective

Several studies explored the phenomenon of social media influencers through an Islamic lens. Abu Bakar et al. (2023) analysed halal food influencers from a Shariah perspective, highlighting the need for influencers to adhere to Islamic principles in their content and promotions. Rahim et al. (2021) investigated the effects of social media influencers on Muslim millennial consumers' attitudes towards halal food products in Malaysia, finding that trustworthiness and expertise were key factors.

Ani and Yusoff (2021) assessed influencer marketing practices from the perspective of Islamic advertising principles. They discussed that Islamic advertising principles should be incorporated into influencer marketing to avoid ethical issues and ensure the credibility of information shared.

Zaid et al. (2022) studied how social media influencers are reimagining religious authority and Islamic practices among Muslim millennials. They found that influencers are challenging traditional religious authorities and reshaping Muslim identities

based on a new global lifestyle.

Maqasid Shariah as a Framework for Social Media Use

Several researchers suggested using the Maqasid Shariah (objectives of Islamic law) as a framework for evaluating and guiding social media use. Shompa et al. (2018) suggested using *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* to develop guidelines for ethical social media use. They discussed that this approach could assist the protection of faith, life, intellect, lineage, and property in the digital space.

Abu Bakar et al. (2018) investigated the relationship between values, religiosity, and the concept of Maqasid Shariah in influencing Muslim behaviour on social media. They found that all these factors influenced behaviour, with religiosity being the strongest element.

The International Islamic Fiqh Academy (2023) issued a resolution on social media use that implicitly encompasses Maqasid Shariah principles. The resolution emphasizes protecting faith, intellect, and social stability, complying with the broader objectives of Islamic law.

Challenges and Risks of Social Media Influencing

Several studies highlighted the potential threats and challenges associated with social media influencing from an Islamic perspective. Al-Darmaki (2023) discussed both positive and negative impacts of social media influencers on society, stating concerns about the promotion of materialism and unrealistic beauty values.

The Mufti of Federal Territory's Office of Malaysia (2021) issued a fatwa prohibiting the promotion of goods on social media in ways that violate Islamic principles of modesty and dignity. This focuses the conflict between modern marketing practices and Islamic ethical standards.

Al-Mahmud (2022) examined the jurisprudential and legal rulings for social media celebrity advertisements in Saudi Arabia, highlighting the need for influencers to observe to both Islamic principles and national regulations in their promotional activities.

Cultural and Generational Perspectives

Some studies discovered the cultural and

generational aspects of social media influencing in Muslim contexts. Sanno (2022) analyzed how Muslim fashion influencers are shaping views of modesty on social media, finding that they are redefining modesty in ways that sometimes conflict with traditional interpretations.

Singer et al. (2023) compared perceptions of influencer authenticity between Gen Z and Millennials, including during the "de-influencer" movement. While not specifically focused on Muslim consumers, this study presents insights into generational differences that may be relevant in Islamic perspectives.

Emerging Trends and Technologies

A few studies observed emerging trends in social media influencing. Stein et al. (2024) investigated parasocial interactions with virtual influencers, comparing them to real human influencers. While not specifically referring to Islamic perspectives, this research mentions important questions about the future of influencer marketing and its implications for Muslim consumers and societies.

Research Gaps

The thematic analysis of Islamic perspectives on social media influencing exposes both progress and significant gaps in the field. While there is growing literature relating Islamic ethics to social media use and influencer marketing, a need exists for more broad frameworks integrating various Islamic concepts into a interconnected approach. This integration should incorporate Maqasid Shariah, Islamic ethics, and fiqh rulings.

The analysis emphasizes on a lack of large-scale practical studies examining Muslim influencers' practices and their impact on followers, suggesting a demand for more quantitative and mixed-methods research. Several areas require further investigation, including comparative research across different Muslim cultures, examination into emerging platforms from an Islamic perspective, and studies including various influencer categories and their unique challenges.

There is also a lack of practical guidelines for Muslim influencers based on Islamic principles. Research is needed on merging traditional Islamic values with modern digital marketing and social media culture. The application of Maqasid Shari'ah to

this field is still in its early stages. This study aims to fill these gaps by providing a detailed analysis of ethical challenges faced by social media influencers from an Islamic perspective. By utilizing the Maqasid Shari'ah approach, the research will offer a balanced view and propose specific guidelines for Muslim influencers, contributing to the broader discourse on digital ethics and Islamic jurisprudence.

Research Methodology

Data Collection and Data Analysis

Data for this study will be collected through library research, focusing on recent studies and fatwas related to social media influencing from Islamic perspective. The research will involve sources in three languages: English, Malay, and Arabic, to ensure a diverse coverage of the topic. This multilingual approach will allow for a more all-inclusive understanding of the subject, capturing insights from various cultural and scholarly perspectives. The collection process will include systematic searches in academic databases, Islamic jurisprudence repositories, and official publications of recognized Islamic authorities. Key search terms will include "social media influencing," "Islamic ethics in digital marketing," "Maqasid Shariah and social media," and their equivalents in these three languages. The time frame for the collected materials will primarily focus on publications from the last five years (2019-2024) to ensure the analysis exhibits the most current views and opinions.

The collected data will be analysed using qualitative methods, with a particular emphasis on thematic analysis. This approach will engage a systematic process of comparing, interpreting, and deducing patterns and themes from the gathered materials. The analysis will begin with thorough reading and familiarization of the texts, followed by initial coding to identify relevant concepts and ideas. These codes will then be grouped into broader themes aligned with the Maqasid Shariah framework. The analysis will involve comparison between different sources, interpreting the findings in light of Islamic principles, and deducing implications for social media influencing practices. This process will allow for a meticulous understanding of how Islamic ethics and Maqasid Shariah principles can be applied to guide and control social media influencing activities in the contemporary digital environment.

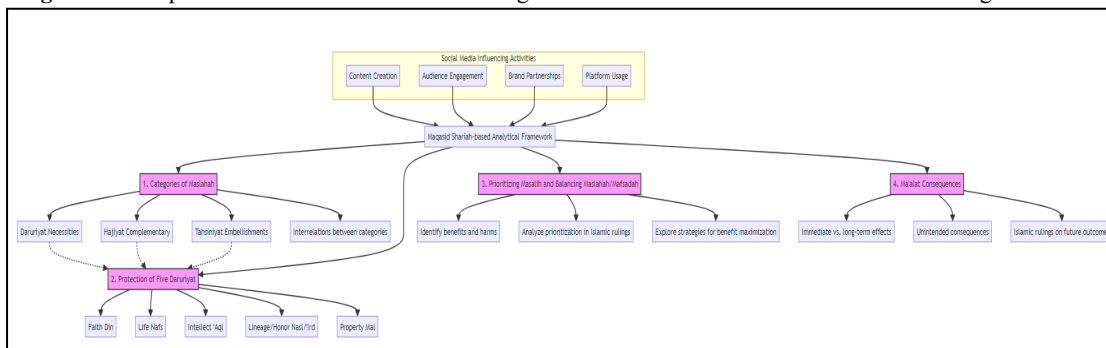
Analytical Framework

The study will employ Maqasid Shariah-based analytical framework, focusing on four key aspects. First, it will examine how social media influencing activities relate to the three categories of *maslahah*: *daruriyat* (necessities), *hajiyyat* (complementary aspects), and *tahsiniyyat* (embellishments). The framework will explore how *hajiyyat* and *tahsiniyyat* in social media influencing complete and support *daruriyat*, such as how educational content by influencers might support the protection of intellect, or how promoting modest fashion could reinforce the protection of faith and lineage. Second, the analysis will evaluate how social media influencing delivers and impacts each of the five essential values (*daruriyat*): faith, life, intellect, lineage/honour, and

property.

The framework will also investigate how social media influencing activities prioritize different *masalih* (benefits) and balance between *maslahah* (benefit) and *mafsadah* (harm). This will include identifying potential benefits and harms in various influencing practices, analysing how Islamic rulings and guidelines prioritize certain *masalih* over others, and exploring strategies for maximizing benefits while minimizing potential harms in influencer activities. Lastly, the analysis will consider the long-term consequences (*ma'alat*) of social media influencing activities, including immediate versus long-term effects on individuals and society, unintended consequences of influencer practices and content, and how Islamic rulings and guidelines describe potential future outcomes.

Diagram 1. Maqasid Framework for Islamic Rulings and Guidelines on Social Media Influencing



Discussion

Overview of Social Media Influencing

Social media influencing has deeply changed the dynamics of consumer engagement and brand promotion. Influencers, individuals with significant followings on social media platforms, carry substantial power in shaping consumer preferences, behaviours, and cultural trends (Bansah et al., 2024). Their impact extends beyond mere product promotion, as they have become key opinion leaders in various domains, including lifestyle, fashion, technology, and cultural practices.

The efficiency of social media influencers in marketing strategies is rooted in their ability to establish parasocial relationships with their followers. Shahzad et al. (2023) introduces an consolidative framework encompassing "Influencer Content Characteristics," "Source Characteristics," and "Psychological Characteristics," providing insights

into how influencers influence trust, connections, and persuasive impact. This framework offers a deeper understanding of follower engagement, enabling marketers to create more effective influencer strategies in the ever-evolving digital sphere.

Stein et al. (2024) conducted an experiment comparing viewers' parasocial interactions with human and virtual influencers, finding that while virtual influencers may lack perceived human-likeness and similarity, they can still generate similar levels of audience involvement as human influencers. This indicates that the impact of influencers is not merely dependent on their human qualities but also on their ability to create participating content and advance a sense of connection with their audience.

Lie et al. (2023) conducted a meta-analysis of 62 studies, identifying eight key characteristics of social media influencers: homophily, expertise, trustworthiness, credibility, congruence with the

product, entertainment value, informative value, and attractiveness. Their findings disclose that these characteristics have moderate to high correlations with customer engagement and purchase intention, with entertainment value showing the strongest association with engagement and credibility having the most significant impact on purchase intention.

However, the rise of social media influencing is not without its challenges and ethical considerations. Al-Darmaki (2023) points out both positive and negative impacts of social media influencers on society. While some influencers present valuable content, others prioritize fame and material gain over ethical considerations. The phenomenon has led to a change in societal values, with an increased attention on materialism, appearance, and superficial success rather than knowledge and true achievements. This grows concerns about the potential negative impacts of influencer culture on social values and individual well-being.

The economic impact of social media influencing is significant and growing. Gänßle and Budzinski (2023) present an overview of the economics of influencers and social media stardom, discussing success factors, revenue models, and welfare effects. They notice that while social media stardom presents new economic phenomena, it also incorporates elements of traditional media industries, emphasizing the importance of distinguishing truly novel aspects from repackaged traditional practices.

Islamic Perspective on Social Media Influencing

The dawn of social media and the rise of influencer culture have stimulated significant discussions within Islamic scholarship regarding their permissibility, potential benefits, and correlated risks. Islamic perspectives on social media use and influencing activities are developed by fundamental principles of Islamic ethics and jurisprudence, with scholars and institutions providing guidance to direct this modern phenomenon.

Islamic scholars in general recognize the potential benefits of social media as a tool for communication, education, and positive social interaction. The Jordanian Fatwa Department (2018) stresses that social media platforms can be viewed as "open windows between people, helping them communicate and facilitating their lives." This perspective aligns with the Quranic principle of fostering understanding and cooperation among diverse communities.

However, the same fatwa also emphasizes the importance of using these platforms responsibly and within the borders of Islamic ethics.

The Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) (2017) issued a comprehensive fatwa on social media use, recognizing its potential benefits while also addressing its risks. The fatwa provides specific guidelines for content creation and sharing, emphasizing the importance of truthfulness, beneficial content, and avoiding harm. This balanced approach reflects the Islamic principle of balancing benefits (*masalih*) against potential harms (*mafasid*) in new situations.

Regarding social media influencers particularly, Islamic perspectives differ depending on the nature of their content and activities. Islamweb.net (2021) differentiates between influencers whose fame stems from permissible and beneficial activities versus those engaged in activities deemed inappropriate or harmful from an Islamic viewpoint. This meticulous approach highlights the importance of intention and content in evaluating the permissibility of following or engaging with influencers.

Zaid et al. (2022) analyse how social media influencers are reimagining religious authority and Islamic practices among Muslim millennials. Their study found that these influencers are challenging traditional religious authorities by making religious content more relevant and engaging to young Muslims. This phenomenon develops important questions about the evolving nature of religious authority in the digital age and the potential benefits and risks of this shift.

Abu Bakar et al. (2023) examined the influence of social media influencers on halal food consumption in Malaysia, identifying ten Shariah elements that should be considered by influencers promoting halal products. This study emphasizes the need for influencers to align their endorsements with Islamic principles, highlighting the potential for influencers to play a positive role in promoting ethical consumption patterns.

The issue of authenticity and credibility in influencer marketing is particularly relevant from an Islamic perspective. Ani and Yusoff (2021) argue that Islamic advertising principles should be incorporated into influencer marketing practices to ensure credibility and avoid ethical issues. This approach emphasizes the importance of truthfulness and transparency in commercial activities, which are

fundamental principles in Islamic business ethics.

Md Zin (2024) discusses the influence of social media content creators on marital relationships, highlighting how excessive engagement with social media and influencer content can lead to unrealistic expectations and conflicts within marriages. This perspective underscores the Islamic emphasis on maintaining strong family bonds and protecting the institution of marriage.

Balancing the potential benefits and harms of social media influencing is a key challenge from an Islamic viewpoint. The International Islamic Fiqh Academy (2023) issued a resolution on social media use that seeks to discover this balance. While acknowledging the potential benefits of social media, the resolution prohibits the spreading of harmful content, fake news, and rumors. It also provides guidelines for the appropriate accusation of evils through social media, emphasizing the need to consider broader societal impacts.

Jurisprudential Adaptation (al-Takyif al-Fiqhi) on Social Media Influencing

The speedy growth of social media influencing as a profession has imposed a jurisprudential adaptation (*al-Takyif al-Fiqhi*) within Islamic law to address its permissibility and ethical boundaries. Islamic scholars and institutions have engaged in *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) to apply traditional Islamic principles to this modern phenomenon.

Regarding the permissibility of social media influencing as a profession, the consensus among contemporary Islamic scholars is that it is permissible in principle, provided it observes Islamic ethical guidelines. This view is based on the legal maxim "*al-Asl fi al-Mu'amalat al-Ibahah*" (The original ruling in transactions is permissibility), as cited by the Mufti of Federal Territory's Office (2022) in their discussion of marketing methods. However, this permissibility is depending on the nature of the content and the manner in which influencing activities are conducted.

Al-Mahmud (2022) provides a detailed analysis of the jurisprudential adaptation of social media celebrity advertisements, framing the relationship between advertisers and influencers as a form of lease contract (*ijarah*). This characterization allows for the application of established fiqh principles related to commercial transactions while acknowledging the unique aspects of digital marketing. The study deduces that the original ruling on advertisements by

social media celebrities is permissibility, but it may be subject to other jurisprudential rulings (obligatory, recommended, disliked, or forbidden) depending on specific circumstances.

Legal evidence (*Adillah*) for the permissibility of social media influencing often derives from Quranic verses and hadith that encourage beneficial trade and prohibit deception. For instance, the verse "*O you who have believed, do not consume one another's wealth unjustly but only [in lawful] business by mutual consent*" (Quran 4:29) is frequently cited to emphasize the importance of transparency and mutual consent in commercial transactions, including influencer marketing (Rossanty et al., 2021).

Several legal maxims (*Qawa'id*) are particularly relevant to the jurisprudential adaptation of social media influencing. The maxim "*La darar wa la dirar*" (No harm shall be inflicted or reciprocated) is often quoted to emphasize the responsibility of influencers to avoid causing harm through their content or promotional activities (Shompa et al., 2018). Another relevant maxim is "*al-'Umur bi-Maqasidiha*" (Acts are judged by their intentions), which underlines the importance of the influencer's intention in determining the permissibility of their activities (Abu Bakar et al., 2018).

The application of these principles leads to different rulings depending on various conditions and consequences. For instance, the International Islamic Fiqh Academy (2023) resolution on social media use prohibits the dissemination of content that harms society's security, stability, or religious values. This indicates that influencer activities promoting such content would be considered impermissible. On the contrary, influencer activities that promote beneficial products or ideas, conducted transparently and ethically, would generally be considered permissible or even recommended.

Ethical considerations in content creation and online interactions form a crucial part of the jurisprudential adaptation. The Majelis Ulama Indonesia (2017) fatwa on social media use provides specific guidelines for content creation, emphasizing the importance of truthfulness, beneficial content, and avoiding harm. These guidelines can be directly applied to influencer activities, requiring influencers to verify information, maintain honesty in product promotion, and consider the broader societal impact of their content.

The issue of modesty and personal presentation in

influencer content has been a subject of particular concern. The Mufti of Federal Territory's Office of Malaysia (2021) clearly prohibits the promotion of goods through immodest or inappropriate means, emphasizing that the intention to seek sustenance does not justify methods forbidden by religion. This ruling directly addresses the ethical challenges faced by influencers in balancing commercial interests with Islamic moral standards.

The concept of *wasatiyyah* (moderation) plays a significant role in the jurisprudential adaptation of social media influencing. Razali et al. (2024) identify five main objectives for using social media from an Islamic perspective: Islamic teachings (da'wah), building relationships, education, enjoining good and forbidding harm, and maintaining digital well-being. These objectives provide a framework for evaluating influencer activities, encouraging a balanced approach that maximizes benefits while minimizing potential harms.

Maqasid-Based Guidelines for Muslim Social Media Influencers

In the scope of Islamic jurisprudence, the concept of Maqasid Shariah (higher objectives of Islamic law) provides a framework for evaluating the permissibility and ethical implications of contemporary practices, including social media influencing. This approach considers juridical rulings as instrumental means (*wasa'il*) for realizing the supreme objectives of Islamic legislation, where permissible acts (*halal*) actualize *maslahah* (public interest) through the generation or preservation of *manfa'ah* (benefit), while prohibited acts (*haram*) safeguard *maslahah* by averting or eliminating *mafsadah* (harm) (Islamy, 2020).

The legitimacy of social media influencing as a profession can be analyzed through this lens, primarily aligning with the protection of property (*hifz al-mal*), one of the fundamental objectives of Shariah. However, a nuanced examination reveals that this profession potentially safeguards multiple elements of *maslahah*, including the protection of faith (*hifz al-din*), self (*hifz al-nafs*), intellect (*hifz al-'aql*), lineage (*hifz al-nasl*), and wealth (*hifz al-mal*) (Islamy, 2020).

In the hierarchy of *maslahah*, social media influencing can be categorized as *hajiyyat* (complementary needs), facilitating ease and preventing hardship in the pursuit of livelihood. Alternatively, it might be classified under *tahsiniyat*

(embellishments) if its primary function is to enhance the aesthetic or qualitative aspects of wealth generation and protection.

To establish a comprehensive framework for Maqasid-based guidelines, three critical domains of action are considered: intentions and motivating factors (*al-Qasd*), methodologies and approaches (*al-Ada'*), and consequences and outcomes (*al-Ma'al*). These domains are analyzed through the application of three fundamental principles: Prioritization of *maslahah* (*al-Awlawiyat*), Equilibrium between *maslahah* and *mafsadah* (*al-Muwazanat*), and Consideration of Long-term Implications (*al-Ma'alat*).

i. Intentions and Factors (al-Qasd)

The domain of al-Qasd includes the motivations and underlying factors pushing individuals to engage in social media influencing.

- a. Applying the principle of Prioritization of *Maslahah* (*al-Awlawiyat*) indicates that intentions which align with higher objectives of Shariah should be prioritized. For instance, using social media influence for da'wah (spreading Islamic knowledge) would be prioritized over intentions focused merely on personal celebrity or wealth accumulation. An influencer intending to use their platform primarily for educational purposes, such as teaching Quranic exegesis or Islamic history, represents a preponderant interest (*maslahah rajihah*) as it serves the protection of faith (*hifz al-din*) and intellect (*hifz al-'aql*). An influencer whose primary intention is to showcase a luxurious lifestyle, even if it indirectly inspires some followers to work hard, may be considered an outweighed interest (*maslahah marjuhah*) due to potential negative impacts on social values and economic disparities.
- b. Balancing between *Maslahah* and *Mafsadah* (*al-Muwazanat*) requires weighing potential benefits and harms of intentions. For example, an intention to address mental health issues within the Muslim community, despite potential backlash, represents a preponderant interest (*maslahah rajihah*). The benefit of destigmatizing mental health outweighs temporary discomfort it might cause in conservative circles.
- c. Considering Implications (*al-Ma'alat*) imposes farsightedness in intentions. An influencer intending to promote environmental

consciousness from an Islamic perspective represents a preponderant interest (*maslahah rajihah*), serving immediate educational purposes and contributing to long-term environmental sustainability, aligning with the Quranic concept of stewardship (*khilafah*).

ii. *Ways and Approaches (al-Ada')*

The domain of *al-Ada'* encompasses methodologies and strategies employed by social media influencers.

- a. Prioritizing *Maslahah (al-Awlawiyat)* in approaches involves giving precedence to methods that effectively realize Shariah objectives. An approach combining entertainment with educational content, such as using storytelling techniques to convey Islamic history, represents a preponderant interest (*maslahah rajihah*) by engaging audiences while promoting religious knowledge.
- b. Balancing *Maslahah* and *Mafsadah (al-Muwazanat)* requires careful consideration of benefits and potential harms of different approaches. For example, using modern production techniques to recreate historical Islamic events for educational purposes represents a preponderant interest (*maslahah rajihah*), making Islamic history engaging and memorable, provided it's done respectfully and accurately.
- c. Considering Implications (*al-Ma'alat*) involves measuring long-term effects of various approaches. An approach focusing on developing a community around shared Islamic values, rather than just accumulating followers, represents a preponderant interest (*maslahah rajihah*) due to its positive long-term implications for strengthening the ummah and fostering genuine spiritual growth.

iii. *Consequences and Results (al-Ma'al)*

The domain of *al-Ma'al* focuses on outcomes and impacts of social media influencing activities.

- a. Prioritizing *Maslahah (al-Awlawiyat)* in evaluating consequences involves giving precedence to outcomes that significantly contribute to realizing Shariah objectives. A consequence where followers report increased engagement with the Quran and Sunnah in their

daily lives represents a preponderant interest (*maslahah rajihah*), directly contributing to the protection and promotion of faith (*hifz al-din*).

- b. Balancing *Maslahah* and *Mafsadah (al-Muwazanat)* requires weighing positive and negative consequences of social media influencing activities. For instance, a consequence where an influencer's content leads to increased charitable donations and volunteer work in the community represents a preponderant interest (*maslahah rajihah*), with tangible social benefits outweighing potential concerns about public displays of charity.
- c. Considering Implications (*al-Ma'alat*) involves reviewing long-term and indirect consequences of social media influencing. A long-term consequence where an influencer's consistent promotion of interfaith dialogue leads to improved community relations and reduced Islamophobia represents a preponderant interest (*maslahah rajihah*), contributing to social harmony and protection of the Muslim community.

The application of these three fundamental principles to the realms of intentions (*al-Qasd*), approaches (*al-Ada'*), and consequences (*al-Ma'al*) provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating the practice of social media influencing from an Islamic perspective. This framework allows for comprehensive consideration of the complex realities of digital influence, helping to identify and promote practices that align with the higher objectives of Shariah while minimizing potential harms. The formulation of comprehensive guidelines concerning the permissibility of pursuing a career as a social media influencer within the Islamic ethical and jurisprudential framework requires a careful approach that meticulously considers the complex implications of this contemporary profession.

Central to these guidelines is the crucial that the practice of social media influencing must generate *maslahah* (benefit) rather than *mafsadah* (harm). This foundational criterion emphasizes the necessity for influencers to critically evaluate the impact of their content, engagement strategies, and overall online presence. The guidelines highlight the critical characteristic between *maslahah rajihah* (preponderant interest) and *maslahah marjujah* (outweighed interest), demanding an advanced process of prioritization and balancing. Abu Bakar et al. (2023) emphasize that guidelines for Muslim social

media influencers should focus on generating *maslahah* (benefit) rather than *mafsadah* (harm), with particular emphasis on achieving *maslahah rajihah* (preponderant interest) over *maslahah marjuhah* (outweighed interest).

Furthermore, the guidelines specify that the pursuit of *maslahah* through social media influencing must not lead to several harmful outcomes which are:

- a. Generating *Mafsadah Rajihah* (Preponderant Harm): Influencer activities must not result in harm that outweighs intended benefits.
- b. Eliminating More Important *Maslahah*: Pursuit of certain benefits should not come at the expense of more crucial interests.
- c. Generating *Maslahah Marjuhah* (Outweighed Benefit): Activities that, while potentially beneficial, are outweighed by drawbacks or opportunity costs should be avoided.
- d. Resulting in *Mafsadah Rajihah* (Preponderant Harm) as an Outcome: Long-term and indirect effects of influence on individuals, communities, and society must be considered.

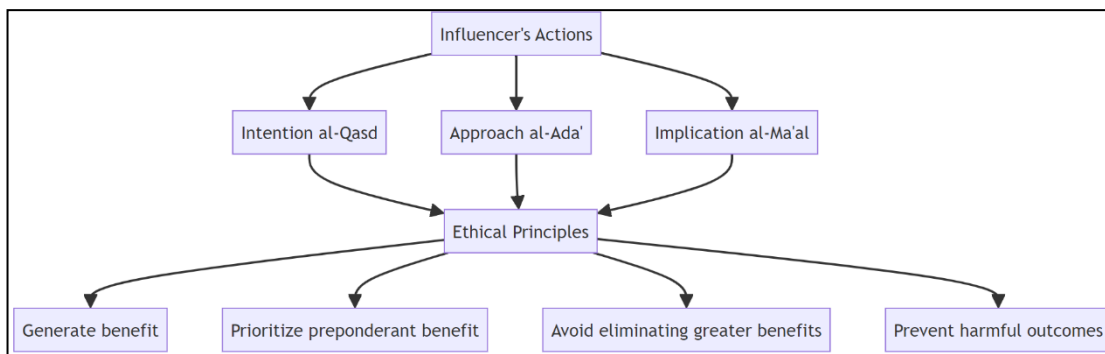
These guidelines underline the complexity of ethical decision-making in social media influencing from an Islamic perspective. They impose a vigorous and context-sensitive approach, recognizing that

determination of *maslahah* and *mafsadah* can vary based on circumstances, cultural contexts, and changing social norms. Implementing these guidelines requires social media influencers to develop a high degree of ethical awareness, critical thinking skills, and a deep understanding of both Islamic principles and contemporary digital dynamics.

Moreover, these guidelines indirectly acknowledge the potential of social media influencing as a tool for positive change and spiritual growth when used responsibly. Hamizul (2024) argues that becoming an influencer presents an opportunity to perform good deeds, suggesting that when influencers share positive content, such as the benefits of paying zakat or giving waqf, it can produce numerous positive outcomes and motivate others to engage in beneficial actions.

In conclusion, the permissibility of being a social media influencer, as explained by these guidelines, is depending on careful triangulation of the ethical landscape, prioritizing substantive benefits over superficial gains, and maintaining a steadfast commitment to Maqasid Shariah. By adhering to these principles, Muslim social media influencers can endeavour to ensure that their digital presence serves as a force for good, contributing to the spiritual, intellectual, and social development of their followers while upholding the integrity of Islamic teachings in the digital age.

Diagram 2. Summary of Maqasid-Based Guidelines on Social Media Influencing



Conclusion

This research provides a comprehensive investigation of social media influencing through the lens of Islamic jurisprudence and ethics, using a Maqasid Shariah approach. It uncovers the intricate nature of social media influencing in the modern digital landscape, highlighting its significant impact on consumer behaviour, public opinion, and cultural norms. The study aligns with its research objectives

by presenting a comprehensive overview of social media influencing, exploring Islamic perspectives on the topic, analysing Islamic rulings (Fiqh) on social media influencing, and justifying the necessity for Islamic guidelines specifically fitted for social media influencers.

Key findings include the substantial power social media influencers wield in shaping consumer preferences and behaviours, extending their impact

beyond product promotion to become key opinion leaders. Islamic scholars generally acknowledge the potential of social media as a tool for positive communication and education, while emphasizing the need for responsible use aligned with Islamic principles. The research also finds that social media influencing is considered permissible as a profession in Islamic jurisprudence, contingent on adherence to Islamic ethical guidelines.

The study proposes a comprehensive framework based on Maqasid Shariah, focusing on three critical domains: intentions (*al-Qasd*), approaches (*al-Ada'*), and consequences (*al-Ma'al*). This framework provides a foundation for assessing and guiding social media influencing activities, ensuring they associate with the higher objectives of Shariah and contribute positively to the Muslim community's well-being.

The research also identifies areas for further study, including exploring the practical implementation of the proposed Maqasid-based guidelines, conducting comparative research across different Muslim cultures, addressing emerging platforms and technologies from an Islamic perspective, and investigating the long-term impacts of Islamic-aligned influencer activities. These future research directions will be crucial in refining and validating the proposed guidelines as the digital landscape continues to evolve.

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