

# Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah as Global Ethics: The Relevance of Tafsir Al-Mishbāḥ for Modern Civilization

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## Abstract

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*The need for a global ethical framework capable of addressing humanitarian crises, ecological degradation, social injustice, and moral disruption in the digital era has become increasingly urgent in contemporary discourse. Although studies on maqāṣid al-sharī'ah have grown significantly, research that integrates this concept with global issues through the lens of Indonesian Qur'anic exegesis, particularly Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ, remains notably limited. This study aims to analyze how M. Quraish Shihab interprets Qur'anic verses related to maqāṣid and to evaluate their relevance as a foundation for global ethics in modern civilization. Employing a qualitative library-based method combined with thematic Qur'anic analysis, this research finds that al-Mishbāḥ emphasizes universal ethical values such as human dignity, justice, moderation, social responsibility, and environmental consciousness. Further, Quraish Shihab's adabī-ijtimā'ī approach expands maqāṣid beyond its legal framework into a humanistic ethical paradigm compatible with global concerns including human rights, ecological sustainability, digital ethics, and conflict resolution. Academically, this study fills a gap in the literature by introducing the contribution of contemporary Indonesian exegesis to maqāṣid studies. Practically, it offers a model for integrating Qur'anic ethical values into global moral discourse and highlights the potential of Indonesian Islam as a significant actor in shaping sustainable and humane civilizational development.*

**Keywords:** *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah, Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ, Global Ethics, Quraish Shihab, Modern Civilization.*

## Abstrak

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*Kebutuhan akan kerangka etika global yang mampu mengatasi krisis kemanusiaan, degradasi ekologi, ketidakadilan sosial, dan disrupsi moral di era digital semakin mendesak dalam wacana kontemporer. Meskipun kajian tentang maqāṣid al-sharī'ah telah berkembang secara signifikan, penelitian yang mengintegrasikan konsep ini dengan isu-isu global melalui lensa tafsir Al-Qur'an Indonesia, khususnya Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ, masih sangat terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana M. Quraish Shihab menafsirkan ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an yang berkaitan dengan maqāṣid serta mengevaluasi relevansinya sebagai landasan etika global dalam peradaban modern. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif berbasis kepustakaan yang dikombinasikan dengan analisis tematik Al-Qur'an, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa al-Mishbāḥ menekankan nilai-nilai etika universal seperti martabat manusia, keadilan, moderasi, tanggung jawab sosial, dan kesadaran lingkungan. Lebih lanjut, pendekatan adabī-ijtimā'ī Quraish Shihab memperluas maqāṣid melampaui kerangka hukumnya menjadi paradigma etika humanistik yang kompatibel dengan persoalan-persoalan global, termasuk hak asasi manusia, keberlanjutan ekologi, etika digital, dan resolusi konflik. Secara akademis, penelitian ini mengisi kesenjangan dalam literatur dengan memperkenalkan kontribusi tafsir Indonesia kontemporer terhadap kajian maqāṣid. Secara praktis, penelitian ini menawarkan model integrasi nilai-nilai etika Al-Qur'an ke dalam wacana moral global, sekaligus menyoroti potensi Islam Indonesia sebagai aktor penting dalam membentuk pembangunan peradaban yang berkelanjutan dan berperikemanusiaan.*

**Keywords:** *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah, Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ, Etika Global, Quraish Shihab, Peradaban Modern.*

## Introduction

The development of global civilization in the twenty-first century has been characterized by rapid technological

advancement, the intensification of globalization, and massive social transformation. Yet such progress has not necessarily been accompanied by a corresponding improvement in the ethical quality of humanity itself. Global realities instead reveal a range of multidimensional crises, including violations of human dignity, social inequality, ecological degradation, identity-based conflicts, and moral disruption resulting from the expansion of digital technology that has far outpaced the ethical readiness of modern societies. These conditions collectively indicate the presence of a profound ethical vacuum within the dominant global normative system, which has largely been shaped by secular, legal-formal, and utilitarian approaches (Bauman, 2000, pp. 7–10).

In this context, the formulation of a comprehensive and sustainable global ethical discourse has become increasingly urgent. Various thinkers have proposed frameworks of universal ethics—most notably Hans Küng’s concept of a *global ethic* and UNESCO’s declarations on universal human values. Nevertheless, these frameworks often encounter epistemological limitations because of their detachment from transcendent moral sources embedded in living religious traditions (Küng, 1991, pp. 17–20). Islam, as a civilization-bearing religion with a well-established ethical and legal tradition, holds significant potential to contribute to this global ethical discourse, particularly through the concept of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, which positions human well-being (*maṣlahah*) as the ultimate objective of the Sharī'ah (Auda, 2008, pp. 3–5).

Normatively, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* is not intended merely as an instrument for legal determination. Rather, it constitutes a Qur'nic ethical framework that upholds universal values such as the protection of human dignity (*ḥifẓ al-nafs* and *al-'ird*), justice (*'adl*), balance (*tawāzun*), and social and ecological responsibility (al-Shāṭibī, 2004, pp. 8–10). However, within academic practice, *maqāṣid* studies often remain confined within a legalistic *fiqh* paradigm and have yet to be fully developed as a dialogical and contextual foundation for global ethics. This gap between normative ideals and global realities necessitates a critical re-reading of religious texts—particularly the Qur'n—through interpretive approaches that are sensitive to contemporary humanitarian challenges.

It is within this framework that *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* by M. Quraish Shihab becomes particularly significant. As a contemporary Indonesian Qur'nic commentary employing an *adabī-ijtimā'ī* (literary-social) approach, *al-Mishbāḥ* does not merely interpret Qur'nic verses linguistically and theologically, but situates them within the social, cultural, and moral realities of modern society (Shihab, 2002, pp. xv–xviii). Quraish Shihab consistently shifts the orientation of interpretation from the mere affirmation of legal norms toward the internalization of Qur'nic ethical values that are humanistic, inclusive, and contextual. Within this framework, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* is understood as Islam's moral vision capable of addressing global challenges such as human rights, environmental sustainability, digital ethics, and conflict resolution.

Despite the growing body of literature on both *maqāṣid* studies and *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ*, academic studies that systematically examine *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as a foundation for global ethics through the perspective of Indonesian Qur"nic exegesis remain notably limited. Most existing research continues to focus on classical *maqāṣid* thought or Middle Eastern *tafsir* traditions, resulting in the underrepresentation of Indonesian Islamic contributions within global ethical discourse. This study therefore seeks to bridge the gap between the realities of the global ethical crisis and Qur"nic normative ideals by analyzing Quraish Shihab's interpretation of *maqāṣid*-related verses and evaluating their relevance as a foundation for global ethics in modern civilization. The central research question guiding this inquiry is: How does *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* articulate *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as a foundation for global ethics, and what is its relevance for contemporary world civilization?

## **Literature Review**

### **Global Ethics in Contemporary Discourse**

Global ethics discourse has emerged as a response to transboundary humanitarian crises that can no longer be adequately addressed through particularistic or nationally bounded ethical frameworks. Hans Küng popularized the concept of a *global ethic* as a set of minimum universal values—such as respect for human dignity, justice, and solidarity—that can be accepted across religious and cultural traditions (Küng, 1991, pp. 23–30). Küng argued that the world's major religions share a

common ethical core that could serve as the moral foundation of a planetary civilization. Nevertheless, his framework has frequently been criticized for its predominantly normative character and for lacking a robust transcendent epistemological foundation, rendering it susceptible to the charge of moral relativism.

In subsequent developments, Martha Nussbaum proposed the *capabilities approach*, which emphasizes the fulfillment of fundamental human capabilities as the basis of global ethics (Nussbaum, 2011, pp. 18–25). While this approach enriches ethical discourse by incorporating dimensions of social justice and human flourishing, it nonetheless remains grounded in a secular humanist paradigm. Consequently, a significant gap persists between the demand for a truly universal global ethic and the limitations of secular moral frameworks that are detached from religious sources of value. It is precisely this gap that creates intellectual space for the contribution of religion—including Islam—in articulating a global ethical framework rooted in transcendent values while remaining contextually relevant.

Contemporary scholars of religion and ethics, such as Tariq Ramadan and Abdullahi An-Na'im, have argued that Islamic ethical resources are not only compatible with universal human rights standards but can offer distinctive contributions to global ethical discourse, particularly in areas where secular frameworks have proven insufficient, such as the ethics of care, intergenerational justice, and the moral responsibilities of

community toward individuals. These perspectives collectively suggest that any genuinely universal global ethic must be pluralist in its sources, drawing on diverse religious and philosophical traditions rather than privileging any single secular or Western paradigm.

### **Reconceptualizing Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah as an Ethical Paradigm**

The concept of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* was classically articulated by al-Juwaynī and systematically elaborated by al-Shāṭibī as the overarching objectives of Islamic law, oriented toward the protection of five fundamental principles: religion (*dīn*), life (*nafs*), intellect (*'aql*), lineage (*nasl*), and property (*māl*) (al-Shāṭibī, 2004, pp. 5–7). Within the classical framework, *maqāṣid* functioned primarily as an instrument of legal reasoning (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), ensuring that the outcomes of Islamic legal rulings remained consistent with human welfare (*maṣlaḥah*).

In its subsequent development, a number of contemporary scholars have sought to expand *maqāṣid* beyond a purely juridical objective into a broader ethical and civilizational paradigm. Ibn 'Ashūr emphasized that *maqāṣid* are fundamentally concerned with the realization of a just and dignified social order, rather than mere formal legal compliance (Ibn 'Ashūr, 2001, pp. 183–185). Building upon this perspective, Jasser Auda advanced a systemic approach to *maqāṣid*, highlighting universal values such as human rights, freedom, and social justice as expressions of contemporary *maqāṣid* (Auda, 2008, pp. 21–28). Auda's systems approach reconceptualizes the

five classical *maqāṣid* not as discrete legal categories but as interconnected dimensions of human well-being that must be evaluated holistically in light of contemporary social realities.

Nevertheless, some critics argue that the modern expansion of *maqāṣid* risks blurring the boundary between Sharī‘ah norms and secular modern values if it is not firmly grounded in the Qur’anic text and the exegetical tradition. This critique underscores the importance of anchoring *maqāṣid* discourse in rigorous Qur’anic interpretation, rather than allowing it to become merely a post-hoc rationalization of contemporary moral preferences. It is in this context that *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* offers a valuable resource: as a work of Qur’anic exegesis that is simultaneously rooted in classical scholarship and responsive to modern challenges, it provides an authoritative textual foundation for a contextually engaged *maqāṣid* paradigm.

### **Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ and the Adabī–Ijtimā‘ī Approach**

Contemporary Qur’anic exegesis has undergone a significant shift in orientation, moving from predominantly textual–legal approaches toward ethical and social paradigms. The *adabī–ijtimā‘ī* approach, pioneered by Muḥammad ‘Abduh and Rashīd Riḍā, emphasizes that the Qur’n was revealed primarily as moral guidance for human life rather than merely as a source of legal rulings (‘Abduh & Riḍā, 1947, pp. 12–15). This approach subsequently developed within various modern *tafsir* works that foreground values such as justice, humanity, and social reform.

In the Indonesian context, M. Quraish Shihab's *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* represents a mature and comprehensive articulation of this approach. Comprising thirty volumes and covering all 114 chapters of the Qur"n, *al-Mishbāḥ* is the most extensive Qur"nic commentary produced in Indonesia and ranks among the most significant works of contemporary Islamic scholarship in Southeast Asia. Shihab interprets the Qur"n by emphasizing moral messages, semantic coherence (*munāsabah*), and the relevance of Qur"nic verses to contemporary humanitarian challenges (Shihab, 2002, pp. xx–xxiii). Studies on *al-Mishbāḥ* consistently highlight its emphasis on values of moderation (*wasatiyyah*), social justice, respect for human dignity, and ecological responsibility (Azra, 2016, pp. 245–248).

Despite its breadth and significance, most existing studies on *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* remain thematically partial—focusing, for example, on pluralism, religious moderation, or specific aspects of social ethics—and have yet to systematically integrate these interpretations within the framework of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as a foundation for global ethics. This study addresses that gap by bringing *al-Mishbāḥ* into dialogue with both classical *maqāṣid* scholarship and contemporary global ethics discourse, thereby demonstrating the capacity of Indonesian Qur"nic exegesis to make substantive contributions to the international academic conversation.

## Research Positioning and Identified Gaps

Based on the foregoing literature review, three dominant tendencies can be identified in existing scholarship. First, global ethics research has been largely dominated by secular–humanistic paradigms that, while valuable, insufficiently engage with transcendent religious sources of moral authority. Second, studies on *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah* have remained primarily oriented toward legal reasoning or normative theory, with limited engagement with the exegetical tradition as a source of ethical insight. Third, analyses of *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* have rarely positioned this work within the broader discourse of global ethics, treating it instead as a localized resource for Indonesian Muslims rather than as a contribution to universal ethical thought.

The research gap, therefore, lies in the limited number of studies that integrate *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*, Qur"nic exegesis, and global ethics within a single, coherent analytical framework, particularly from the perspective of Indonesian Islam. Accordingly, this study positions *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* as an epistemological source for bridging the gap between the realities of the global ethical crisis (*das Sein*) and Qur"nic normative ideals (*das Sollen*). In doing so, it seeks to highlight the contribution of Indonesian Qur"nic exegesis to the construction of a global ethic that is humanistic, moderate, and sustainable.

## Methods

This study is designed as a qualitative, library-based research employing thematic analysis of Qur"nic texts and contemporary Qur"nic exegesis. The methodology aims to elucidate the meanings and ethical values of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as articulated in *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* and to evaluate their relevance within the context of contemporary global ethics.

The primary data for this study consist of the Qur"nic text and *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* by M. Quraish Shihab in thirty volumes, while secondary data include recent academic literature on *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, contemporary Qur"nic exegesis, and Islamic ethics in the modern era. Data collection followed systematic thematic *tafsir* procedures involving the identification of thematic categories, collection of relevant Qur"nic verses, and their interpretation through linguistic analysis and *asbāb al-nuzūl* (contextual circumstances of revelation) considerations (Hanifah et al., 2025, pp. 29–45).

Data analysis was conducted through a hermeneutical reading in which Qur"nic verses related to *maqāṣid* were examined in relation to their moral, legal, and social dimensions. This hermeneutical approach facilitates an understanding of the text not only at the literal level but also at the contextual and value-oriented levels, highlighting the universal ethical principles embedded within the Qur"nic discourse. Thematic analysis subsequently categorized the identified ethical values according to the principal domains of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*—including the protection of life, intellect, and property—while

examining how *Tafsir al-Mishbāh* connects these values to global ethical concerns such as social responsibility, ecological sustainability, and digital ethics (Asep, 2024, pp. 29–39).

The validity and reliability of the research findings were ensured through literature triangulation and cross-referencing among sources, including comparative reviews of interpretations across different *tafsir* traditions and contemporary *maqāṣid* scholarship. This process was complemented by critical reflection on the interpretive positions of the exegete and their relationship to broader intellectual currents within Islamic thought. Such an approach aligns with contemporary library research practices in Islamic studies, which emphasize the systematic collection and critical analysis of primary and secondary sources to produce robust and contextually grounded conclusions (Irvandi & Arif, 2022, pp. 98–109).

## **Results and Discussion**

### **1. Result**

#### **a. Communication Ethics and the Protection of Human Dignity**

The analysis of *Tafsir al-Mishbāh* demonstrates that M. Quraish Shihab consistently interprets Qur'anic verses with a strong emphasis on universal ethical values that correspond to the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. The first and perhaps most prominent domain concerns the protection of human dignity (*ḥifẓ al-naḥs* and *al-'ird*) through interpretations of verses related to

ethical communication, mutual respect, and the prohibition of destructive behavior.

In his commentary on Q. 49:11–12 (*Sūrat al-Hujurāt*), Shihab addresses the Qurʾanic prohibition of mockery, slander, and backbiting not merely as legal infractions but as violations of the divinely ordained dignity of every human person. He emphasizes that the Qurʾan's condemnation of *ghibah* (backbiting) and *namimah* (tale-bearing) reflects a profound ethical concern for preserving the integrity of human relationships and the social fabric. Significantly, Shihab contextualizes these Qurʾanic injunctions within the contemporary landscape of digital communication, arguing that the ethical imperatives articulated in *Sūrat al-Hujurāt* are directly applicable to phenomena such as cyberbullying, online defamation, and the viral spread of disinformation on social media platforms. This interpretive move exemplifies Shihab's broader methodology of treating the Qurʾanic text as a living moral resource whose relevance transcends its seventh-century historical context (Akbar et al., 2025, pp. 101–104).

Furthermore, Shihab's interpretation of Q. 17:70—which declares that God has honored the children of Adam—serves as a foundational axiom for his ethical thought. The divine bestowal of dignity (*kirāmah*) upon all human beings regardless of race, religion, or social status provides, in Shihab's reading, the ontological basis for a universal human rights ethic grounded in Qurʾanic theology. This Qurʾanic foundation for human dignity resonates strongly with international human rights discourse

while simultaneously offering a transcendent grounding that secular frameworks lack.

b. Social Justice and Collective Responsibility

The second principal domain identified in *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* concerns the Qurʾanic vision of social justice and collective responsibility. Shihab’s interpretations of verses concerning justice (*‘adl*) and social balance illustrate that these concepts are understood not as abstract normative ideals but as ethical imperatives calling for substantive transformation of social structures and relationships.

In his commentary on Q. 4:135 (*Sūrat al-Nisā’*), Shihab emphasizes the Qurʾanic command to uphold justice even when it requires testimony against oneself or one’s closest kin. This verse, he argues, establishes a radical standard of impartiality that challenges all forms of nepotism, tribalism, and institutional bias. The ethical principle extracted from this verse—that justice is an absolute moral obligation that supersedes personal interest and group loyalty—is, in Shihab’s reading, directly relevant to contemporary challenges such as corruption, systemic discrimination, and the abuse of institutional power.

Shihab’s discussion of *shūrā* (mutual consultation) in his commentary on Q. 42:38 further develops his social ethics. He argues that *shūrā* is not merely a procedural norm for collective decision-making but expresses a deeper Qurʾanic commitment to participatory governance and the recognition of every individual’s right to contribute to communal affairs. This reading of *shūrā* as a fundamental ethical principle connecting Islamic

political thought to modern democratic values has significant implications for the development of an Islamic contribution to global governance ethics (Fanani, Syahputra, & Rifa'i, 2025, pp. 19–32).

c. Ecological Consciousness and Environmental Ethics

The third domain identified concerns ecological consciousness and environmental ethics in Shihab's commentary. While *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* does not develop a systematic ecological theology, Shihab's interpretations of relevant verses consistently reflect a commitment to harmony between humanity and nature as an integral dimension of moral responsibility.

In his commentary on Q. 2:30, which introduces the concept of *khilāfah* (vicegerency), Shihab argues that the divine appointment of humanity as steward of the earth entails a profound moral obligation to care for the natural world. The *khilāfah* principle, he argues, establishes not merely a legal relationship between humanity and the natural environment but an ethical covenant: the human being is entrusted with creation and will be held accountable for its stewardship. This interpretation positions environmental destruction not simply as a practical problem but as a moral and spiritual failure.

Shihab's commentary on Q. 7:56—which prohibits causing corruption (*fasād*) in the earth after it has been set aright—similarly frames ecological destruction as a form of moral transgression (*zulm*) against both the natural order and the divine will. These interpretations align closely with

contemporary *maqāṣid*-based approaches to environmental ethics, which argue that the protection of the environment should be recognized as an additional or expanded *maqṣad* of the Sharī‘ah commensurate with the ecological challenges of the contemporary world (Alfet & Syaifuddin, 2025, pp. 18–30).

## 2. Discussion

### a. Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah as a Universal Ethical Framework

The findings of this study indicate that *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* advances a paradigm of Qur’anic interpretation that transcends the boundaries of classical legalistic approaches and enters the domain of universal normative ethics. Shihab’s consistent emphasis on the ethical dimensions of Qur’anic injunctions—rather than their purely legal implications—demonstrates that *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah* can function as a comprehensive moral philosophy rather than merely a legal theory. This paradigmatic shift has significant implications for the positioning of Islamic ethics within global ethical discourse.

The concept of human dignity as articulated in *al-Mishbāḥ* provides a compelling example of this universalizing tendency. By grounding human dignity in the divine act of creation and bestowal of *amānah* (trust), Shihab offers a theologically robust account of human rights that converges with, and in important respects deepens, secular rights discourse. Where secular frameworks tend to ground human rights in the contingent facts of human rationality or social utility, the Qur’anic account grounds them in the unconditional divine valuation of

every human person—a foundation that is, by its nature, non-negotiable and resistant to the erosions of utilitarian calculation.

This finding is consistent with the broader argument, advanced by scholars such as Auda (2008) and Ramadan (2009), that Islamic ethical resources are not simply parallel to but genuinely complementary with secular and humanistic ethical frameworks. The contribution of *al-Mishbāḥ* to this conversation lies in its demonstration that these resources are not merely theoretical but are embedded in a living tradition of Qurʾanic interpretation that has deep roots in Indonesian Muslim society.

#### b. Digital Ethics and the Relevance of Qurʾanic Communication Ethics

The application of Shihab’s communication ethics to the challenges of the digital era represents one of the most practically significant findings of this study. The proliferation of disinformation, cyberbullying, and hate speech on digital platforms has generated widespread recognition of the need for a robust digital ethics. Yet existing frameworks for digital ethics—drawing largely on liberal principles of freedom of expression, harm prevention, and user autonomy—have proven insufficient to address the scale and complexity of the problem.

Shihab’s interpretation of the Qurʾanic ethics of communication, as elaborated in his commentary on *Sūrat al-Hujurāt* and related passages, offers a distinctive contribution to this conversation. The Qurʾanic emphasis on the responsibility of every individual to verify information before sharing it (Q. 49:6), to speak with truthfulness and precision (Q. 9:119), and to refrain

from speech that violates the dignity of others (Q. 49:11–12) provides a comprehensive ethical framework for digital communication that goes beyond the minimalist standard of harm avoidance. In Shihab’s reading, these Qur’anic imperatives are not merely religious obligations but expressions of a universal moral commitment to the integrity of human communication and the protection of communal trust (Akbar et al., 2025, pp. 101–104).

This ethical framework has particular relevance in the Indonesian context, where digital media has become a major site of religious and political contestation. Shihab’s influential position as Indonesia’s most widely read Qur’anic commentator means that his ethical teachings have the potential to shape public moral discourse in ways that transcend academic circles. The integration of Qur’anic communication ethics into digital literacy education and media governance frameworks represents a promising avenue for the practical application of *al-Mishbāh*’s ethical insights.

c. Indonesian Islam as a Contributor to Global Ethical Discourse

The findings of this study also contribute to the broader argument for the global significance of Indonesian Islam. Indonesia, as the world’s most populous Muslim-majority country, has developed a distinctive Islamic intellectual tradition characterized by its commitment to moderation (*wasatīyyah*), pluralism, and the integration of Islamic values with democratic and humanistic principles. *Tafsir al-Mishbāh* exemplifies this tradition and represents, in microcosm, the broader civilizational

contribution that Indonesian Islam is positioned to make to global ethical discourse.

The concept of *wasatiyyah*—understood not merely as a middle path between extremes but as a principled commitment to balance, comprehensiveness, and contextual wisdom—has considerable potential as a contribution to global ethical thought. In a world increasingly polarized between secular liberalism and religious fundamentalism, Indonesian Islam’s articulation of a moderate, humane, and contextually sensitive Islamic ethics represents a genuinely valuable alternative. Shihab’s *tafsir* is one of the most powerful expressions of this alternative, and its engagement with global ethical challenges merits far greater attention in international academic discourse than it has hitherto received.

Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of including non-Western, non-Arabic sources in global *maqāṣid* scholarship. The dominance of Middle Eastern perspectives in Islamic intellectual discourse has tended to marginalize the contributions of scholars from the Global South, including Southeast Asia. By demonstrating the substantive ethical contribution of *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* to *maqāṣid* studies and global ethics, this research advocates for a more inclusive and geographically diverse approach to Islamic scholarship.

#### d. Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study is subject to certain limitations that should be acknowledged. As a qualitative, library-based study, it does not engage with empirical data concerning the reception or social

impact of Shihab's ethical teachings in Indonesian society. Future research could productively complement the textual analysis presented here with ethnographic or survey-based studies of how *al-Mishbāḥ*'s ethical values are received, interpreted, and enacted by Muslim communities in Indonesia and beyond.

Additionally, while this study focuses on three principal ethical domains—communication ethics, social justice, and ecological consciousness—a more comprehensive analysis might extend to other areas addressed in *al-Mishbāḥ*, such as bioethics, gender ethics, and economic justice. The relationship between Shihab's ethical thought and other contemporary Indonesian Muslim thinkers, such as Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid, also merits further comparative investigation. Such research would deepen the understanding of Indonesian Islamic ethics as a coherent intellectual tradition with distinctive contributions to offer global ethical discourse.

## **Conclusion**

This study affirms that *Tafsir al-Mishbāḥ* by M. Quraish Shihab represents a significant and original development of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* from a predominantly normative–legal framework toward a Qur'anic ethical paradigm that is humanistic, contextual, and universal in its orientation. Through the *adabī–ijtimā'ī* approach, *al-Mishbāḥ* articulates core values—including the protection of human dignity, social justice, moderation, collective responsibility, and ecological consciousness—as

ethical foundations that are directly relevant to contemporary global challenges: the digital ethics crisis, human rights violations, environmental degradation, and the search for just governance.

Three principal findings emerge from this study. First, Shihab's commentary on Qur"nic communication ethics provides a robust framework for addressing the moral challenges of the digital age, grounded in a theology of human dignity that transcends and enriches secular digital ethics discourse. Second, his social ethics, centered on the Qur"nic concepts of *'adl* and *shūrā*, offers a principled Islamic contribution to contemporary debates about justice, governance, and democratic participation. Third, his ecological interpretation of the Qur"nic concept of *khilāfah* positions environmental stewardship as a moral and spiritual obligation, providing a theologically grounded foundation for Islamic environmental ethics.

These findings collectively demonstrate that contemporary Indonesian Qur"nic exegesis, as represented by *al-Mishbāḥ*, functions not merely as a localized intellectual reflection but possesses genuine global significance in enriching religion-based ethical discourse. *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, as articulated through this exegetical lens, may be positioned as a constructive normative framework for the development of global ethics—one that is simultaneously faithful to the Qur"nic tradition and responsive to the moral demands of the contemporary world. This study thus affirms the potential of Indonesian Islam, as exemplified in Shihab's scholarship, as an

important actor in the advancement of a sustainable, just, and humane global civilization.

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