# Islam and Artificial Intelligence: Ethics, Epistemology, and Social Transformation

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## Abstract

The rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI) has reshaped how humans produce knowledge, make decisions, and organize social life, raising fundamental questions for religious traditions, including Islam. Existing studies, however, tend to address the ethical, epistemological, and social aspects of AI separately. This article examines the relationship between Islam and AI through three dimensions: ethics, epistemology, and social transformation. Using a qualitative approach based on library research and conceptual analysis, the study draws on the Qur'an, the Sunnah, classical Islamic scholarship, and contemporary literature on AI ethics, analyzed through qualitative content analysis and *maqāṣid*-based normative reasoning. Ethically, the article argues that the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*, *ʿadl* (justice), *amānah* (trust), and *maṣlaḥah* (public good) offer a normative framework for assessing the development and use of AI, particularly regarding accountability, privacy, and algorithmic bias. Epistemologically, it discusses how AI challenges the Islamic understanding of knowledge (*ʿilm*), revelation, reason, and human agency, emphasizing that AI should be positioned as a tool rather than a source of truth. Socially, the study explores the impact of AI on education, *daʿwah*, the economy, and religious authority in Muslim societies. The article concludes that Islam does not reject technological progress but calls for its integration within a value-based framework that places human dignity and moral responsibility at the center.

***Keywords:*** Islam, artificial intelligence, ethics, epistemology, social transformation

## Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) has moved, within little more than a decade, from specialized research laboratories into the ordinary routines of daily life. Recommendation engines decide which news items and sermons appear on smartphone screens, automated systems screen applications for loans and jobs, and large language models now draft essays, summarize documents, and answer questions about religion in fluent prose (Floridi & Chiriatti, 2020; Kasneci et al., 2023). These systems do not merely accelerate existing tasks; they reconfigure how knowledge is produced, how decisions are made, and how social life is organized. Because AI increasingly mediates access to information and judgment, the questions it raises are not

only technical or economic but also moral, epistemological, and ultimately theological (Coeckelbergh, 2020).

For religious traditions these questions are particularly acute. Religions offer accounts of what it means to know, of who bears responsibility for actions, and of what a good society looks like, which are precisely the domains that AI is reshaping. Islam, followed by roughly a quarter of the world's population, possesses a rich normative and intellectual heritage for addressing such questions. The first revelation of the Qur'an begins with the command to read and connects knowledge with the Creator who teaches humankind by the pen (QS. al-ʿAlaq [96]: 1–5). Classical Muslim scholars subsequently developed sophisticated theories of knowledge, legal reasoning, and public interest (al-Ghazālī, 1993; al-Shāṭibī, 1997; Ibn Khaldūn, 2005). The question, therefore, is not whether Islam has resources to respond to AI, but how those resources can be articulated in a way that is faithful to the tradition and relevant to contemporary technological realities.

Over the last decade, a large body of literature on AI ethics has emerged. Jobin et al. (2019) mapped 84 AI ethics guidelines and found convergence around transparency, justice and fairness, non-maleficence, responsibility, and privacy. Floridi et al. (2018) and Floridi and Cowls (2019) synthesized these into five principles: beneficence, non-maleficence, autonomy, justice, and explicability. However, critics have pointed to the limits of this principle-based approach. Hagendorff (2020) showed that many guidelines lack enforcement mechanisms and have little measurable effect on practice, while Mittelstadt (2019) argued that principles alone cannot guarantee ethical AI because AI development, unlike medicine, lacks shared aims, established professional norms, proven methods for translating principles into practice, and robust accountability mechanisms. Moreover, most influential guidelines originate in North America and Europe (Jobin et al., 2019), and scholars have called for perspectives from outside these centers to be taken seriously in shaping AI governance (Mohamed et al., 2020).

Islamic perspectives on AI ethics have begun to respond to this call. Raquib et al. (2022) proposed Islamic virtue ethics as a comprehensive alternative to predominantly rule-based frameworks, emphasizing the moral character of those who design and use AI. Elmahjub (2023) argued for pluralist ethical benchmarking and proposed *maṣlaḥah* as an Islamic benchmark for evaluating AI, while Mohadi and Tarshany (2023) read the ethical challenges of AI, such as privacy violations and manipulation, through the lens of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*. In parallel, scholarship on digital religion has documented how digital media transform religious practice and authority (Bunt, 2018; Campbell, 2012), including the rise of Islamic applications in Indonesia (Fakhruroji, 2019). More recent studies have begun to theorize the relationship between AI and religion (Reed, 2021) and to examine how generative AI tools represent religious traditions (Tsuria & Tsuria, 2024). Lala (2025) has further argued that using large language models for religious guidance risks desacralizing knowledge by flattening its theological, legal, hermeneutic, and spiritual layers into a single practical plane. In the Indonesian context, Faizin et al. (2025) compared ChatGPT's responses with the deliberations of the Bahtsul Masail forum of Nahdlatul Ulama on questions of religious moderation, while ethnographic research shows Indonesian educators, religious leaders, and students negotiating a middle position between rejection and uncritical adoption of AI (Wong-A-Foe, 2025).

Despite this growing literature, existing studies tend to treat ethics, knowledge, and social change separately. Ethical analyses without epistemological reflection risk treating AI as a neutral instrument whose outputs can be trusted once fairness is secured; epistemological

reflection without social analysis remains abstract; and social studies without a normative framework remain descriptive. This article addresses this gap by examining the relationship between Islam and AI through three interrelated dimensions. It asks, first, how the Islamic principles of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*, *ʿadl* (justice), *amānah* (trust), and *maṣlaḥah* (public good) can function as a normative framework for assessing AI, particularly with regard to accountability, privacy, and algorithmic bias; second, how AI challenges the Islamic understanding of knowledge (*ʿilm*), revelation, reason, and human agency, and what epistemic status AI outputs should therefore have; and third, what implications AI carries for education, *daʿwah*, the economy, and religious authority in Muslim societies. Because this is a conceptual study, it does not test statistical hypotheses. Instead, it advances a central proposition: Islam does not reject technological progress but requires that AI be integrated within a value-based framework in which AI is treated as a means (*wasīlah*) rather than a source of truth, and in which human dignity and moral responsibility remain at the center.

## Methods

### Research Design

This study employed a qualitative design based on library research and conceptual analysis. It is normative and philosophical in character: rather than measuring variables, it builds an argument through the systematic reading, interpretation, and synthesis of texts. The design follows the logic of an integrative literature review, which is suited to topics that span several disciplines and aims to critique and synthesize existing knowledge in order to generate new conceptual frameworks (Snyder, 2019). This design was considered appropriate because the relationship between Islam and AI involves Islamic law and ethics, philosophy of knowledge, computer ethics, and the sociology of religion simultaneously.

### Participants/Data Sources

As a library-based study, this research did not involve human participants. Its data consisted of written sources grouped into three categories. The first category comprised the primary normative sources of Islam, namely the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the latter accessed through the canonical hadith collections of al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, and Ibn Mājah. The second category comprised classical and modern Islamic scholarship, including al-Ghazālī's *al-Mustaṣfā* (1993) and al-Shāṭibī's *al-Muwāfaqāt* (1997) on the objectives of Islamic law, Ibn Khaldūn's *Muqaddimah* (2005) on the classification of sciences, and modern interpretations of the tradition by al-Attas (1993), Bakar (1998), Rosenthal (2007), Nasr (1993), Kamali (2008), and Auda (2008). The third category comprised contemporary literature on AI ethics, AI and society, and digital religion, consisting mainly of peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly monographs.

### Research Procedures

The research proceeded in four stages. In the first stage, the research problem was formulated and the three analytical dimensions of ethics, epistemology, and social transformation were defined. In the second stage, relevant sources were collected and selected for each dimension. In the third stage, the selected sources were read closely, coded, and analyzed thematically. In the fourth stage, the findings were synthesized into an integrative conceptual framework, and the interpretations were checked against classical commentaries and recent scholarship to ensure that the reading of Islamic sources remained consistent with established understanding.

**Data Collection Technique(s)**

Data were collected through documentation. Contemporary literature was searched in Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar using combinations of keywords such as "Islam" and "artificial intelligence", "Islamic ethics" and "AI", "maqasid" and "artificial intelligence", "digital religion", and "algorithmic bias". Priority was given to peer-reviewed publications from 2016 onward, reflecting the period in which AI ethics became a prominent field of inquiry, while foundational works published earlier were retained where they remain widely cited. Classical Islamic sources were selected purposively according to their authority in the tradition and their relevance to the three dimensions. Sources were included if they addressed at least one of the dimensions and were published in scholarly outlets.

**Data Analysis Technique**

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis (Krippendorff, 2018), combined with normative reasoning derived from the Islamic legal and ethical tradition. Two analytical procedures were applied.

***Thematic Coding***

Codes were derived deductively from the three analytical dimensions and inductively from recurring themes in the texts. Ethical codes included accountability, privacy, bias, and harm; epistemological codes included knowledge, truth, verification, and agency; and social codes included education, *daʿwah*, labor, and authority. Coded passages were then compared across the classical and contemporary corpora to identify convergences and tensions.

***Normative-Interpretive Reasoning***

The coded themes were evaluated using *maqāṣid*-based reasoning. AI practices were assessed according to whether they protect or threaten the five essential objectives of the *sharīʿah*, namely religion, life, intellect, progeny, and property, and according to the three levels of necessities (*ḍarūriyyāt*), needs (*ḥājiyyāt*), and refinements (*taḥsīniyyāt*) (al-Shāṭibī, 1997; Auda, 2008). The results of this evaluation were then compared with mainstream AI ethics principles to identify where Islamic ethics converges with, extends, or departs from them.

## Results

The findings are presented following the three dimensions defined in the Methods section. Because the study is conceptual, the results take the form of analytical findings derived from the reading of the sources rather than statistical data. Tables are used to summarize the mapping between Islamic concepts and AI-related issues, and figures are used to depict the conceptual relationships that emerged.

**Outcome 1: The Ethical Dimension**

The first finding is that the Islamic ethical tradition provides not a single rule but an interlocking set of principles that can be applied to AI in a structured way. Four principles proved most relevant: *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* as an overall evaluative architecture, *ʿadl* as a response to algorithmic bias, *amānah* as a basis for accountability, and *maṣlaḥah* together with the prohibition of harm as a basis for privacy protection and risk assessment.

***Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah as an Evaluative Architecture***

Al-Ghazālī (1993) formulated the objective of the *sharīʿah* as the preservation of five essentials: religion (*dīn*), life (*nafs*), intellect (*ʿaql*), progeny (*nasl*), and property (*māl*). Whatever protects these essentials is a *maṣlaḥah*, and whatever undermines them is a *mafsadah*. Al-Shāṭibī (1997) systematized this into three levels of priority, while contemporary scholars

have extended the framework to include human dignity, rights, and development (Auda, 2008; Kamali, 2008). Applied to AI, this framework allows every system to be assessed by asking which objectives it serves and which it threatens. Medical diagnostic AI may serve the preservation of life, whereas recommender systems that maximize engagement through sensational or misleading content may threaten the preservation of intellect. AI tools that generate inaccurate religious content can undermine the preservation of religion; deepfakes and the exposure of private family data can harm the preservation of progeny and honor; and opaque credit-scoring or fraud systems affect the preservation of property. This reading is consistent with Mohadi and Tarshany (2023), who identified privacy and manipulation as central *maqāṣid*-related concerns in AI.

***ʿAdl and Algorithmic Bias***

Justice occupies a central place in the Qur'an, which commands believers to uphold justice even against themselves or their relatives (QS. al-Nisāʾ [4]: 135) and forbids them from letting hostility toward a people lead them to act unjustly (QS. al-Māʾidah [5]: 8). Empirical studies show that AI systems can reproduce and amplify injustice. Obermeyer et al. (2019) found that a widely used health-care algorithm, which used health-care costs as a proxy for health needs, systematically underestimated the illness of Black patients, while Noble (2018) showed how search engines can reproduce racist and sexist representations. From an Islamic perspective, *ʿadl* is not satisfied by the absence of discriminatory intent; it is substantive and concerns outcomes. A system that relies on proxies reflecting historical inequality therefore violates *ʿadl* even if its designers did not intend harm. This implies an obligation to audit training data, test for unequal impacts across groups, and provide remedies for those who are wronged.

***Amānah and Accountability***

The Qur'an describes the trust (*amānah*) that the heavens, the earth, and the mountains declined to bear but that humankind accepted (QS. al-Aḥzāb [33]: 72), and it commands that trusts be rendered to those entitled to them and that judgment be made with justice (QS. al-Nisāʾ [4]: 58). The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) affirmed that every person is a shepherd who is responsible for their flock (al-Bukhārī, no. 893; Muslim, no. 1829). AI complicates the attribution of responsibility because machine learning systems are often opaque, even to their designers (Burrell, 2016), and because responsibility is distributed across developers, data providers, deployers, and users (Mittelstadt et al., 2016). In Islamic jurisprudence, however, moral and legal responsibility (*taklīf*) attaches only to a *mukallaf*, a being endowed with intellect and capable of being held accountable. An AI system is not a *mukallaf*; responsibility can therefore never be transferred to the machine, but remains with the humans and institutions that design, deploy, and use it, in proportion to their roles. *Amānah* also implies that personal data entrusted to an organization is held in trust, and that systems should be transparent enough for those responsible to give an account of their decisions, a requirement that existing legal frameworks such as the GDPR do not fully secure (Wachter et al., 2017).

***Maṣlaḥah, Privacy, and the Prevention of Harm***

The principle of *maṣlaḥah* directs the law toward the public good, and it is accompanied by the prophetic principle that there should be neither harm nor reciprocal harm (Ibn Mājah, no. 2341) and by the legal maxim that averting harm takes precedence over securing benefit. These principles are directly relevant to privacy. The Qur'an prohibits spying on others (QS. al-Ḥujurāt [49]: 12) and requires permission before entering another's home (QS. al-Nūr [24]: 27–28). The extraction of behavioral data to predict and shape human conduct, which Zuboff (2019)

describes as surveillance capitalism, can be understood as a form of systemic intrusion that these texts forbid. At the same time, *maṣlaḥah* also supports AI applications that bring real benefit, such as early disease detection, disaster prediction, accessibility tools for people with disabilities, and applications that help Muslims learn the Qur'an. The Islamic position is therefore one of weighing benefits and harms (*muwāzanah*) rather than blanket acceptance or rejection, which corresponds to Elmahjub's (2023) proposal to use *maṣlaḥah* as an ethical benchmark for AI.

These four principles are complemented by the virtue of *iḥsān*, excellence in conduct, which the Prophet described as prescribed in all things (Muslim, no. 1955). *Iḥsān* shifts attention from compliance with rules to the moral character of those who build and use AI, in line with the virtue-based approach of Raquib et al. (2022). Table 1 summarizes the mapping between Islamic ethical principles and AI-related issues, and Figure 1 presents the integrative framework that emerged from the analysis as a whole.

Table 1 Islamic Ethical Principles and Their Implications for AI

| Principle | Key normative sources | AI ethical issue | Implication for AI governance |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* | al-Ghazālī (1993); al-Shāṭibī (1997) | Overall social impact of AI systems | Assess systems against the five essentials and the three levels of priority |
| *ʿAdl* (justice) | QS. 4: 135; QS. 5: 8 | Algorithmic bias and discrimination | Bias audits, representative data, testing for unequal impacts, remedies for those harmed |
| *Amānah* (trust) | QS. 4: 58; QS. 33: 72; hadith of the shepherd | Accountability, opacity, data stewardship | Responsibility remains with humans; explainability; data treated as a trust |
| *Maṣlaḥah* and *lā ḍarar* | Ibn Mājah, no. 2341; QS. 49: 12; QS. 24: 27–28 | Privacy, surveillance, and harm | Consent, data minimization, risk-based assessment, priority of harm prevention |
| *Iḥsān* (excellence) | Muslim, no. 1955 | Professional ethics of developers and users | Cultivation of moral character alongside rules |

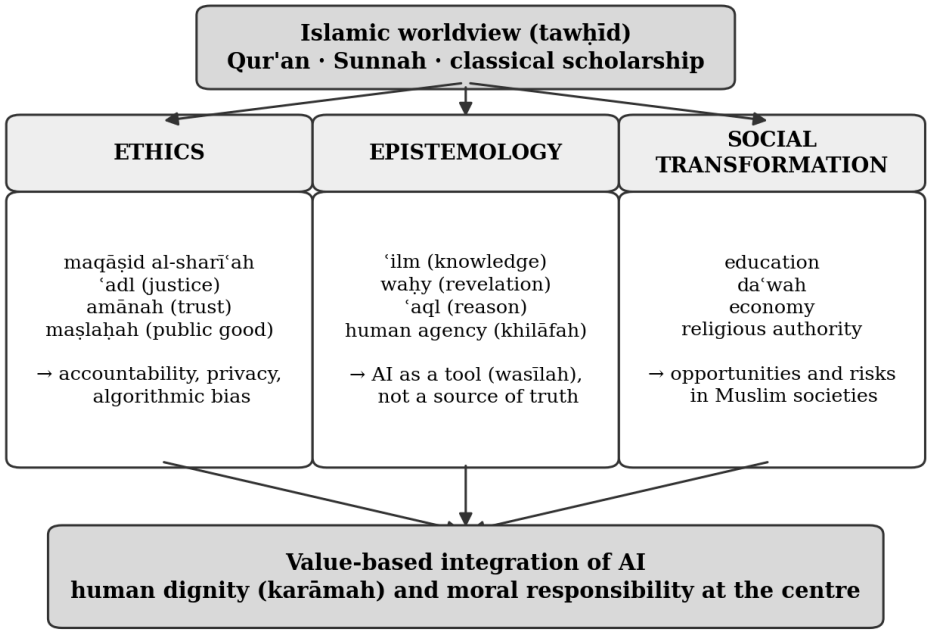



Figure 1 Integrative Framework of Islam and AI

**Outcome 2: The Epistemological Dimension**

The second finding concerns the status of knowledge. AI systems, particularly generative models, produce outputs that look like knowledge. The analysis shows that the Islamic understanding of *ʿilm* provides clear criteria for distinguishing such outputs from knowledge in the full sense, and for determining their proper place.

***The Islamic Concept of ʿIlm***

Knowledge holds an exceptional position in Islamic civilization, to the point that Rosenthal (2007) described it as "knowledge triumphant." The Qur'an asks whether those who know and those who do not know can be equal (QS. al-Zumar [39]: 9) and states that God raises in rank those who have been given knowledge (QS. al-Mujādilah [58]: 11). Al-Attas (1993) characterized knowledge as the arrival of meaning in the soul, linked to *adab*, the recognition of the proper place of things. Classical scholars classified knowledge into revealed and rational sciences, each with its own methods and hierarchy (Bakar, 1998; Ibn Khaldūn, 2005). In this tradition, *ʿilm* is not simply information. It involves understanding (*fahm*), an orientation toward truth, and the moral transformation of the knower, and it integrates reason (*ʿaql*) with revelation (*waḥy*).

***Machine Outputs and the Limits of Statistical Knowledge***

Large language models generate text by predicting likely sequences of words based on statistical patterns in their training data. Bender et al. (2021) argued that such models assemble linguistic forms without access to meaning, and Floridi and Chiriatti (2020) showed that their outputs can be fluent while lacking understanding, sometimes failing basic semantic and ethical tests. As a result, these systems can produce plausible but false statements. Viewed through Islamic epistemology, an AI output lacks the elements that make knowledge reliable: it has no intention, no understanding, and no accountable author, and it usually lacks a traceable source. It resembles a report (*khabar*) without a chain of transmission (*isnād*). The Qur'an instructs believers to verify reports before acting on them (QS. al-Ḥujurāt [49]: 6), and the Prophet warned that it is enough of a lie for a person to pass on everything he hears (Muslim, *Muqaddimah*, no. 5). The hadith sciences, with their rigorous criticism of transmitters, thus offer a model of source verification that is highly relevant to an information environment saturated with machine-generated content.

***Revelation, Reason, and the Position of AI***

The analysis indicates a hierarchy of epistemic authority in Islam. Revelation is the highest source of normative truth; qualified scholarly reasoning (*ijtihād*) interprets revelation within the tradition; human reason and experience understand both revelation and the world; and instruments serve these faculties. At the same time, the Prophet recognized that people know their worldly affairs best (Muslim, no. 2363), which leaves wide space for technical innovation. AI belongs to the category of means (*wasāʾil*), and according to the legal maxim that means take the ruling of their ends, its value depends on the purposes it serves. AI should therefore be positioned as a tool rather than a source of truth: its outputs are evaluated by higher sources and never the reverse. This position also guards against the scientism that Nasr (1993) criticized, in which only what can be quantified is treated as real, and it responds to the concern raised by Lala (2025) that generative AI tends to strip religious knowledge of its metaphysical foundations.

***Human Agency and Khilāfah***

The Qur'an presents the human being as God's vicegerent (*khalīfah*) on earth, taught the names of all things (QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 30–31), honored above much of creation (QS. al-Isrāʾ [17]: 70), and accountable for the use of hearing, sight, and heart, with the instruction not to pursue that of which one has no knowledge (QS. al-Isrāʾ [17]: 36). These verses ground a strong conception of human epistemic agency. Excessive reliance on AI, in which judgment is outsourced to systems whose reasoning cannot be inspected, risks eroding this agency. Russell (2019) argued from a technical standpoint that AI systems should remain deferential to human preferences and under human control. The Islamic perspective reinforces this conclusion on moral and theological grounds: final judgment, especially in moral and religious matters, must remain with accountable human beings. Table 2 compares the Islamic concept of *ʿilm* with AI-generated output, and Figure 2 illustrates the resulting hierarchy of epistemic authority.

Table 2 The Islamic Concept of ʿIlm Compared with AI-Generated Output

| Aspect | Islamic concept of *ʿilm* | AI-generated output |
|---|---|---|
| Source | Revelation, reason, sense experience, and transmitted scholarship | Statistical patterns in training data |
| Nature | Understanding (*fahm*) and the arrival of meaning in the soul | Prediction of probable sequences of words or data |
| Relation to truth | Oriented toward truth (*ḥaqq*) | Oriented toward plausibility; may produce false statements |
| Verification | *Isnād*, *tabayyun*, and scholarly critique | Provenance often unclear; requires external verification |
| Accountability | Borne by a responsible knower (*mukallaf*) | No moral agency; responsibility lies with humans |
| Ethical orientation | Linked to *adab* and moral transformation | Value-neutral in itself; reflects data and design choices |
| Appropriate status | Source of guidance and judgment | Instrument (*wasīlah*) that supports human judgment |

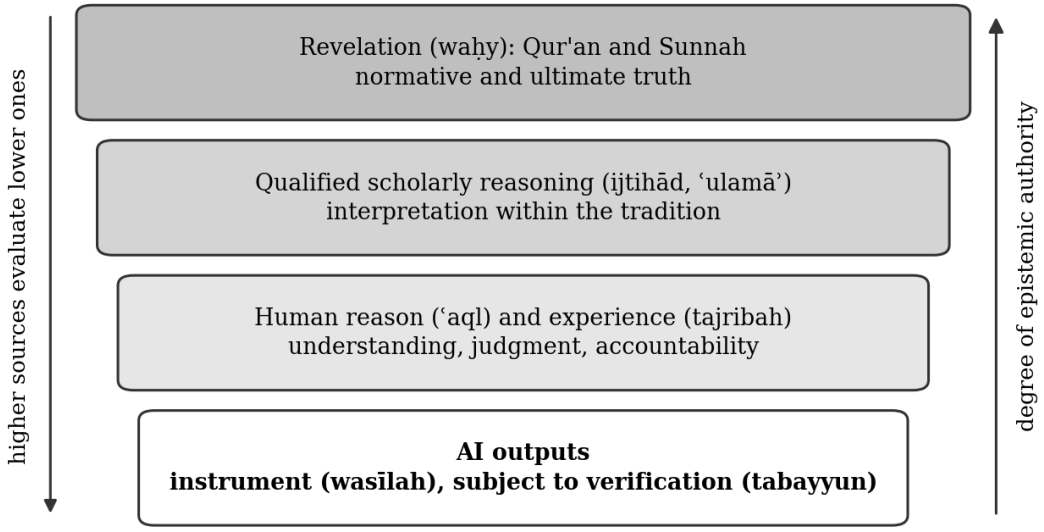



Figure 2 Hierarchy of Epistemic Authority and the Position of AI

**Outcome 3: The Social Transformation Dimension**

The third finding concerns the social consequences of AI in Muslim societies. The analysis identified four domains in which AI is producing significant change: education,

*daʿwah*, the economy, and religious authority. In each domain, AI presents genuine opportunities alongside risks that call for an Islamic normative response.

***Education***

A systematic review by Zawacki-Richter et al. (2019) found that AI applications in higher education cluster around profiling and prediction, assessment and evaluation, adaptive systems and personalization, and intelligent tutoring systems, while noting the scarcity of critical reflection on risks and the weak involvement of educational theory. Kasneci et al. (2023) similarly identified both opportunities and challenges in the use of large language models in education, including personalized learning on the one hand and over-reliance and threats to academic integrity on the other. In Islamic education, AI can support the learning of Qur'anic recitation, Arabic, and access to classical texts, and it can widen access to knowledge, which the Prophet described as an obligation upon every Muslim (Ibn Mājah, no. 224). However, Islamic education aims not merely at the transfer of information but at *taʾdīb*, the formation of *adab* and character (al-Attas, 1993), and it relies on the teacher–student relationship and the chain of transmission (*sanad*). AI can assist the teacher, but it cannot replace the educator (*murabbī*) as a moral exemplar.

***Daʿwah and Religious Information***

Digital technology has already transformed *daʿwah*. Fakhruroji (2019) showed how Islamic applications launched by popular preachers in Indonesia created new forms of religious engagement and spread religious authority into new media spaces. AI extends this transformation by enabling automatic translation of sermons, personalized religious content, and chatbots that answer religious questions. Yet the risks are considerable: AI may fabricate or misattribute hadith, generate deepfakes of preachers, and amplify divisive content through engagement-maximizing algorithms. Tsuria and Tsuria (2024) found that generative AI tools struggle to represent complex religious issues. These findings point to the need for verified Islamic datasets curated by credible institutions and for digital and AI literacy among Muslims, grounded in the Qur'anic principle of *tabayyun*.

***Economy and Work***

Frey and Osborne (2017) estimated that about 47 percent of employment in the United States was at high risk of computerization, while Acemoglu and Restrepo (2019) argued that automation displaces workers from some tasks but can also create new tasks, so that its net effect depends on the balance between the two. The economic power generated by AI also tends to be concentrated in a small number of firms that control data and computing infrastructure (Crawford, 2021; Zuboff, 2019). Islamic economic ethics, which honors work, mandates redistribution through *zakāh*, and warns against wealth circulating only among the rich (QS. al-Ḥashr [59]: 7), offers principles for addressing displacement and concentration. In the field of Islamic finance, AI can improve efficiency and *sharīʿah* screening, but its algorithms must themselves be subject to *sharīʿah* governance, particularly regarding transparency and the avoidance of excessive uncertainty (*gharar*).

***Religious Authority***

The authority of the *ʿulamāʾ* has historically rested on their role as custodians of the tradition (Zaman, 2002), but the internet has already fragmented this authority by enabling new voices to compete for religious attention (Bunt, 2018; Campbell, 2012). AI adds a qualitatively new layer: systems that do not merely transmit religious content but generate it, including answers that resemble *fatwās*. The Prophet warned that whoever is given a *fatwā* without

knowledge, the sin falls upon the one who issued it (Abū Dāwūd, no. 3657), which underscores that issuing religious rulings is an act of responsibility that requires knowledge of texts, context, intentions, and objectives. An AI system cannot bear this responsibility. Recent studies of chatbot-based *fatwā* services reach a similar conclusion, describing AI as a tool that may support but not replace the *muftī* (Ahmed, 2024), and Indonesian research comparing ChatGPT with collective deliberation in Bahtsul Masail points to the continuing importance of scholarly forums (Faizin et al., 2025). AI can, however, assist qualified scholars by searching large corpora and collating opinions, supporting what may be called augmented rather than automated *ijtihād*. Table 3 summarizes the opportunities, risks, and normative responses identified in the four domains.

Table 3 Opportunities, Risks, and Islamic Normative Responses in Four Social Domains

| Domain | Opportunities | Risks | Islamic normative response |
|---|---|---|---|
| Education | Personalized learning; support for Qur'an and Arabic learning; wider access to texts | Over-reliance; academic dishonesty; weakening of teacher–student relationship | AI as an aid to *taʾdīb*; preservation of *sanad* and the role of the *murabbī* |
| *Daʿwah* | Translation, wider reach, personalized content | Fabricated hadith, deepfakes, algorithmic amplification of divisive content | *Tabayyun*; curated and verified Islamic datasets; AI literacy |
| Economy | Productivity, Islamic fintech, *sharīʿah* screening | Job displacement; concentration of wealth and data | Distributive justice, *zakāh*, *sharīʿah* governance of algorithms |
| Religious authority | Support for scholars in searching and collating sources | Automated pseudo-*fatwās*; further fragmentation of authority | Augmented, not automated, *ijtihād*; responsibility kept with qualified scholars |

## Discussion

The findings support the central proposition of this study. Across all three dimensions, the Islamic tradition neither rejects AI nor accepts it uncritically; it evaluates AI according to its purposes and consequences and places it within a hierarchy of values in which human dignity and moral responsibility take precedence. Regarding the first research question, *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*, *ʿadl*, *amānah*, and *maṣlaḥah* together form a coherent normative framework that addresses accountability, privacy, and algorithmic bias. Regarding the second, Islamic epistemology provides clear grounds for positioning AI as a tool rather than a source of truth. Regarding the third, AI brings both opportunities and risks to education, *daʿwah*, the economy, and religious authority, and in each domain Islamic principles suggest concrete responses.

These results show substantial convergence with mainstream AI ethics. The principles of justice, responsibility, non-maleficence, and privacy identified by Jobin et al. (2019) and Floridi and Cowls (2019) have clear counterparts in *ʿadl*, *amānah*, the prohibition of harm, and the prohibition of spying. This convergence suggests that Islamic ethics can participate constructively in global AI governance rather than standing apart from it. However, the Islamic framework also extends mainstream approaches in at least three respects. First, it offers a shared teleology. Mittelstadt (2019) argued that AI ethics lacks the common aims that make medical ethics workable; *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* supplies such aims in the form of the five essentials. Second, it offers a method for resolving conflicts between principles. Hagendorff (2020) observed that ethical guidelines rarely explain what to do when principles collide, whereas the

levels of *ḍarūriyyāt*, *ḥājiyyāt*, and *taḥsīniyyāt*, together with the precedence of harm prevention over benefit, provide a structured way of prioritizing. Third, it grounds ethics in accountability before God, which addresses the motivational gap between knowing principles and acting on them.

The results are consistent with Raquib et al. (2022) in emphasizing virtue and character, and with Elmahjub (2023) in treating *maṣlaḥah* as a benchmark within a pluralist landscape of AI ethics. They also respond to the call by Mohamed et al. (2020) for AI governance to draw on perspectives beyond the dominant centers of technology production. At the same time, this study differs from approaches that reduce the Islamic response to AI to a classification of permissible and forbidden uses. By examining ethics together with epistemology and social transformation, it shows that the legal status of a given use cannot be properly determined without asking what kind of knowledge AI produces and how it reshapes communities and institutions.

On the epistemological dimension, the findings agree with the critiques of Bender et al. (2021) and Floridi and Chiriatti (2020), which warn against attributing understanding to language models. The Islamic tradition adds to these critiques a developed culture of verification, embodied in *isnād* criticism and the Qur'anic command of *tabayyun*. This offers Muslim societies an indigenous resource for AI literacy: the question "what is the source and can it be verified?" has deep roots in the tradition. This is significant because, as Reed (2021) and Tsuria and Tsuria (2024) suggest, users may come to treat AI systems as authoritative voices on religion, which would invert the hierarchy of epistemic authority described in Figure 2.

On the social dimension, the findings confirm digital religion research showing that digital media fragment religious authority (Bunt, 2018; Campbell, 2012). Yet they also suggest that AI represents a qualitative shift. Earlier digital media changed who could speak about religion; generative AI changes what produces religious speech. The question of authority therefore moves from "who is speaking?" to "who, or what, composed this answer, and who is responsible for it?" The Islamic insistence that responsibility belongs only to accountable human beings provides a principled answer to this new question.

These findings have practical implications. Policymakers in Muslim-majority countries such as Indonesia could incorporate *maqāṣid*-based impact assessment into national AI governance, building on the moderate (*wasaṭiyyah*) orientation toward AI already visible among Indonesian religious leaders and educators (Wong-A-Foe, 2025). Islamic educational institutions, including madrasahs, pesantren, and Islamic universities, could integrate AI literacy grounded in *adab* and *tabayyun* into their curricula. Religious organizations and fatwa bodies could develop guidance on the use of AI in *daʿwah* and in the preparation of religious opinions, and could support the creation of verified Islamic datasets. Developers serving Muslim users could adopt bias audits, transparency measures, and clear lines of human accountability.

This study has several limitations. First, it is conceptual and based on library research, so its findings have not been tested empirically. Second, the interpretation of Islamic sources relies mainly on Sunni classical scholarship, and other schools of thought may offer different emphases. Third, AI technology is changing rapidly, so specific examples may soon be outdated, although the underlying principles are expected to remain relevant. Fourth, Muslim societies are diverse, and the framework proposed here may apply differently across national,

cultural, and economic contexts. Future research could examine empirically how teachers and students in pesantren and madrasahs use AI, survey Muslim attitudes toward AI-generated religious content, develop measurable indicators for *maqāṣid*-based AI assessment, and compare Islamic approaches with the AI ethics of other religious traditions.

## Conclusion

This article has examined the relationship between Islam and artificial intelligence through the dimensions of ethics, epistemology, and social transformation. Ethically, it has shown that *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*, *ʿadl*, *amānah*, and *maṣlaḥah* provide a normative framework for assessing AI, particularly with respect to accountability, privacy, and algorithmic bias, and that this framework both converges with and extends mainstream AI ethics by offering shared aims, a method for prioritizing principles, and a grounding in moral accountability. Epistemologically, it has argued that AI outputs do not constitute *ʿilm* in the Islamic sense, because they lack understanding, verifiable provenance, and an accountable author; AI must therefore be positioned as a tool (*wasīlah*) rather than a source of truth, subordinate to revelation, qualified scholarship, and human reason. Socially, it has shown that AI brings real opportunities and real risks to education, *daʿwah*, the economy, and religious authority in Muslim societies.

The overall conclusion is that Islam does not reject technological progress. It calls instead for the integration of AI within a value-based framework that places human dignity and moral responsibility at the center. Theoretically, this article contributes an integrative framework that connects Islamic ethics, epistemology, and social analysis in the study of AI. Practically, it offers direction for policymakers, educators, religious institutions, and developers. Further empirical research is needed to test and refine this framework in concrete settings, so that Muslim societies can engage with AI not merely as consumers of technology but as contributors to its ethical shaping.

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## Conflict of interests

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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