

Maintaining *Fitrah* in the Digital Era: An Islamic Philosophical Framework Based on *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* for Early Childhood Education

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Abstract: Digital transformation has reshaped the early childhood education (ECE) ecosystem while introducing new challenges regarding the maintaining of *fitrah*. This research aims to develop an Islamic educational philosophy framework that reconstructs the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* into a digital pedagogy paradigm oriented toward the protection of *fitrah*. The research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing content analysis and a philosophical-interpretative review of classical and contemporary literature concerning *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, Islamic education, early childhood development, and digital technology. The findings indicate that the five universal objectives of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*—*ḥifẓ al-dīn*, *ḥifẓ al-'aql*, *ḥifẓ al-nafs*, *ḥifẓ al-nasl* and *ḥifẓ al-māl* - can be reconstructed as pedagogical principles capable of addressing both the opportunities and risks associated with digital media exposure regarding a child's spiritual, cognitive, moral, social, and psychological development. Based on these findings, the study develops a *maqāṣid*-based “*Digital Fitrah Protection Model*” (DFPM) comprising four integrated dimensions: ontological foundation, epistemological mediation, ethical habituation, and community-based supervision. This model makes a conceptual contribution by bridging classical Islamic educational philosophy with contemporary digital pedagogy, while providing an operational framework for ECE curriculum development, the strengthening of family-school partnerships, and the formulation of digital literacy policies oriented toward protecting the child's holistic development.

Key words: *nature; maqāṣid al-sharī'ah; early childhood education programs; digital pedagogy; Islamic education; digital literacy; holistic development of children.*

Prologue

The twenty-first century has ushered in a digital revolution of extraordinary scope, fundamentally altering the conditions under which children grow, learn, and develop their moral and cognitive identities. For children aged zero to eight—the period classified by developmental psychologists as early childhood—sustained digital media exposure occurs at critical neurobiological junctures, with formative implications for cognitive architecture, emotional regulation, social bonding, and spiritual orientation (Sigman, 2012). These developmental realities pose acute challenges for educators and families who seek to cultivate not only cognitive competencies but also moral integrity, spiritual rootedness, and communal responsibility in young children.

Within the Islamic intellectual tradition, the educational mission of early childhood is encapsulated in the concept of *fitrah*—the primordial, God-given disposition toward virtue, *tawhīd* (divine unity), and ethical agency with which every human being is endowed at birth. The Prophet Muhammad articulated this principle unambiguously:

حَدَّثَنَا آدَمُ، حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ أَبِي ذَنْبٍ، عَنْ الزُّهْرِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - قَالَ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ " كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُولَدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ، فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ، كَمَثَلِ الْبَيْهَمَةِ تُنْتَجُ الْبَيْهَمَةُ (البخاري : 1385)

“Every newborn is born in a state of *fitrah*; it is his parents who make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Zoroastrian” (Muhammad Bin Ismail AlBukhari, 2018, no.1385). This hadith establishes the dual role of environment and intentional formation in either nurturing or distorting the child's innate orientation toward goodness and divine consciousness (التقوي).

Contemporary scholarship has increasingly recognized that digital environments constitute a new and powerful environmental force capable of shaping—or disfiguring—the *fitrah* of young children. Research documents correlations between early and intensive screen exposure and outcomes including diminished attention spans, impaired language acquisition, disrupted sleep, increased aggression, and reduced empathic capacity (Anderson & Subrahmanyam, 2017). From an Islamic educational perspective, these empirical findings raise profound normative questions: What pedagogical obligations do Muslim educators, parents, and policymakers bear in the digital age? How should Islamic educational theory respond to challenges that classical scholars could not have

anticipated? And what resources within the Islamic tradition are available for constructing principled, theoretically coherent responses?

This article proposes that the doctrine of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*—the higher objectives or purposes of Islamic law—provides the most comprehensive and internally coherent theoretical basis for addressing these questions. Developed systematically by classical jurists including al-Ghazālī (d. 1111 CE), al-Shāṭibī (d. 1388 CE), and extended by modern scholars such as Muhammad 'Allāl al-Fāsī, Ṭāhir ibn 'Āshūr, and Jasser Auda, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* articulates a teleological framework in which Islamic norms are oriented toward the realization of human well-being (*maṣlaḥah*) in both its individual and collective dimensions. The five universal necessities—religion (*dīn*), intellect (*'aql*), progeny (*nasl*), life (*nafs*), and wealth (*māl*)—provide an integrative framework that is simultaneously theocentric, anthropological, and socially embedded.

This study proceeds through three interrelated objectives: (1) to analyze the concept of *fitrah* within the Islamic philosophical tradition and its implications for early childhood education; (2) to map the five *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* onto the specific challenges posed by digital technology in ECE contexts; and (3) to construct a coherent, practically applicable framework—designated the Digital Fitrah Protection Model (DFPM)—capable of guiding pedagogical practice, institutional design, and policy formation. The article thus contributes to the growing interdisciplinary field at the intersection of Islamic philosophy, educational theory, and digital media studies.

Literature Review

The Concept of Fitrah in Islamic Thought

The term *fitrah* (فِطْرَة) derives from the Arabic root ف-ط-ر meaning to create, originate, or cleave open. In its Quranic usage :
فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ
وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (٣٠)

Fitrah refers to the primordial nature upon which God created humanity—a nature intrinsically oriented toward recognition of divine unity (*tawḥīd*) and ethical goodness. Classical exegetes and theologians offered varying but complementary interpretations: al-Māwardī (d. 1058 CE) understood *fitrah* as the innate capacity for faith; Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 1350 CE) elaborated it as a comprehensive disposition encompassing rationality, moral intuition, aesthetic sensibility, and spiritual yearning; while al-Rāghib al-

Iṣfahānī (d. c. 1108 CE) connected it to the human being's unique ontological constitution as khalīfah (vicegerent) on earth.

Modern Islamic educational philosophers have extended these classical analyses to engage contemporary developmental contexts. Ashraf (1985) argued that fitrah-based education must prioritize the integration of spiritual, intellectual, and moral dimensions in a unified pedagogical vision (Wagner, 1987). Al-Attas in his work states that Wan Daud (1998) places fitrah as the center of Islamic philosophy of knowledge, arguing that authentic education is fundamentally the process of actualizing the human being's God-given potential through both revealed (*naqlī*) and rational (*'aqlī*) sources of knowledge (S. M. N. Al-Attas, 1994). More recently, scholars including Miskawayh, al-Attas, and Langgulung have engaged fitrah as the foundational anthropological premise of Islamic educational philosophy, providing the normative basis for critiquing secular-materialist educational paradigms.

Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah: Classical Foundations and Contemporary Applications

The intellectual history of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* spans more than a millennium, with significant contributions from al-Juwaynī (d. 1085 CE), al-Ghazālī (d. 1111 CE), and the systematization achieved by al-Shāṭibī in his monumental *al-Muwāfaqāt*. Al-Shāṭibī distinguished between three categories of objectives: *ḍarūriyyāt* (necessities), *ḥājiyyāt* (needs), and *taḥsīniyyāt* (embellishments), arguing that Islamic law in its totality aims at the preservation and promotion of these objectives in both their individual and collective dimensions (Abu Ishaq Al-Shatibi, 2003).

Contemporary scholars have significantly expanded and reconceptualized the *maqāṣid* framework. Ibn 'Āshūr proposed adding human dignity (*karāmah al-insaniyah*) and freedom (*ḥurriyyah*) to the classical five (Ibn 'Ashur, 2019). Auda offered a systems-thinking approach to *maqāṣid*, arguing that the framework should be reconceptualized as a multi-dimensional, dynamic system rather than a static checklist (Auda, 2008). El-Mesawi applied *maqāṣid* to contemporary social challenges including education, family, and governance. These developments have rendered *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* an increasingly versatile and robust framework for Islamic bioethics, economics, political philosophy, and—most relevantly for the present study—educational theory (El-Mesawi, 2008).

Applications of maqāṣid to education have been explored by scholars including Kamali (2008), who argued that Islamic educational reform requires explicit alignment with maqāṣid principles (KAMALI, 2019). Steven provides an interesting explanation in this regard, stating that The quality of digital education is not determined by the amount of technology used, but by the teacher's ability to integrate technology pedagogically so as to enrich social interactions, broaden learning experiences, and improve children's development (Steven J. Howard et al., 2025).

Digital Technology and Early Childhood Development: Empirical Landscape

The empirical literature on digital technology and early childhood development reveals a complex and contested landscape. Longitudinal research by Anderson demonstrated that children with higher levels of recreational screen time at age two exhibited lower cognitive performance at age five across measures of language, attention, and executive function (Anderson & Subrahmanyam, 2017). Radesky and Christakis documented associations between mobile device use and reduced parent-child verbal interactions, which represent a critical substrate for language and social-emotional development (Radesky & Christakis, 2016). Twenge and Campbell argued for a broader generational shift characterized by increased anxiety, depression, and social isolation among digital natives (Twenge & Campbell, 2018).

However, the research landscape is not uniformly negative. Strouse and Troseth demonstrated that high-quality interactive video content, when accompanied by active parental mediation, can support language learning in toddlers (Strouse & Troseth, 2014). Hirsh-Pasek proposed a framework distinguishing between "mind-numbing" and "mind-expanding" digital experiences, arguing that the quality of digital engagement, not mere quantity, is the decisive variable. These nuances are significant for Islamic educational frameworks, which must articulate principled criteria for distinguishing beneficial from harmful digital engagement rather than adopting blanket prohibitionist or permissivist positions (Hirsh-Pasek et al., 2015).

Gaps in the Literature

Despite the growing literature on both maqāṣid al-sharī'ah and digital childhood, a systematic philosophical framework integrating

these domains is conspicuously absent from the literature. Existing Islamic perspectives on digital media tend toward either uncritical adoption (technophilia) or unreflective rejection (technophobia), without the theoretical rigor that the maqāṣid framework can provide. Similarly, secular developmental literature on digital childhood typically lacks the anthropological depth, normative precision, and community-embedded perspective that Islamic philosophy offers. This article seeks to address this gap by constructing a framework that is simultaneously theologically grounded, philosophically coherent, and practically applicable.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative philosophical research design, combining interpretive content analysis of primary Islamic sources (Quranic texts, hadith collections, and classical jurisprudential treatises) with a critical literature review of contemporary scholarship in Islamic education, developmental psychology, and digital media studies. This methodology is appropriate for philosophical inquiry aimed at theory construction, where the goal is the systematic development and justification of a normative framework rather than the testing of empirical hypotheses (Creswell, 2007).

Data Sources and Analytical Approach

Primary sources include the Quran (multiple tafsīr works consulted), the hadith collections (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, and hadith collections), classical jurisprudential texts (*al-Ghazālī's Ihya' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, *al-Shāṭibī's al-Muwāfaqāt*, *Ibn al-Qayyim's Tuhfat al-Mawdūd*), and modern Islamic educational philosophy (al-Attas, Langgulung, Ashraf,). Secondary sources encompass peer-reviewed articles and books in developmental psychology, digital media studies, and Islamic educational philosophy.

Analytical procedures followed the hermeneutical approach articulated by Ricoeur (1981) and adapted for Islamic philosophical inquiry by Abu-Rabi (2004), involving iterative cycles of interpretation, contextualization, and critical evaluation. The maqāṣid framework was operationalized as an analytical lens for identifying, categorizing, and assessing digital challenges to fitrah in ECE (Early Childhood Education) contexts. Framework construction followed the

methodological principles of normative theory-building as outlined by Rawls (1999) and adapted for Islamic contexts by Ramadan (2009).

Findings and Discussion

Mapping Digital Challenges onto the Five Maqāṣid

Systematic analysis reveals that digital technology in early childhood contexts poses distinct but interrelated challenges to each of the five universal necessities of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. Table 1 presents a comprehensive mapping of these challenges and their corresponding educational responses.

Table 1. Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah Mapping to Digital Challenges in Early Childhood Education

Maqāṣid Element	Digital Challenge	Fitrah Implications	Educational Response
<i>Hifẓ al-Dīn</i> (Religion)	Secular digital content undermining <i>tawhīdic</i> worldview; exposure to ideologically conflicting material	Erosion of God-consciousness; weakening of Islamic identity formation in critical developmental period	Integration of Quranic narratives; digital content filtering; spiritually infused screen-time rituals
<i>Hifẓ al-ʿAql</i> (Intellect)	Passive screen consumption reducing critical thinking; attention fragmentation; cognitive overload	Impaired executive function; reduced imaginative and reflective capacity; shallow information processing	Mindful technology pedagogy; structured offline periods; Socratic questioning practices
<i>Hifẓ al-Nasl</i> (Progeny)	Disruption of family communication patterns; reduced parent-child	Weakened attachment relationships; distorted family roles; threats to gender identity	Family media plans; device-free bonding time; values-based media selection criteria

	bonding; gender- blurring content	formation	
<i>Hifz al-Nafs</i> (Life)	Sedentary screen behaviour; sleep disruption; anxiety and psychological harm from inappropriate content	Physical health impairment; emotional dysregulation; diminished sense of embodied spiritual identity	Screen-time limits; physical- digital balance curriculum; emotional literacy programmes
<i>Hifz al-Māl</i> (Wealth)	Addictive consumption patterns; in- app purchasing; digital dependency reducing real- world competencies	Materialism; impaired self- regulation; reduced capacity for productive economic agency	Financial literacy for children; emphasis on intrinsic motivation; collaborative rather than commercial digital play

The Digital Fitrah Protection Model (DFPM)

Building on the *maqāsid* mapping, this study proposes the Digital Fitrah Protection Model (DFPM)¹—a normative pedagogical framework comprising four interconnected dimensions. The DFPM is not conceived as a rigid prescription but as a flexible, context-sensitive framework that can be adapted to diverse Muslim educational contexts, from pesantren-based preschools in Indonesia to Islamic private schools in Western minority contexts.

¹ It is a framework or approach to parenting and character education based on Islamic values, aimed at protecting a child's innate nature (*fitrah*) from negative influences and moral distortions in the digital space.

Ontological Grounding (al-Ta'sīl al-Wujūdī)

The first dimension of the Digital Fitrah Protection Model (DFPM) concerns the ontological foundation that shapes a child's understanding of the nature of the self, reality, and their relationship with God. This perspective draws upon the Islamic anthropology developed by Ibn al-Qayyim, which views human beings as created with the *fitrah* of *tawhid*—a primordial inclination to recognize, acknowledge, and worship Allah as the One and Only God. Within this framework, education serves not merely as a process of knowledge transfer, but as an endeavor to preserve and cultivate this innate potential, ensuring it remains aligned with the purpose of human creation (Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, 2003).

This perspective aligns with the philosophy of Islamic education espoused by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, which asserts that the primary goal of education is the cultivation of a civilized human being (*insān adabī*) through the process of instilling true knowledge (*ta'dīb*), thereby enabling learners to recognize their position within the cosmic order and society, as well as their relationship with Allah (S. M. Al-Attas, 1980). Based on this perspective, early childhood education should establish the internalization of *tawhid* (divine oneness) awareness as the ontological foundation underpinning the entire process of character formation. This awareness of *tawhid* is understood not merely as a mastery of theological concepts but also as encompassing affective, spiritual, and cognitive dimensions that shape the child's life orientation toward divine values.

Pedagogically, the implementation of the ontological dimension within the Digital Fitrah Protection Model (DFPM) is realized by internalizing *tawhid* (monotheistic) values into children's daily learning experiences. A key strategy involves incorporating the recitation of Quranic verses and prayers into the daily routines of Early Childhood Education (PAUD) institutions. Furthermore, the ontological dimension is cultivated through the construction of narratives (narrative pedagogy). The use of Quranic stories and Prophetic traditions helps shape a coherent moral cosmology, thereby providing children with a relatively stable value framework when interacting with diverse digital content—content that is often fragmentary, instantaneous, and not always aligned with Islamic ethical principles (S. M. Al-Attas, 1980).

Epistemological Mediation (al-Wasāṭah al-Ma'rifiyyah)

The second dimension addresses the epistemological challenge posed by digital information environments: the abundance, fragmentation, and frequently unverified character of digital content. Drawing on the Islamic concept of *tabayyun* (verification and critical scrutiny, QS. Al-Hujurat: 6.), this dimension proposes that ECE curricula cultivate in young children the cognitive dispositions and basic epistemic skills necessary for thoughtful engagement with information.

For children in the zero-to-eight age range, epistemological mediation is necessarily graduated and developmentally calibrated. For infants and toddlers (0–3 years), mediation is primarily parental and environmental: caregivers function as the child's epistemological proxies, selecting, filtering, and contextualizing all digital content (Goodall et al., 2025). For preschoolers (3–5 years), mediation becomes increasingly dialogical: caregivers engage children in simple conversations about what they see and hear, modelling the habit of questioning and reflection (Soyoof et al., 2024). For early school-age children (6–8 years), mediation transitions toward scaffolded autonomy: children begin to practice basic information evaluation skills, supported by structured pedagogical frameworks derived from classical Islamic scholarship on the ethics of knowledge (*adab al-ʿilm*) (Mermelshtine, 2017).

Ethical Habituation (al-Ta'dīb al-Akhlāqī)

The third dimension draws on the classical Islamic concept of *ta'dīb*—the comprehensive process of moral formation through disciplined habituation—to address the ethical challenges of digital engagement. Al-Attas famously argued that the fundamental problem of Muslim education is not the provision of knowledge but the loss of *adab* (moral-aesthetic sensibility and proper comportment), and that educational reform must center on its recovery (Yunita et al., 2025). This insight is acutely relevant to digital ECE contexts, where the dominant behavioral patterns encouraged by digital platforms—passive consumption, instant gratification, performative self-presentation, and competitive comparison—are directly antithetical to the virtues of patience (*ṣabr*), gratitude (*shukr*), contentment (*qanā'ah*), and modesty (*ḥayā'*) that Islamic moral formation seeks to cultivate (Peters, 2013).

The application of digital technology, such as interactive videos, Islamic children's apps, and educational animations, has helped increase children's interest in learning, understanding of Islamic concepts, and participation in learning activities. Technology integration also strengthens the introduction of the values of manners, morals, worship, and monotheism in a contextual and enjoyable way. However, the use of digital technology must be balanced with direct familiarization with Islamic values to avoid diminishing children's social and spiritual interactions (Hairunnisa, 2024).

Community-Based Supervision (al-Riqābah al-Mujtama'iyah)

The fourth dimension addresses the irreducibly communal character of Islamic education and the insufficiency of individualistic approaches to digital governance in ECE. Drawing on the Quranic principle of *tawāṣī* (mutual enjoining of truth and patience; QS. Al-Ashr: 3) and the concept of *al-amr bi-l-ma'rūf wa-l-nahy 'an al-munkar* (QS. Ali Imran: 104). This dimension thus shows that effective maintaining of *fitrah* in the digital age requires coordinated action across social layers: families, schools, mosque communities, and broader civil society (Wastuti et al., 2025).

Community-based encompasses several interconnected mechanisms: family digital covenants, school-community partnerships, scholarly guidance networks and peer accountability. This dimension is particularly significant in Muslim-majority contexts such as Indonesia, where existing structures of community solidarity—including *pesantren* networks, *majelis ta'lim*, and mosque-based education—can be mobilized as resources for digital *fitrah* protection (Nainggolang et al., 2025).

Synthesis: The DFPM as an Integrative Framework

The four dimensions of the Digital Fitrah Protection Model (DFPM) are not understood as stages that unfold linearly or sequentially. Instead, they are integrative dimensions that interact with and reinforce one another to construct a holistic pedagogical vision. This approach aligns with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which asserts that individual development is shaped by dynamic interactions among interconnected environments rather than by a single factor operating in isolation (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This perspective is further reinforced by the concept of "whole-child education," which treats intellectual, moral, social, emotional, and

spiritual development as an inseparable whole. Conceptually, whole-child education is grounded in findings from developmental science indicating that cognitive development does not occur in isolation from social, emotional, or moral development. Consequently, educational success is measured not only by academic achievement but also by the development of character, resilience, empathy, social responsibility, and self-management skills (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

Each dimension within the DFPM serves a distinct function, yet their implementation occurs simultaneously to create an educational ecosystem capable of preserving, nurturing, and actualizing the innate nature (*fitrah*) of learners amidst digital dynamics. The effectiveness of the DFPM does not depend on the sequence in which the dimensions are applied, but rather on the synergy of all components in fostering an educational process that balances spiritual strengthening, character building, and digital literacy development with the involvement of families and the educational environment.

This perspective also shares significant common ground with Islamic thought. In the Islamic tradition, education is directed toward shaping individuals who develop in a balanced manner across the dimensions of the intellect (*'aql*), heart (*qalb*), spirit (*rūh*), character, and social conduct. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas emphasizes that the goal of education is to cultivate a refined, civilized human being (*ta'dīb*)—an individual capable of placing all things in their proper proportion based on knowledge and divine values (Hamka & Umarella, 2024). Thus, both the concept of "whole-child education" and the Islamic educational paradigm emphasize intellectual, moral, social, emotional, and spiritual development, requiring education to be designed as a process that harmoniously nurtures every dimension of the human being.

Implications

For Curriculum Design

The Digital Fitrah Protection Model (DFPM) holds significant implications for the development of Islamic Early Childhood Education (PIAUD) curricula. First, the curriculum needs to integrate digital literacy that focuses not only on technological proficiency but also on the cultivation of digital ethics grounded in Islamic values. Second, the curriculum must foster self-regulation, empathy, and reflective thinking skills—competencies that bolster a child's

resilience against risks in the digital environment. Strengthening these socio-emotional aspects has been shown to contribute to holistic child development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). Third, integrating Quranic values, stories of the prophets, and the practice of Islamic character traits into the learning process can reinforce a child's religious identity and character from an early age. From an Islamic educational perspective, the cultivation of etiquette and character is the primary goal of education; thus, technological mastery must always be guided by divine values and noble character (Hamka & Umarella, 2024).

For Educational Policy

At the policy level, the Digital Fitrah Protection Model (DFPM) emphasizes the importance of developing digital governance for Early Childhood Education (ECE) that aligns with the principles of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*. This approach directs digital policy not only toward security and technology utilization but also toward the protection of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*), and holistic child development (Auda, 2007).

In the Indonesian context, the integration of this principle aligns with the National Standards for Early Childhood Education—which emphasize the holistic development of students' religious values, character, and competencies—and with national education goals aimed at fostering individuals who possess faith, piety, and noble character, as mandated by Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. Consequently, *maqāṣid*-based digital governance can serve as a normative foundation for designing digital education policies that are appropriate for Indonesia's social, cultural, and religious context (Khanapi, 2003).

For Future Research

The methodology of this article is fundamentally philosophical and requires complementary empirical research. Future studies should examine the practical application of DFPM principles across diverse Early Childhood Education (ECE) contexts, employing mixed-methods designs capable of evaluating both process aspects—such as how the framework is operationalized by educators and families—and outcomes, including whether DFPM-aligned practices correlate with stronger indicators of *fitrah*, improved developmental outcomes, and more positive digital citizenship. Cross-cultural comparative research

would be highly valuable in assessing the extent to which this framework can be adapted to various social and institutional Muslim contexts.

Epilog

This study proposes the Digital Fitrah Protection Model (DFPM), comprising four interconnected dimensions: an ontological foundation, epistemological mediation, ethical habituation, and community-based oversight. Together, these dimensions form an integrative conceptual framework to guide curriculum design, pedagogical practices, educational institutional governance, and family upbringing within the digital ecosystem. The model expands contemporary Islamic educational discourse by linking the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* with child development theory, digital literacy, and educational ecology, thereby yielding an approach that is more adaptive to social change without disregarding Islam's normative orientation.

The article's theoretical contribution lies in the assertion that *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* provides a comprehensive philosophical foundation for constructing a digital education paradigm. This paradigm focuses not merely on digital safety or the mastery of technological competencies (digital literacy), but also on preserving a child's spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, and emotional integrity—manifesting the protection of *fitrah* (innate human nature). Consequently, the maintaining of *fitrah* is positioned as a dynamic, transformative, and continuous educational process—facilitated through learning experiences that consciously integrate religious, pedagogical, and developmental dimensions—rather than serving merely as a protective strategy that restricts access to digital technology.

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