

From Normative Objectives to Moral Agency: A Behavioral Mediation Framework for Maqasid al-Shariah

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Abstract

Although maqasid al-Shariah scholarship has increasingly addressed human welfare and institutional performance, the behavioral mechanisms through which normative objectives are translated into sustained individual and institutional practices remain under-theorized. This study conceptualizes moral values as behavioral mediators between maqasid objectives and preservation outcomes. Using qualitative normative-conceptual research, it integrates Qur'anic and Prophetic ethical foundations, classical maqasid scholarship, and contemporary studies of Islamic ethics, *maslahah*, institutional performance, and education through a hybrid deductive-inductive analysis. The findings show that moral values operate through two complementary pathways: constructive cultivation of protected goods and preventive restraint of harmful practices. Justice, honesty, mercy, wisdom, and self-restraint emerge as cross-cutting virtues operating across intrapersonal, interpersonal/institutional, and maqasid-preservation levels. The study proposes a behavioral-mediation framework in which maqasid objectives shape moral dispositions, which guide individual and institutional practices and ultimately contribute to multidimensional preservation outcomes. The framework extends classical and systems-oriented maqasid theory by explaining the behavioral link between normative purposes and lived practice and provides a conceptual basis for moral formation and subsequent empirical research.

Keywords: *maqasid al-Shariah; moral values; behavioral mediation; Islamic ethics; moral agency; Islamic education*

INTRODUCTION

Maqasid al-Shariah has increasingly moved from the margins of Islamic legal theory to the center of contemporary debates on ethics, governance, finance, education, and human development. This development reflects a broader intellectual shift in Islamic studies: from asking primarily whether particular acts conform to legal rules toward examining whether legal and institutional practices actually realize the higher purposes that those rules are intended to serve. In its classical formulation, particularly in the works of al-Ghazali and al-Shatibi, maqasid theory identifies the protection of religion (*hifz al-din*), life (*hifz al-nafs*), intellect (*hifz al-'aql*), lineage (*hifz al-nasl*), and wealth (*hifz al-mal*) as essential to human and social order (Al-Ghazali, 1993; Mas'ud, 2000; Zuhdi & Abdun Nasir, 2024). Subsequent developments, particularly Ibn Ashur's reformist approach and Auda's systems-oriented reconstruction, have expanded this framework beyond a static taxonomy of protected interests toward questions of social reform, multidimensionality, interdependence, and

human flourishing (Ashur, 2006; Auda, 2021). Maqasid has consequently become not merely a classificatory concept in Islamic jurisprudence but an increasingly influential framework for evaluating whether contemporary practices substantively embody the purposes of Shariah.

This expansion, however, generates an important theoretical problem. Identifying desirable objectives does not in itself explain how those objectives become socially realized. A legal system may formally recognize the protection of life, wealth, intellect, religion, and family, while the practices of individuals and institutions continue to undermine precisely those goods (Saidon et al., 2017; Sukri & Fauzan, 2025). Similarly, an organization may demonstrate formal Shariah compliance without necessarily producing ethically desirable outcomes (Farooq, 2024). The central theoretical question is therefore no longer only what Shariah seeks to preserve, but through what mechanisms normative objectives are translated into durable patterns of individual conduct and institutional practice. This distinction between normative ends and their behavioral realization is crucial because maqasid cannot operate directly upon social outcomes. Their realization depends on agents who interpret norms, exercise judgment, regulate their conduct, interact with others, and reproduce particular values through institutional routines.

Contemporary maqasid scholarship has approached this problem from several directions. A *maslahah*-oriented strand emphasizes public welfare and social responsibility, demonstrating how Islamic legal reasoning may respond to changing social circumstances while remaining oriented toward substantive human goods (Lobah, 2016; Muhtar et al., 2026; Saidon et al., 2017). A second strand has developed ethical-performance frameworks that translate maqasid into dimensions for assessing institutions, particularly within Islamic economics and finance. Such approaches have been important in shifting evaluation from formal compliance toward substantive ethical and social performance (Bedoui & Mansour, 2015; Mergaliyev et al., 2021). A third strand, associated particularly with systems-oriented maqasid theory, emphasizes interdependence, multidimensional consequences, and the inadequacy of treating the five essentials as isolated categories (Auda, 2008). Meanwhile, virtue-oriented scholarship has redirected attention toward moral agency, character formation, the cultivation of the soul, and the relationship between jurisprudential norms and moral excellence (Jacobs & Meyer, 2024; Obaid et al., 2024).

Recent scholarship further demonstrates both the analytical potential and the unresolved difficulties of operationalizing maqasid. Obaid et al. (2024), for example, position maqasid as higher ethical objectives through which institutional performance can be evaluated, thereby challenging approaches that equate Shariah compliance with technical conformity alone. Sulaeman et al. (2025) similarly integrate Islamic business ethics with maqasid across sectoral practices. Alias et al. (2024) cautions that contemporary appeals to maqasid may become conceptually thin when higher objectives are detached from a disciplined theory of Shariah and employed primarily to legitimize predetermined outcomes. The problem is also visible at the level of practice: Baharuddin et al. (2019) indicate that the meaning and operationalization of maqasid remain contested among practitioners. Beyond finance, Lokman et al. (2026) demonstrate the relevance of integrating Islamic ethical values and maqasid into digital competency, illustrating the growing demand for frameworks capable of connecting normative principles with concrete forms of responsible conduct.

Despite these developments, a significant theoretical gap remains between maqasid as normative objectives and maqasid as realized patterns of conduct. Existing studies have substantially advanced understanding of what should be protected, how maqasid may inform

contemporary legal reasoning, and how maqasid-oriented outcomes can be evaluated (Alias et al., 2025; Mubarrak et al., 2025). However, considerably less attention has been devoted to the mediating processes through which these normative objectives become repeated choices, social relationships, and institutional routines. Moral virtues are frequently acknowledged as desirable attributes, but they tend to appear as lists of ethical qualities rather than as theoretically specified mechanisms linking normative purposes to observable practice. Conversely, virtue-centered approaches illuminate moral character and ethical formation but do not always explain systematically how particular dispositions contribute to the constructive cultivation or preventive protection of the five essential objectives. What remains insufficiently theorized, therefore, is the behavioral infrastructure between normative purpose and preservation outcome.

This missing middle has important theoretical consequences. Without specifying the mechanisms connecting objectives to conduct, maqasid analysis risks moving too quickly from normative propositions to desirable outcomes (Güney, 2024). For example, the protection of wealth cannot be explained solely through the existence of rules governing property and transactions; it also depends on honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and institutional accountability (Rohmanu & Rofiah, 2023). The protection of intellect similarly requires more than the prohibition of substances or practices that impair cognition; it also depends on epistemic virtues such as intellectual honesty, verification, disciplined judgment, and resistance to misinformation (Kayadibi, 2019). Moreover, the protection of life requires not only prohibitions against physical harm but also justice, mercy, restraint, and institutional procedures capable of protecting vulnerable persons (Yunos et al., 2026). Thus moral values, from this perspective, are not supplementary ornaments attached to maqasid. They may constitute part of the mechanism through which protected objectives acquire behavioral and institutional expression.

This article develops this proposition by conceptualizing moral values as behavioral mediators between maqasid objectives and preservation outcomes, operating through a four-stage framework in which maqasid objectives shape moral virtues and dispositions, which guide individual and institutional practices and ultimately contribute to preservation outcomes as stated by Mehellou et al. (2023). Within this framework, moral virtues neither replace legal norms nor constitute autonomous sources of law. Rather, they function as ethically structured mediating mechanisms through which individuals and institutions translate normative objectives into patterns of judgment, conduct, interaction, and organizational routine. This mediation occurs at three interconnected levels: intrapersonal regulation, where virtues shape intentions, desires, emotions, and judgment; interpersonal and institutional regulation, where they structure relationships, procedures, communication, and resource allocation; and maqasid-level preservation, where these practices contribute to protecting or strengthening essential human goods (Nur et al., 2020). The framework further distinguishes between two complementary pathways of preservation: constructive cultivation, through which protected goods are established and strengthened, and preventive restraint, through which the causes of corruption, harm, and loss are constrained.

Therefore, the study addresses three interconnected questions: (1) Through what mechanisms do moral values contribute to the constructive and preventive preservation of the five essential objectives of Shariah? (2) How do cross-cutting virtues operate across intrapersonal, interpersonal/institutional, and maqasid-preservation levels? (3) What theoretically justified implications does this framework generate for Islamic education and moral formation? These questions are examined through a qualitative normative-conceptual

analysis integrating Qur'anic and Prophetic ethical foundations, classical maqasid scholarship, and contemporary studies of Islamic ethics, maslahah, institutional performance, human development, and education.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative normative-conceptual research design to examine how moral values mediate the relationship between maqasid al-Shariah and their realization in individual and institutional practices (McPherson & Plunkett, 2020; Racines, 2024). Rather than seeking statistical generalization, the study aimed to reconstruct conceptual relationships and develop a theoretically grounded framework of moral mediation. The analysis drew on three interconnected bodies of literature: (1) primary Islamic sources, particularly Qur'anic verses and Prophetic teachings relevant to moral values and human welfare; (2) foundational works on maqasid al-Shariah, particularly those of al-Ghazali, al-Shatibi, Ibn Ashur, and contemporary systems-oriented scholarship; and (3) contemporary peer-reviewed studies addressing Islamic ethics, maslahah, moral agency, institutional ethical performance, human development, and education. Contemporary literature published primarily between 2000 and 2026 was purposively selected based on its direct relevance to the conceptual relationship between moral values, human conduct, and the preservation of maqasid.

The sources were analyzed through a hybrid deductive–inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2022). Deductively, the analysis was guided by the five essential objectives—preservation of religion (hifz al-din), life (hifz al-nafs), intellect (hifz al-'aql), lineage and honor (hifz al-nasl/al-'ird), and wealth (hifz al-mal)—as well as the distinction between constructive preservation and preventive protection. Inductively, recurring moral virtues, behavioral mechanisms, and cross-objective relationships were identified across the selected sources. These patterns were then conceptually synthesized to explain how moral dispositions shape individual conduct and institutional routines and how these practices contribute to maqasid-preservation outcomes. This analytical process resulted in the proposed behavioral mediation framework linking maqasid objectives, moral virtues and dispositions, individual and institutional practices, and preservation outcomes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis generated three interrelated findings corresponding to the research questions. First, moral values contribute to the preservation of the five essential objectives through two complementary mechanisms: constructive cultivation and preventive restraint. Second, virtues do not operate as isolated moral attributes attached to particular maqasid but function across intrapersonal, interpersonal/institutional, and preservation levels. Third, this behavioral-mediation framework suggests that Islamic education should move beyond the transmission of normative knowledge toward the formation of moral reasoning, responsible practice, and ethical institutional cultures. Taken together, these findings support a model in which maqasid are translated into lived outcomes through the mediating role of moral dispositions and their institutionalization in repeated practices.

Moral Values as Constructive and Preventive Mechanisms of Maqasid Preservation

The first finding demonstrates that moral values contribute to maqasid preservation through two interconnected pathways: they constructively cultivate conditions that sustain

protected goods while simultaneously preventing behaviors and practices that threaten them as stated by Mehellou et al. (2023). This distinction is theoretically significant because preservation cannot be reduced to protection from harm. A protected good must also be actively developed, sustained, and embedded in social practice. Moral values therefore operate not merely as responses to violations but as generative mechanisms through which the conditions necessary for human flourishing are continuously reproduced.

In the preservation of religion (hifz al-din), the analysis identifies tawhid, moderation (wasatiyyah), wisdom, commitment, and patience as central mediating virtues (Nur et al., 2020). Qur'anic orientations toward devotion to God (Qur'an 6:162), moderation (Qur'an 2:143), and wisdom in religious communication (Qur'an 16:125) indicate that religious preservation requires more than maintaining formal religious practices. Constructively, these virtues sustain disciplined worship, religious knowledge, balanced commitment, and responsible religious agency. Preventively, moderation and wisdom restrain extremism, manipulation of religious authority, aggression, and inconsistency between religious commitment and moral conduct. Hifz al-din is therefore not preserved by the intensity of religious expression alone but by forms of moral agency capable of translating religious commitment into responsible conduct.

A similar mechanism operates in the preservation of life (hifz al-nafs). Qur'anic prohibitions against unjust killing and the strong valuation of saving human life (Qur'an 17:33; 5:32) provide the normative foundation, but their social realization requires virtues that regulate both judgment and action. Justice ensures that the interests and dignity of others are recognized, mercy sensitizes agents to vulnerability, and self-restraint prevents anger, prejudice, or self-interest from becoming harmful conduct (Fuad, 2024). Constructively, these virtues support care, social solidarity, dignity, fair access to necessities, and institutional protection for vulnerable persons. Preventively, they restrain violence, oppression, humiliation, discrimination, and reckless harm. The preservation of life thus depends on the transformation of normative prohibitions into dispositions and institutional procedures that actively minimize vulnerability.

For the preservation of intellect (hifz al-'aql), the findings reveal an especially important relationship between moral virtue and epistemic responsibility. The Qur'anic command to verify consequential information (Qur'an 49:6), together with the prohibition of intoxicants that impair judgment (Qur'an 5:90), indicates that intellectual preservation encompasses both cognitive capacity and responsible knowledge practices. Intellectual honesty, self-control, sound judgment, the pursuit of beneficial knowledge, and caution toward doubtful information operate constructively by promoting learning, critical literacy, verification, and trustworthy knowledge production. Preventively, the same virtues protect individuals and communities from misinformation, plagiarism, manipulation, intoxicants, and other practices that impair judgment. In contemporary digital environments, this mechanism becomes particularly significant because misinformation can extend beyond hifz al-'aql to threaten reputation, wealth, social trust, and even life. This finding resonates with Akhter (2025) and Yunos et al. (2026), who connect Islamic ethical values and maqasid with ethically guided digital competency.

The preservation of lineage and honor (hifz al-nasl/al-'ird) reveals a relational mechanism. Qur'anic teachings concerning sexual responsibility, protection against false accusations, and affection and mercy within marriage (Qur'an 17:32; 24:4; 30:21) indicate that preservation involves more than biological continuity. Chastity, mercy, affection, forgiveness, and responsibility constructively support family stability, caregiving, dignified relationships,

responsible parenthood, and relational trust. Their preventive function is visible in restraints against exploitation, coercion, abandonment, violence, harassment, and reputational harm. The protected good is therefore sustained when moral dispositions become dependable patterns of responsibility within families and social institutions.

Finally, the preservation of wealth (*hifz al-mal*) illustrates how moral dispositions mediate between legal rules and trustworthy economic relationships. Qur'anic prohibitions against wrongful appropriation and corrupt consumption of property, together with the requirement of mutual consent in exchange (Qur'an 4:29; 2:188), provide the normative foundation. Yet the effective preservation of wealth depends on honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, benevolence, and moderation. Constructively, these virtues sustain productive activity, fair exchange, reliable contracts, charity, transparent accounting, and responsible stewardship. Preventively, they restrain fraud, theft, corruption, exploitation, deception, and waste. This distinction helps explain why formal Shariah compliance does not necessarily produce substantive ethical performance, a concern also identified in studies of Islamic financial institutions (Farooq, 2024; Güney, 2024; Mergaliyev et al., 2021).

Across the five objectives, a consistent mechanism therefore emerges: normative objectives identify the good to be protected, moral virtues shape the dispositions through which agents respond to that good, practices translate dispositions into observable conduct, and institutional routines stabilize these practices over time. This mechanism advances classical preservation theory by introducing an analytical layer between normative ends and preservation outcomes. Al-Ghazālī (1993) and al-Shātibī (1997) identify the essential goods and their significance to human welfare, while contemporary systems-oriented approaches emphasize their multidimensionality and interdependence. The present framework complements these perspectives by explaining how preservation may occur behaviorally through the constructive cultivation of beneficial practices and the preventive restraint of harmful ones.

Cross-Cutting Virtues across Intrapersonal, Institutional, and Maqasid Levels

The second finding challenges the assumption that each moral virtue can be assigned exclusively to a single maqasid. Instead, the analysis reveals a network of cross-cutting virtues, particularly justice, honesty, mercy, wisdom, and self-restraint, whose effects extend across several protected objectives (Norman & Ruhullah, 2024; Rohmanu & Rofiah, 2023). Their significance lies not only in the number of objectives to which they contribute but also in their movement across three levels of moral regulation: the intrapersonal, interpersonal/institutional, and maqasid-preservation levels. At the intrapersonal level, moral virtues regulate intention, desire, emotion, judgment, and practical reasoning. Self-restraint, for example, regulates impulses that may otherwise damage religious commitment, intellectual judgment, family responsibility, or economic behavior (Hodge et al., 2020). Intellectual honesty regulates the inclination to accept convenient but unsupported claims, while mercy shapes the moral perception of vulnerability and suffering. At this level, virtues function as internal dispositions that influence how agents perceive situations and select courses of action. However, virtue cannot remain exclusively internal if it is to contribute to maqasid preservation. At the interpersonal level, internal dispositions become observable practices. Honesty becomes truthful communication and reliable exchange; justice becomes fair treatment and impartial decision making; mercy becomes care and protection; and wisdom becomes responsible judgment and communication. Repetition converts these

actions into recognizable patterns of conduct. The movement from disposition to practice is therefore the first crucial mediating transition in the framework.

The institutional level extends this mechanism further by transforming individual ethical conduct into repeatable procedures and organizational expectations. Honesty, for example, may be institutionalized through transparent reporting, academic integrity systems, reliable accounting, or disclosure requirements. Justice may take institutional form through fair assessment, equitable procedures, protection against discrimination, and accountable decision making (Atkinson, 2020). Mercy may be expressed through institutional safeguards for vulnerable persons, while epistemic responsibility can become editorial standards, verification procedures, and responsible information governance. Institutionalization matters because *maqasid* preservation cannot depend exclusively on the moral character of individual actors. Ethical procedures create conditions in which responsible conduct becomes expected, reproducible, and less dependent on continuous external supervision (Garadian, 2026).

The final level concerns preservation outcomes. When virtues are repeatedly translated into practices and embedded in institutional routines, their effects may extend across multiple *maqasid* (Mehellou et al., 2023). Justice, for example, protects life through fair treatment but also wealth through equitable economic relations and lineage through responsible family arrangements. Honesty supports *hifz al-mal* through trustworthy transactions while simultaneously supporting *hifz al-'aql* through reliable knowledge and information. Mercy contributes to the preservation of life and family relationships, while wisdom influences religious communication, intellectual judgment, and institutional decision making. Self-restraint operates even more broadly by regulating religious behavior, consumption, sexuality, emotional reactions, and epistemic judgment.

This cross-objective character is theoretically important because it supports Auda's (2008) criticism of reductionist approaches to *maqasid*. The five essentials are analytically distinguishable, but their realization is socially interdependent. Damage to one protected good can cascade into others. Corruption, for example, initially appears to threaten *hifz al-mal* because it involves the unjust appropriation or allocation of resources. Yet institutionalized corruption may also reduce access to healthcare and thereby affect life, distort educational opportunities and thereby affect intellect, normalize dishonesty, and undermine public trust. The underlying mechanism is therefore broader than economic loss: institutionalized dishonesty can propagate harm across several *maqasid* simultaneously.

Digital misinformation illustrates the same relational structure. Its most immediate effect concerns *hifz al-'aql* because false information compromises knowledge and judgment. However, misinformation can also damage honor through defamation, wealth through fraud, and life through harmful health information or incitement. The Qur'anic principle of verification (Qur'an 49:6) can consequently be understood not merely as an individual communication ethic but as an epistemic virtue with multidimensional preservation effects. The sequence begins with an internal disposition to verify information, develops into responsible communicative practice, and can ultimately be institutionalized through academic standards, editorial procedures, or information-governance mechanisms.

These findings refine the proposed behavioral-mediation model by demonstrating that, rather than following a simple linear relationship in which a single virtue protects a specific objective, *maqasid* preservation operates through a multilevel and relational mechanism in which *maqasid* objectives shape moral dispositions, which inform interpersonal practices, become embedded in institutional routines, and ultimately contribute to multidimensional preservation outcomes. The model complements Auda's systems-oriented account by adding

a micro-to-meso explanation of how interdependence operates. It also differs from institutional performance frameworks such as those developed by Bedoui and Mansour (2015) and Mergaliyev et al. (2021). Whereas performance frameworks primarily assess whether organizations achieve desirable outcomes, the present model focuses on the preceding mechanisms that make such outcomes plausible. In this sense, moral mediation helps explain why institutions may satisfy technical compliance requirements while failing to realize higher ethical objectives when organizational incentives normalize opacity, opportunism, or indifference toward vulnerable stakeholders.

Implications for Islamic Education and Moral Formation

The third finding concerns the theoretical implications of the behavioral-mediation framework for Islamic education. These implications should be understood as conceptually derived propositions rather than empirically demonstrated educational effects. Because the present study does not examine students, classrooms, or educational interventions, it cannot establish that particular pedagogical strategies cause measurable improvements in moral behavior. Nevertheless, if moral virtues mediate between normative objectives and actual practices, the framework provides a theoretically grounded basis for reconsidering how *maqasid* and Islamic ethics are taught.

The first implication is that Islamic education should connect normative knowledge with moral reasoning. Teaching a legal ruling identifies what is required, permitted, or prohibited, but it does not necessarily enable learners to understand the protected good involved, the ethical disposition required to realize it, or the social consequences of particular forms of conduct (Beca, 2016). A *maqasid*-oriented pedagogy could therefore encourage students to ask interconnected questions: What human or social good is being protected? What virtue is required to protect it? What behavior expresses that virtue? What forms of harm must be prevented? And what institutional conditions enable responsible conduct to persist? Such questions connect legal knowledge with ethical reasoning without allowing subjective moral preference to replace established juristic methodology.

Second, the findings suggest that moral formation requires practice-oriented pedagogies rather than knowledge transmission alone. If virtues become socially meaningful through judgment and repeated conduct, educational practices should provide opportunities for students to exercise these capacities. Case analysis can develop judgment when competing interests are involved; evidence-verification activities can cultivate intellectual honesty and epistemic responsibility; reflective argument can encourage students to articulate the relationship between norms, virtues, and consequences; and stakeholder analysis can develop sensitivity to justice, vulnerability, and responsibility. Ritonga et al. (2025), for example, demonstrate the conceptual relevance of integrating values such as *amanah* and *ihsan* with *maqasid*-guided digital competency, indicating how technical capability may be connected with ethical responsibility.

Third, the framework shifts attention from individual moral education toward institutional moral formation. Educational institutions cannot credibly teach honesty while tolerating plagiarism, teach justice while maintaining opaque assessment procedures, or teach dignity while permitting humiliation and abuse (Byvaltsev et al., 2017). Moral education therefore involves not only curriculum content but also the ethical architecture of the institution itself. Fair assessment, academic integrity, transparent financial management, responsible digital practices, protection from harassment, and accountable leadership

represent institutional forms through which moral values become routine. From the perspective of behavioral mediation, these institutional arrangements are pedagogically significant because students encounter values not only as abstract concepts but also as lived organizational practices.

This point extends the conventional understanding of moral education. The proposed framework suggests that moral formation is not simply the internalization of virtues by individuals but a reciprocal relationship between moral agency and institutional environment. Individuals shape institutional practices through their conduct, while institutional routines reinforce, discourage, or redirect individual behavior (Tajima, 2007). Moral formation is therefore simultaneously personal, relational, and structural. This interpretation is particularly consistent with a systems-oriented understanding of *maqasid*, in which human flourishing emerges from relationships among multiple levels rather than from isolated individual attributes.

Nevertheless, these educational implications require empirical validation. The present framework establishes theoretically plausible relationships but does not demonstrate their causal effectiveness. Future research could therefore examine whether explicit instruction connecting *maqasid*, virtues, and practices strengthens students' ethical reasoning; whether case-based moral reasoning improves the ability to recognize cross-objective consequences; whether institutional integrity mediates the relationship between Islamic ethics curricula and student conduct; and whether particular virtues produce measurable effects across multiple preservation outcomes. Comparative studies across Islamic schools, universities, professional education, and digital-learning environments would also clarify how the proposed mechanisms operate under different institutional conditions.

Toward a Behavioral-Mediation Theory of Maqasid

Taken together, the three findings suggest that the relationship between *maqasid* al-Shariah and moral values should be understood neither as a simple classification of virtues under the five essentials nor as an assumption that desirable values automatically produce desirable outcomes. The relationship is better conceptualized as a behavioral-mediation process. *Maqasid* provide normative orientation; virtues structure moral perception, motivation, and judgment; individual practices translate dispositions into conduct; institutions stabilize or inhibit these practices; and the resulting patterns contribute to constructive or preventive preservation outcomes (Rohmanu & Rofiah, 2023).

This model extends classical *maqasid* theory without replacing its normative foundations. Its contribution lies in explaining the analytical space between protected ends and lived outcomes (al-Laithy, 2026). It also complements systems-oriented approaches by identifying mechanisms through which interdependence among the five essentials becomes behaviorally and institutionally visible. At the same time, the framework avoids treating *maqasid* as unrestricted consequentialism. Moral virtues function as mediating mechanisms within Shariah-guided normative constraints rather than as autonomous grounds for overriding established legal principles (Alias et al., 2025; Nur et al., 2020). The theoretical contribution can therefore be summarized as a movement from protected ends to moral agency and from moral agency to institutionalized practice. The five essential objectives identify what is normatively valuable, but their realization depends on how individuals and institutions embody virtues through repeated conduct. Preservation consequently becomes both constructive and preventive, individual and institutional, and objective-specific yet simultaneously interconnected. This behavioral-mediation perspective provides a conceptual

bridge between classical maqasid theory, contemporary virtue-oriented Islamic ethics, and institutional approaches to ethical performance, while also generating propositions that can be subjected to subsequent empirical testing.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the realization of maqasid al-Shariah depends not only on the identification of protected objectives but also on the moral mechanisms through which those objectives are translated into individual and institutional practice. Moral values perform this mediating function through two complementary pathways: constructive cultivation, which develops and sustains conditions conducive to protected human goods, and preventive restraint, which limits behaviors and practices that threaten them. Across the five essential objectives, virtues such as justice, honesty, mercy, wisdom, and self-restraint operate not as isolated attributes but as cross-cutting mechanisms connecting normative purposes with patterns of judgment, conduct, and institutional practice. The study therefore proposes a behavioral-mediation framework in which maqasid provide normative orientation, moral virtues shape dispositions and practical judgment, interpersonal practices translate these dispositions into observable conduct, and institutional routines stabilize them into durable patterns capable of contributing to preservation outcomes. This multilevel relationship demonstrates that the five essential objectives are ethically interdependent rather than self-contained categories. The framework consequently extends classical preservation theory by explaining the behavioral space between normative ends and their realization, while complementing systems-oriented maqasid scholarship with a micro-to-meso account of how moral agency becomes institutionalized.

For Islamic education, the framework suggests that maqasid-oriented moral formation should move beyond the transmission of normative knowledge toward the integration of moral reasoning, practice, and institutional culture. Learners need opportunities not only to understand what Islam seeks to protect but also to examine which virtues, behaviors, and institutional conditions enable such protection. Educational institutions likewise become part of moral formation when principles such as justice, amanah, dignity, and intellectual honesty are embodied in assessment, academic integrity, leadership, and everyday organizational practices. These contributions remain theoretical rather than causal claims. As a normative-conceptual study, the analysis does not establish that particular virtues necessarily produce specific behavioral or educational outcomes. Future research should therefore empirically test the proposed relationships across educational, financial, legal, and public institutions, examine how institutional environments strengthen or inhibit moral mediation, and investigate whether explicitly connecting maqasid, virtues, practices, and institutional routines improves ethical reasoning and observable conduct. The principal contribution of this study is thus to reposition moral values from supplementary ethical ideals to mediating mechanisms that connect the normative purposes of Shariah with lived moral and institutional practice.

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