

THE TRANSFORMATION OF IJTIHAD AND FATWA IN THE ERA OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL STUDY

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E-Issn: 3063-8313

Received: Oktober 2025

Accepted: Oktober 2025

Published: November 2025

Abstract :

The rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has significantly influenced Islamic legal reasoning, particularly in data processing, textual analysis, and the acceleration of jurisprudential decision-making. This study examines how AI reshapes methodological approaches to ijtihād, redefines the authority of fatwa institutions, and interacts with the epistemological foundations of Islamic law. Employing a qualitative method through literature review, the research engages classical usūl al-fiqh texts and contemporary works on AI and Islamic ethics. The findings reveal that AI acts as an assistant to ijtihād by enhancing analytical efficiency, yet it cannot replace human jurists due to its inability to comprehend maqāṣid, moral judgement, and socio-cultural context. The study also identifies the need for a “collective AI-assisted ijtihād model” to maintain accuracy, objectivity, and normative legitimacy. It concludes that AI must operate within the framework of maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah and digital ethics to ensure that fatwas remain valid, adaptive, and accountable.

Keywords : digital ijtihād, fatwa, artificial intelligence, Islamic legal epistemology.

Abstrak :

Transformasi digital berbasis Artificial Intelligence (AI) membawa dampak signifikan terhadap praktik ijtihad dan fatwa dalam Islam, terutama dalam pengolahan data keagamaan dan percepatan proses istinbāt hukum. Kajian ini bertujuan menganalisis perubahan metodologis dalam ijtihad, reposisi otoritas fatwa, serta kesesuaian epistemologi hukum Islam ketika berinteraksi dengan teknologi cerdas. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan studi literatur, merujuk pada karya klasik ushul fiqh dan penelitian kontemporer terkait AI dan etika Islam. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa AI berfungsi sebagai mu‘in al-ijtihad yang memperkuat efisiensi analisis dalil, namun tidak dapat menggantikan otoritas mujtahid karena keterbatasannya dalam memahami maqāṣid, konteks sosial, dan nilai moral. Temuan lain menunjukkan perlunya model “ijtihad kolektif berbantuan AI” untuk menjaga akurasi, objektivitas, dan otoritas hukum. Penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa penggunaan AI harus berada dalam kerangka maqāṣid al-syarī‘ah dan etika digital agar fatwa tetap sahih, adaptif, dan bertanggung jawab.

Kata Kunci: ijtihad digital, fatwa, artificial intelligence, epistemologi hukum Islam.

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology in the contemporary era has had a significant impact on almost all aspects of life, including Islamic law. Among the most prominent developments is the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which is capable of processing vast amounts of data and providing information rapidly. Within the context of Islamic jurisprudence, this raises a



As-Sulthan Journal Of Education (ASJE)

<https://ojssulthan.com/asje>

Vol. 02 No. 02 (2025) : 81-91



serious question: can AI play a role in the processes of ijtihad and fatwa issuance? Etymologically, ijtihad derives from the root word jahada, which means exerting effort and striving with one's full capability. Ibn Manẓūr, in *Lisān al-ʿArab*, explains that ijtihad signifies *badhl al-wus'*, the exertion of all available potential to achieve something difficult. This classical understanding clearly shows that ijtihad is an intellectual and spiritual endeavor requiring the earnest dedication of a mujtahid in deriving legal rulings (Faris, 1979).

Scholars of *uṣūl al-fiqh* later offered more systematic technical definitions. Al-Ghazālī defines ijtihad as the exertion of all one's abilities to obtain a presumptive (*zannī*) legal ruling, until no further effort remains possible. Al-Āmidī reinforces this by describing ijtihad as the exertion of a jurist's capabilities to reach a strong presumption regarding a legal judgment. In modern literature, Wahbah al-Zuhailī broadens its scope by emphasizing methodological dimensions the derivation of rulings from detailed evidences as well as the personal authority required of a mujtahid. These evolving definitions indicate that ijtihad is not merely an intellectual activity; it carries ethical and spiritual responsibility. Hence, the authority of ijtihad cannot be separated from the qualifications of a mujtahid (Karimullah, 2023).

In the contemporary context, a new challenge emerges as AI becomes involved in searching evidences and comparing Islamic legal opinions. Some modern scholars and researchers view AI as a *wasīlah* (instrument) that can accelerate and expand the scope of ijtihad, but not as a replacement for the authority of scholars (Karimullah, 2023). As emphasized by Suud Sarim Karimullah, AI can serve as a complementary tool that supports the work of the mujtahid, while final verification must remain in the hands of qualified scholars. Similarly, Latifi asserts that AI lacks *fiqhī* intuition and the capacity for understanding *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*, which are essential requirements for a mujtahid (Latifi, 2024). Thus, the use of AI in ijtihad and fatwa must be situated within the ethical framework of Islam: it is valid as an epistemic aid but must never replace the role of scholars as the ultimate legal authority.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative design using a literature-based approach to analyze the concepts of ijtihad, fatwa, and the use of Artificial Intelligence in Islamic law. All data were obtained from primary sources such as the Qur'an, hadith, and works of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, as well as secondary sources including books, journals, and documents issued by fatwa institutions. The researcher functions as the main instrument in critically examining, selecting, and interpreting the data. The research subjects consist of religious texts and academic studies on AI technology, while theoretical informants are drawn from the thought of classical and contemporary scholars. Data collection was conducted through documentation techniques, and the analysis employed content analysis and comparative analysis to identify methodological patterns and the implications of the transformation of ijtihad and fatwa in the digital era.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Definition of Ijtihad in Islam

Etymologically, the term *ijtihad* derives from the root *jahada*, which means “to exert effort” or “to mobilize all capabilities” (Faris, 1979b). In *Lisān al-‘Arab*, Ibn Manẓūr explains that *ijtihad* signifies *badhl al-wus’*, namely the exertion of one’s full potential and capability to achieve something, particularly in matters that are difficult (Manẓūr, 1990). Thus, *ijtihad* implies an intellectual rigor undertaken in addressing legal problems.

Scholars of *uṣūl al-fiqh* provide more technical definitions, as follows. Al-Ghazālī (d. 505 H) defines *ijtihad* as “the exertion of all possible effort to obtain a presumptive (*zannī*) legal ruling such that no further effort remains” (al-Ghazālī, 1993). Al-Āmidī (d. 631 H) states that *ijtihad* is the exertion of a jurist’s capacity to reach a strong presumption (*ẓann*) regarding a legal ruling (al-Āmidī, 2003). Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 H) describes *ijtihad* as the application of a jurist’s reasoning in understanding scriptural texts and legal principles in order to determine rulings for specific cases (Taymiyyah, 1995a). In modern literature, its scope expands. Wahbah al-Zuhailī, in *Uṣūl al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*, defines *ijtihad* as “the exertion of a mujtahid’s full intellectual capacity to derive legal rulings from detailed evidences,” emphasizing both methodological aspects (detailed evidences) and the personal authority of the mujtahid (al-Zuhailī, 2009).

In the contemporary context, Hallaq highlights that *ijtihad* is not merely a legal method but also an instrument of authority in modern Muslim societies (Hallaq, 2009). Al-Aidarus, in more recent studies, observes that *ijtihad* today is being contextualized within the digital framework, though its essence remains bound to the classical qualifications of the mujtahid (Al-Aidarūs, 2021).

Ijtihad is one of the fundamental pillars of the Islamic legal tradition that ensures the enduring relevance of the *sharī‘ah*. Etymologically, it signifies the exertion of maximum intellectual effort. Al-Ghazālī, in *al-Mustaṣfā*, defines *ijtihad* as the full exertion of the intellect to derive legal rulings not explicitly determined by scriptural texts (al-Ghazālī, 1993). This definition underscores that *ijtihad* is not merely an intellectual task but an epistemological process imbued with ethical and spiritual responsibility. Hence, classical legal thought always attaches *ijtihad* to the personal qualifications of the mujtahid knowledge, decorum, and integrity.

With the progression of time, *ijtihad* confronts new challenges, including the acceleration of knowledge and the rise of digital technologies. The emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and big-data search systems introduces unprecedented efficiency in accessing thousands of works of *tafsīr*, *hadith*, and *fiqh*. Nonetheless, this “digital *ijtihad*” generates debate: is the use of AI in legal reasoning permissible? Within the framework of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, AI cannot be considered a mujtahid because it lacks moral consciousness and the capacity for *istidlāl* rooted in *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*. However, if understood as a *wasīlah* (instrument), digital technology is permissible even recommended so long as it supports, rather than replaces, the role of scholars (Taymiyyah, 1995).

Wahbah al-Zuhailī emphasizes that *ijtihad* is a human domain because

the qualifications of a mujtahid cannot be fulfilled by a machine (al-Zuhailī, 2009). Hasan Latifi (2024) similarly argues that while AI can serve as a powerful instrument for organizing information, it cannot deliver legal rulings due to its lack of fiqhī intuition and its inability to understand the contextual aims of maqāṣid. Suud Sarim Karimullah (2023) adds that AI may be used as a complementary tool, but its outputs must always be verified by competent scholars. Such perspectives indicate a consensus: technology may aid the process but cannot assume the role of issuing fatwas.

Fiqh maxims provide a strong basis for legitimizing digital technology in legal reasoning. The maxim *al-wasā'il lahā aḥkām al-maqāṣid* states that the legal ruling of a means follows the ruling of its objective. If the objective of ijtihad is to produce valid and beneficial rulings, then technological tools that assist in identifying evidences may be deemed permissible or even recommended. Further, the maxim *mā lā yatimm al-wājib illā bihi fahuwa wājib* implies that if contemporary ijtihad cannot be performed adequately without technological support such as in handling massive hadith datasets then the use of technology may become a communal obligation (*wājib kifāyah*) for scholars. Despite its benefits, the use of AI in ijtihad presents risks. First, data bias arising from limited or invalid inputs may produce erroneous conclusions. Second, AI hallucination can generate information that appears authoritative but lacks authentic sources. Third, there is the potential for authority fragmentation when laypeople perceive AI-generated answers as official fatwas. Consequently, contemporary scholars emphasize the necessity of a human-in-the-loop approach, whereby digital outputs must be verified by a qualified mujtahid possessing epistemic and moral competence (Latifi, 2024a).

At the institutional level, several fatwa councils have begun integrating digital technologies to support collective ijtihad. Various Dar al-Ifta' bodies in the Middle East and major councils in Southeast Asia now utilize digital databases to assist with takhrīj al-ḥadīth, cross-madhab fiqh classification, and contemporary fatwa formulation on issues such as fintech and biomedical ethics (Dar al-Ifta' & Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 2023). This practice demonstrates that digital ijtihad is not merely possible but has become a methodological necessity for addressing complex modern legal problems. Nevertheless, these institutions consistently affirm that legal authority rests with scholars not machines. From the above discussion, it may be concluded that the status of digital ijtihad within Islamic legal theory is permissible so long as it functions as a supportive instrument that accelerates, expands, and enhances the intellectual work of scholars. It must not replace the role of the mujtahid as the final decision-maker due to the technological limitations regarding maqāṣid, intuition, and ethical judgment. Thus, digital ijtihad may be regarded as a methodological innovation enriching Islamic legal scholarship while maintaining a balance between continuity of tradition and adaptation to modern developments.

Definition of Fatwa in Islam

Etymologically, the term fatwa derives from al-fatwā (الفتوى) or al-fatā (الفتاء), which denotes clarification or a legal explanation regarding a particular issue. In shar'i terminology, scholars define a fatwa as a legal clarification issued by a qualified mufti concerning matters of Islamic law that remain unclear to the public.

Imam al-Nawawī in *Al-Majmū' Sharh al-Muhadhdhab* states: "A fatwa is the communication of Allah's ruling on matters of the shari'ah." (al-Nawawī, 2003)

Thus, a fatwa constitutes an ijthād-based legal pronouncement derived from scholarly reasoning upon scriptural texts and social reality. In *Uṣūl al-Iftā' wa Ādābuhu*, Mufti Taqī Usmani emphasizes that a fatwa is not merely a rational opinion but the result of a rigorous scientific process bound to the discipline of uṣūl al-fiqh (Usmani, 1996). Fazlur Rahman, in *Islam and Modernity*, adds that the fatwa historically functions as an instrument mediating between revealed texts and social realities, giving it a dynamic role in the development of Islamic law (Rahman, 1982).

Functions of Fatwa in Muslim Societies: 1) As a legal and social guideline. A fatwa provides practical legal guidance on issues arising in society, especially new matters not explicitly addressed in the textual sources. For example, the fatwas issued by the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) regarding digital transactions and Islamic finance represent contemporary forms of ijthād responding to technological developments (Dewan Syariah Nasional Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 2018). 2) As a medium of Islamic legal education. A fatwa functions as an instrument of legal education (ta'lim al-shari'ah) for the community, as it contains explanations of the rationale and principles of Islamic law. Imam al-Qarāfi, in *Al-Furūq*, states that a mufti is essentially a teacher who educates society about the laws of Allah, rather than merely issuing decisions (al-Qarāfi, 2001). 3) As a guardian of the integrity of the shari'ah. A fatwa also serves to ensure that Muslims remain within the boundaries of Islamic law when confronting social and technological changes. In this role, the fatwa becomes an instrument of taḥṣīn al-ummah, preserving the community from deviations influenced by modern cultural or technological forces (Auda, 2008).

Contemporary Implications

In the era of digital technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI), fatwas face new challenges, particularly the emergence of digital fatwas generated by algorithms or AI-based systems. However, from an epistemological standpoint, AI cannot replace the role of the mufti, as issuing a fatwa requires moral consciousness, niyyah, and religious responsibility elements that belong exclusively to human agency (Priantina, 2025). Therefore, AI can only function as an auxiliary tool (an assistant to the mufti) that helps gather evidences and trace legal literature, not as an independent issuer of fatwas. This aligns with the principles of maqāṣid al-shari'ah, which position human beings not machines as the custodians and interpreters of legal values (Zawawi, 2023a). Thus, a fatwa is a clarification of Allah's law delivered by a mufti based on valid scriptural evidences and sound ijthād. In Muslim societies, fatwas serve as moral and legal guidance that safeguard the integrity of Islamic teachings

while responding to socio-cultural developments. The distinction between fatwa, qadā', and ijtiḥād lies in their authority and legal effect: a fatwa is non-binding, qadā' is legally binding, whereas ijtiḥād is the intellectual process underlying both. In the age of AI, a new approach is required collective ijtiḥād grounded in digital ethics ensuring that technology supports, rather than replaces, the role of scholars in guiding the Muslim community.

The Epistemology of Ijtiḥād in Islam

Ijtiḥād is an intellectual mechanism in Islam that serves as the core of Islamic legal and intellectual dynamism. In the era of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the epistemology of ijtiḥād confronts new challenges: how can algorithms engage with sacred texts and the maqāṣid al-sharī'ah without replacing the rationality and intuition of scholars? According to al-Ghazālī, ijtiḥād is "badhl al-wus' fi istinbāṭ al-aḥkām al-syar'iyyah" the exertion of maximal effort to derive legal rulings from valid sources, namely the Qur'an, the Sunnah, consensus (ijmā'), and analogy (qiyās) (al-Ghazālī, 1993a).

Al-Juwaynī, in *Al-Burhān fi Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, states that these epistemic instruments function to maintain the balance between revelation and reason (al-Juwaynī, 1997a). However, AI, lacking ta'abbudiyyah (devotional consciousness), cannot serve as a substitute for the mujtahid; it can only operate as an epistemic tool (al-Jawziyyah, 1991a).

Philosophically, qiyās is an inferential process that transfers legal rulings from an original case to a new case based on the shared legal 'illa. In AI logic, this resembles machine learning inference, which detects patterns of similarity within data. Yet al-Shāṭibī emphasizes that ijtiḥād is not merely logical deduction: it requires tafaquḥ (deep juristic understanding) of the maqāṣid al-sharī'ah (al-Shāṭibī, 1997a). Jasser Auda argues that the Islamic system of ijtiḥād is inherently "systemic and dynamic" and can be harmonized with systemic AI logic, provided that its ethical and maqāṣid-oriented dimensions are preserved (Auda, 2008b). Although AI can assist in the analysis of Islamic legal sources, the ethics of ijtiḥād cannot be automated. In the tradition of uṣūl al-fiqh, a mujtahid must meet several conditions: mastery of Arabic, uṣūl al-fiqh, maqasid, and socio-historical context. AI lacks niyyah (moral intention), making it merely an epistemic instrument rather than a legal subject. According to Nor Zawawi (2023), the greatest risk lies in the emergence of fatwas devoid of ethical spirit, as machines operate on statistical logic rather than spiritual insight (Zawawi, 2023).

The use of AI in the process of ijtiḥād transforms the pre-ijtiḥād phase: the collection, indexing, and presentation of evidences (Qur'an, tafsīr, ḥadīth, and fiqh literature) now occur far more rapidly and comprehensively than in traditional manual methods. This enhances the capacity for literature retrieval and the detection of precedent patterns scattered across a vast corpus. Yet this operational shift is not merely technical efficiency; it alters how the mujtahid perceives what counts as evidence. When a system ranks or highlights particular texts, the model's retrieval and ranking processes shape the epistemic salience of certain evidences, thereby influencing the intellectual agenda even

before the mujtahid offers normative assessment (Jurnal Fatwa Malaysia, 2023).

On a deeper epistemological level, LLM/RAG-based systems produce arguments that appear coherent but may lack identifiable sources (hallucinations), raising questions of legitimacy: does a machine-generated summary possess the same epistemic weight as human-led sanad analysis and takhrīj? The model's inability to provide transparent reasoning (black-box reasoning) creates a verification gap: interpretations previously tested through *usul* methodology and sanad validation now require an additional layer of verification (provenance + audit trail) before they can serve as a valid basis for *ijtihād*. Recent studies emphasize that without strong provenance mechanisms and robust re-ranking systems, AI-generated outputs should be treated solely as research inputs, not as final legal conclusions (Latifi, 2024).

The third epistemic implication concerns epistemic authority. In the *usul* tradition, the authority of *ijtihād* is rooted in the scholarly qualifications and ethical disposition (*adab*) of the mujtahid; AI possesses neither intention, moral responsibility, nor the *maqāṣid*-oriented capacity required to issue legal rulings. Therefore, integrating AI necessitates reaffirming the centrality of human agency: the human-in-the-loop model is not merely procedural but epistemic; humans act as directors, source verifiers, and value assessors. Modern technical-fiqh literature proposes a working model in which AI expands access to evidences, while the exegete (*mufasssir*) or mujtahid retains final authority and must articulate the legal rationale transparently (Jurnal Fatwa Malaysia, 2023). Ultimately, there are methodological implications for *ijtihād* itself: the use of AI encourages new verification practices (corpus accreditation, page/editing metadata, confidence scores, audit trails) and interdisciplinary collaboration (scholars + NLP experts). If adopted with strict epistemic protocols, AI can enrich collective *ijtihād* and enhance the traceability of legal decisions; if ignored, AI risks normalizing pseudo-answers that erode the legitimacy of fatwas. Thus, the primary epistemological requirement is the construction of a verification infrastructure that ensures every "conclusion" produced by a digital pipeline can be traced, its sources authenticated, and its *maqāṣid* evaluated before being elevated to the status of a fatwa (Mohamed & others, 2025). The integration of AI into *ijtihād* and fatwa indeed brings both opportunities and significant epistemological challenges. On one hand, AI expands the horizon of available literature and accelerates access to evidences; on the other, the risks of hallucination and black-box reasoning demand stringent verification mechanisms to prevent the erosion of fatwa legitimacy. In the classical tradition, al-Ghazālī asserts that *ijtihād* requires "*isti'māl al-wus' fī ṭalab al-ẓann bi al-ḥukm al-shar'ī*" (the exertion of all capacities to seek a strong presumption of legal rulings) (al-Ghazālī, 1993) a rational and spiritual competence that machines do not possess. Al-Suyūṭī further states, "*al-fatwā tabnā 'alā al-iḥtiyāt wa al-tathabbut*" (fatwas must be grounded in caution and meticulous verification) (al-Suyūṭī, 1990), underscoring the indispensable moral responsibility that cannot be replicated by artificial intelligence. Thus, AI should be positioned as an epistemic assistant that supports the work of the

mujtahid, while final authority remains with competent scholars, ensuring the validity and legitimacy of fatwas in the digital age.

The Concept of Technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) from an Islamic Perspective

In the Islamic worldview, technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are part of *ijtihād insānī* the manifestation of human capacity to employ intellect, knowledge, and the resources created by Allah. Technology never stands independent from ethical values and moral purposes.

The Qur'an affirms this principle: "And He has subjected to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth all together..." (Qur'an, Al-Jāthiyah 45:13).

This verse indicates that all creation including technology is designed as a *wasīlah* (instrument) for human benefit, not as a replacement for human intellect or moral responsibility. In *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'in*, Ibn al-Qayyim affirms that humans are entrusted with the duty to evaluate their actions according to the standards of the *sharī'ah*, not according to desire or unfettered rationality (al-Jawziyyah, 1991).

Islamic ethics does not reject innovation; rather, it emphasizes the principles of responsibility (*mas'ūliyyah*) and public welfare (*maṣlahah*). Al-Shāṭibī in *Al-Muwāfaqāt* explains that any human act that brings benefit to society and does not violate the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* constitutes a form of social worship (*'ibādah ijtīmā'iyah*) (al-Shāṭibī, 1997).

Thus, technological innovations such as AI are considered ethically valid when they fulfill three *maqāṣid*-based conditions: *Hifz al-Dīn* preserving moral values and avoiding theological distortions (e.g., personifying AI as if it possessed a "soul"). *Hifz al-'Aql* strengthening human reasoning rather than weakening it through total dependence. *Hifz al-Insān* preventing social harm, exploitation, or algorithmic discrimination. Jasser Auda emphasizes that the *maqāṣid*-systems approach requires Islamic law to adapt to the complexities of the digital era while keeping humans at the center of moral judgment (Auda, 2008). Accordingly, AI must be developed within an ethical-by-design framework, in which every algorithm incorporates principles of justice, honesty, and social welfare. AI-generated fatwas are valid only when placed under the authority of a human mufti, in accordance with the *fiqh* maxim, "*Al-ḥukmu yadūru ma'a 'illatihi wujūdān wa 'adaman*" a ruling revolves with its effective cause and context, which can be understood only through human intellect and empathy (al-Juwaynī, 1997). In the study of Rahim and Idris (2023), AI in fatwa processes is considered ethical only when functioning as a decision-support tool, not as a digital mufti (Rahim & Idris, 2023). Technology is a manifestation of humanity's potential as God's vicegerent (*istikhlāf*) on earth. Yet when AI is used without the guidance of revelation, it may become a form of "technological temptation" the impulse to rival God's authority in creating or judging. Hence, Islam requires a balance between *'ilm* (scientific knowledge) and *hudā* (divine guidance). Al-Ghazālī in *Al-Mustaṣfā* emphasizes that knowledge must always be subordinated to the values of the *sharī'ah* (al-

Ghazālī, 1993). Thus, Islam does not reject AI; it requires the integration of revelation-based epistemology and reason. AI is merely an extension of human intellect that must be directed toward public welfare rather than domination. The principles of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah serve as the ethical foundation ensuring that digital innovation remains within the framework of raḥmatan lil 'ālamīn.

CONCLUSION

Based on the preceding discussion, it can be concluded that the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is an inevitable outcome of the evolution of science and technology that Muslims cannot avoid. From an Islamic perspective, AI is not viewed as a threat but as a wasīlah (instrument) that can strengthen human reasoning and accelerate legal decision-making processes, as long as its use remains within the ethical framework of the shari'ah and the principles of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah.

First, ijtihad in the era of AI requires a reinterpretation of the epistemology of Islamic law so that it becomes more responsive to digital dynamics. AI can support the process of ijtihād jamā'ī by accessing, tracing, and processing vast Islamic data from classical sources (turāth), global fatwas, and modern social contexts. However, AI cannot replace the role of the mujtahid as a rational and spiritual agent who possesses taqwā, intuition, and moral responsibility in determining legal rulings. Second, fatwa in the age of AI must adopt a collaborative decision-making model, namely a combination of artificial intelligence and scholarly guidance through a human-in-the-loop system. AI functions only as an analytical tool, while legal decisions remain under the authority of the human mufti. This principle aligns with the views of al-Juwaynī and al-Ghazālī, who affirm that legal truth must arise from the integration of reason and revelation. Third, Islamic ethics regarding technology is grounded in the principles of maṣlaḥah mursalah and maqāṣid al-sharī'ah. The development and application of AI must aim to protect the five essential objectives of the shari'ah (al-ḍarūriyyāt al-khamsah): preservation of religion (ḥifẓ al-dīn), intellect (ḥifẓ al-'aql), life (ḥifẓ al-nafs), wealth (ḥifẓ al-māl), and lineage (ḥifẓ al-nasl). Any technology that negates moral and human values contradicts the maqāṣid, as emphasized by al-Shāṭibī. Fourth, from the perspective of Islamic legal epistemology, AI can enrich legal discovery (istinbāt al-ḥukm) through data-driven reasoning and knowledge modeling, but it must still be balanced with al-taḥqīq al-manāt (contextual social analysis), which only humans can perform. In this regard, digital collective ijtihad becomes an ideal model for the future, where scholars, technologists, and Islamic ethicists collaborate to formulate fatwas that are relevant, timely, and context-sensitive.

Thus, AI and Islam are not two opposing entities but two knowledge systems capable of integration. Islam provides the moral and spiritual compass for the advancement of AI, while AI offers technological means to expand the reach and effectiveness of Islamic law in an era of disruption.

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