

BEHAVIOR IN SOCIAL MEDIA USE FROM MAQASID
AL-SHARI'AH PERSPECTIVE AND VALUES AMONG
IIUM STUDENTS

BY

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A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the
degree of Masters of Information Technology

Kulliyyah of Information and Communication Technology
International Islamic University Malaysia

DECEMBER 2020

ABSTRACT

The use of social media has raised concern on users' ability to behave ethically in cyberspace. The various issues include in social media such as accuracy, privacy, security, respect, dignity and many others. Handling these issue lies in the person of using social media properly from the Islamic perspectives. Therefore, this paper aimed to examine the users' behavior in social media use from Maqasid al-Shari'ah perspective and to explore the values that influence the behavior in social media use. Furthermore, this study examines the relations between values and social media use among IIUM students as students from an Islamic institution. This study integrates the Schwartz's basic human values theory with distinctiveness of the 10 values to analyze how values influence the behavior in social media context. The present study utilized the mix research method to answer the research questions. In this study, the behavior in social media use from Maqasid al-Shari'ah perspective and proposed values were obtained through focus group discussion (FGD). A total of 250 respondents were selected through a stratified sampling and data were collected using self-administered questionnaire to determine whether values influence behavior in social media use. The hypothetical relationships were examined through multiple regression analysis (MRA). The findings show that Islamic values, personal values and core values are correlated significantly with social media use among IIUM students while universal and social values have found non-significant. The result of this study will aide in the development of discourse for Muslim to use social media from the Islamic perspective that will create awareness, promote safe and responsible use.

خلاصة البحث

أثار استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي القلق بشأن قدرة المستخدمين على التصرف بشكل أخلاقي في الفضاء الإلكتروني. تشمل القضايا المختلفة في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي مثل الدقة والخصوصية والأمن والاحترام والكرامة وغيرها الكثير. تكمن معالجة هذه القضية في استخدام الشخص لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بشكل صحيح من منظور إسلامي ، لذلك هدف هذا البحث إلى فحص سلوك المستخدمين في استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي من منظور مقاصد الشريعة واستكشاف القيم التي تؤثر على السلوك في استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. علاوة على ذلك ، تبحث هذه الدراسة في العلاقات بين القيم واستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بين طلاب الجامعة الإسلامية العالمية في ماليزيا IIUM كطلاب من مؤسسة إسلامية. تدمج هذه الدراسة نظرية القيم الإنسانية الأساسية لشوارتز مع تميز القيم العشر لتحليل كيفية تأثير القيم على السلوك في سياق وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. استخدمت الدراسة الحالية أسلوب البحث المختلط للإجابة على أسئلة البحث. في هذه الدراسة ، تم الحصول على السلوك في استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي من منظور مقاصد الشريعة والقيم المقترحة من خلال مناقشة مجموعة التركيز (DGF). تم اختيار ما مجموعه 250 مستجيبًا من خلال أخذ عينات طبقية وتم جمع البيانات باستخدام استبيان ذاتي الإدارة لتحديد ما إذا كانت القيم تؤثر على السلوك في استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. تم فحص العلاقات الافتراضية من خلال تحليل الانحدار المتعدد (ARM)، حيث أظهرت النتائج أن القيم الإسلامية والقيم الشخصية والقيم الأساسية مرتبطة بشكل كبير باستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي بين طلاب الجامعة الإسلامية العالمية في ماليزيا IIUM بينما وجدت القيم العامة والاجتماعية غير ذات دلالة. ستساعد نتيجة هذه الدراسة في تطوير الخطاب لدى المسلمين لاستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي من منظور إسلامي مما سيخلق الوعي ، ويعزز الاستخدام الآمن والمسؤول.

APPROVAL PAGE

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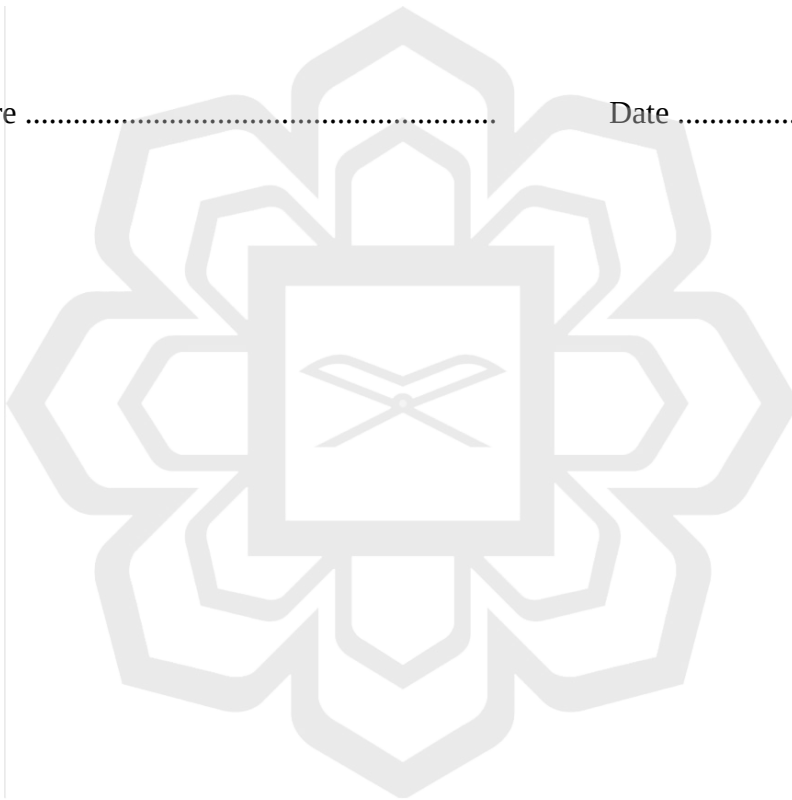
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I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own investigations, except otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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*This Thesis is Dedicated
to
My Respected Parents, Husband and Children*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I express my gratitude to Allah s.w.t for through His blessings I managed to complete this Thesis. Although, it has been tasking, His Mercies and Blessings on me ease the herculean task of completing this thesis.

I am very grateful to Allah that has given me a supportive family. My gratitude and appreciation to my respected parents, beloved husband and lovely children for providing me inspiration and support throughout this journey.

I am most indebted to by supervisor, Asst. Prof. Dr. Aznan Zuhid Bin whose enduring disposition, kindness, promptitude, thoroughness and friendship have facilitated the successful completion of my work. I put on record and appreciate his detailed comments, useful suggestions and inspiring queries which have considerably improved this thesis. His brilliant grasp of the aim and content of this work led to his insightful comments, suggestions and queries which helped me a great deal. Despite his commitments, he took time to listen and attend to me whenever requested. The moral support he extended to me is in no doubt a boost that helped in building and writing the draft of this research work. I am also grateful to my co-supervisor, Prof. Dr. Husnayati Hussin whose support and cooperation contributed to the outcome of this work.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Abstract in Arabic	iii
Approval Page	iv
Declaration	v
Copyright	vi
Dedication	vi
Acknowledgement	viii
Table of Contents	ix
List of Tables	xii
List of Figures	xiv
List of Abbreviations	xv
 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	 1
1.0 Overview	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Problem Statement	6
1.3 Research Questions	11
1.4 Research Objectives	11
1.5 Scope of The Study	12
1.6 Significance of The Study	13
1.7 Research Model	13
1.8 Definition of Terms	14
1.9 Proposed Chapter Outline	16
 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	 18
2.0 Introduction	18
2.1 The Relationship Between Values and Behavior	18
2.2 Basic Human Values Theory	20
2.3 Behavior in Social Media Use	23
2.4 Overview of Maqasid Al- Shari‘Ah	26
2.4.1 Maqasid Al- Shari‘Ah And Human Behavior	28
2.6 Chapter Summary	36
 CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	 36
3.1 Introduction	37
3.2 Research Design	37
3.3 Qualitative Method	38
3.3.1. Justification for this Methodology	38
3.3.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD):	39
3.3.3 Sampling Strategy	41
3.4 Quantitative Method	42
3.4.1 Sample Design	42

3.4.2 Target Population -----	42
3.4.3 Sample -----	43
3.4.4 Sampling Technique -----	43
3.4.5 Sample Size -----	44
3.4.6 Questionnaire -----	44
3.4.7 Pilot Study-----	46
3.4.8 Data Collection -----	46
3.4.9 Data Analysis -----	47
3.4.10 Factor Analysis-----	48
3.4.11 Reliability-----	49
3.4.12 Multiple Regression Analysis-----	50
3.5 Summary -----	52
 CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS -----	53
4.1 Introduction -----	53
4.2 Conduct of Focus Group Discussion -----	53
4.2.1 Ethical Issues -----	54
4.2.2 Data Collection -----	55
4.2.3 Data Analysis -----	56
4.3 Results From Qualitative Data Analysis -----	57
4.3.1 Outcome 1: To Describe Behavior in Social Media Use from Maqasid Al-Shari‘ah Perspective-----	57
4.3.2 Outcome 2: To Investigate the Values that Influence Behavior in Social Media Use -----	62
4.4. Data Examination and Screening -----	63
4.4.1 Outliers -----	63
4.4.2 Missing Data-----	64
4.4.3 Normality-----	64
4.5 Exploratory Factor Analysis -----	67
4.5.1 Factor Analysis for Values-----	67
4.5.2 Factor Analysis for Social Media Use -----	73
4.6 Reliability Analysis -----	79
4.7 Research Model and Hypothesis -----	80
4.8 Results From Quantitative Data Analysis -----	81
4.8.1 Background Information -----	81
4.8.2 Descriptive Statistics-----	86
4.9 Pearson’s Correlation-----	93
4.10 Multiple Regression Analysis-----	94
4.11 Summary -----	102
 CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION -----	103
5.1 Introduction -----	103
5.2 Summary of The Study-----	103
5.3 Major Findings -----	105
5.4 Contribution to the Knowledge -----	119
5.5 Limitations and Future Research Directions -----	120
5.6 Conclusion -----	121

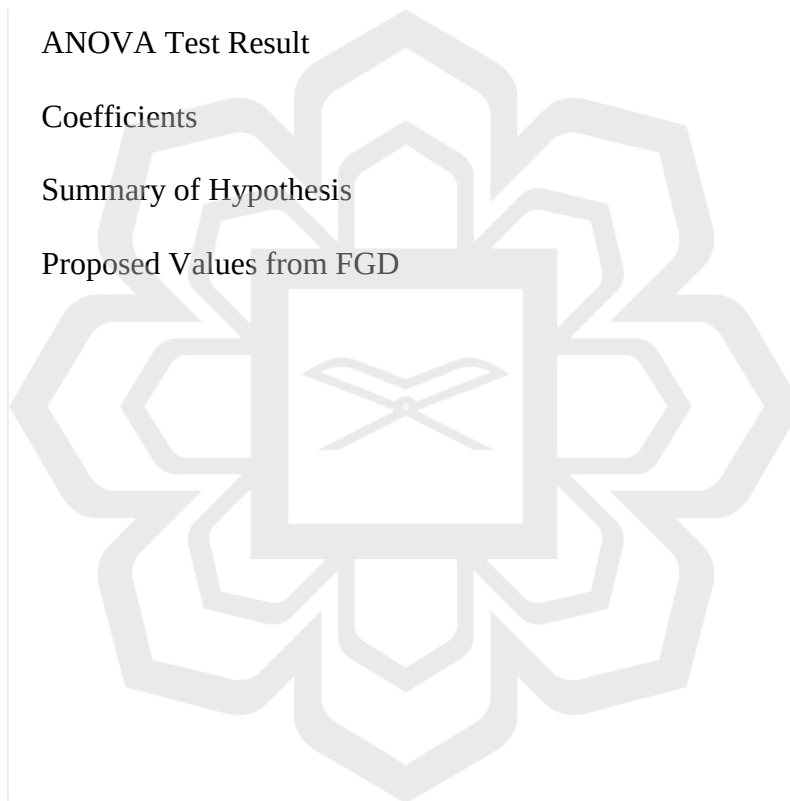
REFERENCES	123
APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE	136
APPENDIX II: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION	144
APPENDIX III: PUBLICATIONS	147



LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table No.</u>		<u>Page No.</u>
2.1	The values in the refined theory 19	21
3.1	Proposed Focus Groups for the Research	41
3.2	Measures of Values	45
3.3	Measures of Social Media Use	45
3.4	Results of Pilot Study	46
4.1	Focus Group Discussion Questions	54
4.2	Normality Test for Values	65
4.3	Normality Test for Social Media Use	66
4.4	KMO and Bartlett's Test for Values	67
4.5	Total Variance Explained for Values	68
4.6	Rotated Component Matrixes for Values	73
4.7	KMO and Bartlett's Test for Social Media Use	74
4.8	Total Variance Explained For Social Media Use	75
4.9	Rotated Component Matrixes For Social Media Use	78
4.10	Reliability Statistics of Values and Social Media Use	79
4.11	Background of the Respondents	82
4.12	Descriptive Statistics for Importance of Values	86
4.13	Behavior in Social Media Use to Protect Religion	88
4.14	Behavior in Social Media Use to Protect Life with Safety	89
4.15	Behavior in Social Media Use to Protect Life In Health-Related Content	89
4.16	Behavior in Social Media Use to Protect Intellect	90

4.17	Behavior in Social Media Use to Protect Reputation	91
4.18	Behavior on Social Media Use to Protect Privacy	91
4.19	Behavior in Social Media Use to Protect Property	92
4.20	Pearson's Bivariate Correlations between Latent Factors	93
4.21	Correlation of Independent and Dependent Variables	95
4.22	Collinearity of Dependent and Independent Variables	96
4.23	Model Summary	98
4.24	ANOVA Test Result	98
4.25	Coefficients	99
4.26	Summary of Hypothesis	101
5.1	Proposed Values from FGD	115



LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure No.</u>		<u>Page No.</u>
1.1	Initial Research Model for Behavior in social media use	13
2.1	Schwartz theory of basic human values	20
4.1	Box plot Representation of the Multivariate Outlier	64
4.2	Scree Plot for Values	72
4.3	Scree plot for social media use	77
4.4	Proposed Research Model for Behavior in Social Media use	80
4.5	Normal Probability Plot of Regression Standardized Residual of Dependent Variable	96
4.6	Scatterplot of Dependent Variable	97
5.1	Proposed Research Model for Behavior in Social Media use	117

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SU Social Media Use

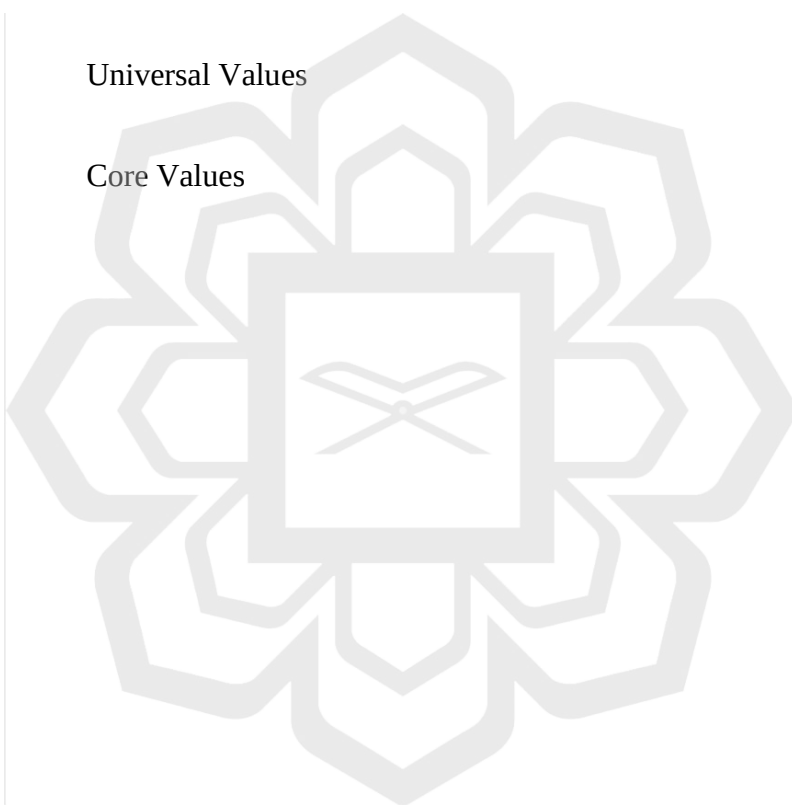
ISV Islamic Values

PEV Personal Values

SOV Social Values

UNV Universal Values

COV Core Values



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 OVERVIEW

This chapter provides the background of the study, the statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, the scope of the study, and significance of the study. This study will provide a better understanding of how the values influence the behavior in social media use among IIUM students from the Maqasid al- Shari'ah perspective (objectives of Shari'ah), which is the aim of this research. In this study, the Maqasid al- Shari'ah according to its five-essential objective of Shari'ah as described by Imam al-Ghazali (d. 505 AH/1111 AD) which are the protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage and wealth.

In the research background, Maqasid al- Shari'ah would shape the behavior in social media use based on the five essentials above. They are taken into consideration when using social media of creating and uploading content, receiving content, sharing content and searching for information through social media. In this study, the statement of the problem is related to the research questions and research objectives.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the modern era, social media is progressively becoming an everyday part of an individual's life. It is known as a powerful platform for distributing information, communication, collaboration, and information consumption (Suseno et al., 2018). Social media is a new forum that brings people to exchange ideas, awareness, career interests, information, and communication through social network sites (Nielsen,

2017). Social media has removed communication barriers and created a decentralized communication channel to easily connect with friends and family around the globe. The important function of social media such as sharing, commenting, publishing, browsing, and messaging are treasured mostly by youth. This is reported in different studies that youth are keen users of social media across the globe (Ismail, 2014; Mahadi, 2013; Raco, 2014). Similarly, in Malaysia, youth are identified as avid users of social media with a huge percentage of 80.3% (Mahadi, 2013). They use social media to serve different functions, including communication and socialization, education, information seeking, and entertainment (Ismail, 2014).

There is no doubt about the usefulness of social media but the medium also involves many issues that can ruin the higher objectives of Islamic Shari‘ah by exploiting social media. These issues like accuracy, privacy, security, respect, dignity, and many others. Social media is often used to threaten public safety and harmony by spreading inaccurate information, including rumors, misleading fact and slender (Muniandy & Muniandy, 2013; Wok, Idid, & Misman, 2012), spam hoaxes, cyber bullying, online harassment, sexting, privacy threats and depression (O’Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). For example, during the recent disasters in Malaysia Airlines flights MH370 and MH17, as well as the landslides in Cameron Highland and severe floods in Kelantan, it was found that many Malaysians shared inaccurate information related to these incidents (Mustafa, 2014). Sharing this inaccurate information through social media creates an extreme panic, complicate crisis management, and rescue effort which violates the higher objective of Islamic Shariah. According to MyCERT Incident Statistics (2017), the Cyber Security Malaysia received cybersecurity incidents around 7962 with fraud topping the list (3821 incidents) followed by intrusion (2011 incidents), malicious codes (814 incidents) and cyber harassment (560

incidents). Furthermore, the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) have warned the public against spreading false and inaccurate information, via social media. This is because, spreading false information is an offense under Malaysian law, including section 233 of the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 (Act 588).

To overcome these problems, a user should access social media properly otherwise improper use of social media will take us away from Allah and His commands. Therefore, the behavior in social media uses can be initially described from the perspective of Maqasid al-Shari'ah. In this regard, this study used Maqasid al-Shari'ah for shaping the students' behavior in social media use to ensure that all activities to achieve the objectives of Shari'ah. This is because all activities in social media become a permanent record that will bear witness against us on the Day of Judgment. The two angels record all deeds and every word whether it is online or offline. It is mentioned in the Quran, Surah Qaf (verse 16-18) that the two angels record all human deeds each day. For example, sins are multiplied through social media when sexually explicit articles or comments are shared among many users for a long period. Even after removing it from social media, it will continue sharing and spreading by other people. This is because some people can keep them personally and share with others through other media of communication. This sharing and spreading is the result of precedence made by someone. Therefore, who will make precedence of a bad deed will be responsible and punished for committed sin by others following this precedence on the Day of Judgment (Ahmad, 2012).

Maqasid Al- Shari'ah can be defined as the higher objectives of the lawgiver (Al-Raysuni, 2005). The Shari'ah is based on the Holy Quran, the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) which is the guideline towards all devotional acts.

According to Imam Ghazali, the objective of the Islamic Law is to promote the welfare of people which lies in the protection of their faith (deen), lives (nafs), intellect (aql), posterity (nasl) and wealth (mal). Maqasid al-Shari'ah is a comprehensive code of behavior for the judgment of right and wrong (Malik, 2001). The Quran is consisting of 6235 verses. Out of 6235 verses, 350 verses are related to laws for mankind to live peacefully in this world and hereafter. Likewise, it guides Muslims to preserve faith, dignity, and rights, call people to worship Allah, purify the soul, restore moral values, build good families, treat women justly, and build a strong Islamic nation (Yusuf al-Qaradawi, 1345 AH). The laws of Maqasid al-Shariah is not only effective and applicable to practice among Muslims but also applicable to be practiced by non-Muslims. It is proven to have a lot of contributions of Maqasid al-Shariah in globalization and modern society. For example, Maqasid shariah not only prescribes and guides the modes of religious obligation, guides morality and action for the individual, but also prescribes instructions for a collective life covering numerous subjects such as health (Padela, 2018), family (Husni, 2015), socio-economic development (Ullah, S., & Kiani, A. K. (2017), human rights (Delagic & Ghalia, 2018), managerial decision-making process (Hasan, 2019), Islamic economic and Islamic banking (Mohammad & Shahwan, 2013), laws of war and peace (Bassiouni, 2014), international treaties (Mohd Yusob et al. , 2015), as well as, secure environment (Saged , 2017) and social needs. Thus, Maqasid al-Shariah is considered as a complete way of life and covers the entire spectrum of Islamic life such as belief, morality, virtues, and principles of guidance, economic, political, cultural, national and international matters that concern not only the Muslim community but the entire humanity (Berghout, 2006). Therefore, Maqasid al-Shari'ah indeed plays an important

and major role in providing the ultimate principle of behavior for individuals, families, society, and the whole Muslim Ummah.

Values are the main aspect that forms attitudes and behaviors. According to Cieciuch and Schwartz (2017), values refer to what people find important in their life. In social media, values can play an important role in people's behavior because people behave according to their values (Bardi and Schwartz, 2003). Therefore, determining the importance of values can solve the possible problems in actions in communicating on social media. Examples are shown that the importance given to a set of values the society is changing. Such as in Nigeria, people support some particular values which are recognizing other people, having a happy life, being honest, good character, trustworthy, friendship, love, benevolence, helpful, success, loyal, hard-working, respect elders and the property of others, and being human (Uduigwomen, 2004, p. 2). Some institutions such as in Turkey, India, Australia, and Singapore have recently spent energy and sources for the programs for encouraging the values and behaviors of their students. They consider the values education as a solution for coping with the difficulties of the present day and finding new ways to educate students. Past research has been carried out to investigate the relationship between social media use and perceived human values in secondary school students in turkey in terms of their genders (Kara and Tekin, 2017). This study found that the students had more responsibility, respect, honesty, and tolerance values and maintaining the relationships, virtual community, narcissism, being informed, and personal status. For that reason, the influence of values can guide the action in communicating and providing the content on social media in a proper way. Acquiring appropriate values not only will contribute to avoiding any actions that may cause harm to oneself and other members of the society but also will contribute to promoting peace at present.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the values of the students that relate to the behavior in social media use from Maqasid al-Shariah's perspective.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Improper use of social media can lead to many unexpected consequences (Emam, 2016). It can give result in a situation that would bring negative effects either to the person who is receiving the content or the person who is creating the content itself. For example, by creating and sharing wrong information on social media leads to affecting religion, reputation, accuracy, privacy, dignity, respect, relationships, and well-being. On the other hand, the owner of this type of information may lose his personality and will be dishonored by other people.

The problems of behavior in social media use are described according to the Maqasid al-Shari'ah:

1. Protection of religion (al-Din)

The first objective of Shari'ah is to protect al-Din. Today, social media is used to disseminate and share Islamic knowledge and information. But in the social media sphere, it is often used to share wrong information and ideas about Islam. If any user shares the false and inaccurate information about Islam such as hadith, Quranic ayahs, and Islamic quotes then it will ruin the higher objectives of protecting din. For example, in Malaysia, it was found that BFM journalist Aisyah Tajuddin misused social media by posting a video for mocking Islam which violates the objectives of protecting al-din (Malaymail, 2015). Spreading anything false or untrue is forbidden in Islam. It is mentioned in the Quran, Allah says:

“And pursue not that of which you do not know; for every act of hearing, of seeing, or of (feeling in) the heart will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning),” (Surah Al-Isra: 36).

2. Protection of life (al-Nafs)

The second objective of Shari‘ah is to protect life. Life is a precious gift from Allah SWT that we must value. Today, people are revealing too much personal information on social media. This revelation can be a threat to life (Tnvrstar, 2015). This is because; people are harming others by tracking someone’s activities and whereabouts for the purpose of murder. Therefore, Muslims are not allowed to inflict harm on anyone’s life through social media. Quran says:

“And do not kill anyone who Allah has forbidden, except for a just cause. And whoever is killed, We have given his heir the authority. But let him not exceed the limits in the matter of taking life. Verily, he is helped”. (Al-Isra, verse 33)

Moreover, excessive use of social media affects an individual’s health (Kelly et al., 2018, Gaspar et al., 2016). Besides, the daily overuse of social media is unhealthy. Muslims are not allowed to change it through ill-usage. This is because, good health, strength, and well-being are the most prized, precious, and generous gifts from Allah SWT (Ibn Al-Qayyim, d. 750 A.H/ 1350 C.E). Therefore, harming health goes against the higher objective of protecting life. It is mentioned in surah al Baqarah (verse 195) that Muslims should not cast themselves into destruction and should prohibit any act which is against human life.

3. Protection of Intellect (al-Aql)

The third objective of the Shari‘ah is to protect the human intellect. Anything that affects the intellect is forbidden in Islam. Today, by the misuse of social media people are violating the higher objective of protecting intellect. Such as in Malaysia in the state of Johor (April 2016), 19-year-old employee Muhammad Amirul Azwan Mohd Shakri was arrested for posting insulting comments on Facebook with the intention of hurting the crown prince’s feelings which violates the higher objective of protecting intellect. Through social media, people are knowingly and intentionally bullying, backbiting, insulting, or defaming other people that harm the victims mentally, even it lead to committing suicide (Campbell and Marilyn, 2005). The previous study revealed that excessive use of social media affects in mental health by causing depression, stress, and anxiety among students (Gaspar et al., 2016; Hawk et al., 2019) and may increase health hazards in a student’s life (Lee et al., 2018; Atallah et al., 2018).

Furthermore, through social media, people disseminate false information that left peoples with deep mental scars (Amanullah, 2015). This is because, once the misinformation spread into cyberspace without its accuracy, it remains there and haunt mentally to the victims and his family. If the Muslims commit all these sins in social media, he/she will violate this higher objective of protecting intellect and will be responsible before Allah (SWT).

4. Protection of Dignity or Lineage (al ‘Ird)

The fourth objective of Shari‘ah is to protect lineage and dignity. In today’s generation, people are massively addicted to social media. By spending enormous time on social media, they may lose the connection with their family and may not be

able to develop normal relationships with their family members. Furthermore, they may lose their good character and dignity by falling in a harmful relationship with someone which may lead them to commit Zina or adultery or even lead married people to weaken their marital relationship or even divorce (Ahmad, 2012). Buzzi (2011) stated that the use of social media such as YouTube can expose youths to entering pornography and inappropriate content. All these acts are contradictory to the higher objectives of Shari'ah.

In addition, by the misuse of social media, people are making rumors, lying about others, disclosing the secrets of others, and sharing too much information about themselves and others that makes one's honor, dignity, and privacy being stripped. Besides, sharing inappropriate content on social media may lead to ruin the reputation of oneself and others. Regardless of whether the content is based on true or false, the more outrageous the posting, the quicker it tends to spread and harm reputations. Such as in Malaysia, a 17-year-old youth was arrested for posting defamatory comments on social media about late Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Adenan Satem which violates the objective of shariah (Malaymail, January 2017). Therefore, the Shari'ah commands its adherents to preserve the people's honor and prestige whether they are living or dead.

5. Protection of property (al-Mal)

The fifth objective of Shari'ah is to protect property. Today, peoples are disclosing their personal information on social media such as posting photos of expensive items, vacations, certain dates, and times when they are out. This disclosure can be a threat against property (Tnvrstar, 2015). This is because the bad person may target this person and enter his house for stealing the property. Therefore, the robbery