

The Essence of Islam: Conceptual Analysis between Aqidah, Sharia, and Morals

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Info Articles	Abstract
Article History Received : 2022-09-02 Revised: 2022-09-09 Published: 2022-09-30 Keywords: Faith; Morals; The Essence of Islam; Sharia;	Islamic law represents a comprehensive legal system derived from divine revelation that governs various aspects of human life. Understanding its philosophical foundation is essential to distinguish between the immutable principles of Sharia and the dynamic interpretations developed through fiqh and ushul fiqh. This study aims to analyze the concepts of Sharia, fiqh, and Islamic law and to examine the philosophical relationship among these three fundamental elements within the framework of Islamic legal philosophy. The research employs a normative juridical method using conceptual and theological-normative approaches. Primary legal materials consist of the Qur'an and Hadith, while secondary and tertiary sources include classical and contemporary scholarly works, scientific journals, books, dictionaries, and encyclopedias. Data were collected through library research and analyzed using a descriptive-analytical method. The findings reveal that Sharia constitutes the divine and absolute legal foundation established by Allah, whereas fiqh represents the human understanding and interpretation of Sharia through the process of ijtihad. Ushul fiqh functions as the methodological framework that guides the derivation and formulation of Islamic legal rulings from their authoritative sources. The study further demonstrates that these three components are inseparable and collectively establish a coherent legal system that balances revelation with rational reasoning. A philosophical approach to Islamic law highlights not only its normative character but also its underlying objectives, including justice, public welfare (<i>maslahah</i>), and the realization of the <i>maqasid al-shariah</i> . Consequently, Islamic law should be understood as a dynamic legal system capable of responding to contemporary social developments while maintaining its essential religious values and universal principles.

I. INTRODUCTION

Understanding the essence of Islamic law is a fundamental aspect in the study of Islamic legal philosophy. Islamic law is understood not only as a set of normative rules governing the lives of Muslims, but also as a manifestation of divine values reflecting justice, truth, and morality derived from God's revelation. Therefore, the study of Islamic law requires an approach that is not solely textual but also philosophical in order to uncover the deeper meaning behind its provisions.

Within this framework, the concepts of sharia, fiqh, Islamic law, and ushul fiqh are interrelated primary elements that form a coherent system. Sharia, as divine decree, serves as the normative basis, while fiqh is the result of human understanding of sharia. Ushul fiqh, on the other hand, serves as a methodology for exploring and

formulating law from its sources. The interconnectedness of these three concepts demonstrates that Islamic law has both theological and rational dimensions.

Through an Islamic legal philosophy approach, this study focuses not only on normative aspects but also seeks to critically and reflectively examine the values embodied in Islamic law. This provides a more comprehensive understanding of Islamic legal construction and enables it to address the various challenges and dynamics emerging in the contemporary era.

Based on this background, the formulation of the problem in this study is: (1) what is meant by sharia, fiqh, and Islamic law, and (2) what is the relationship between sharia, fiqh, and ushul fiqh. The purpose of this writing is to understand the meaning of sharia, fiqh, and Islamic law, and to understand the conceptual relationship between

the three from the perspective of Islamic legal philosophy.

In a scientific context, Islamic law does not exist as a static system, but rather evolves in line with social, cultural, and temporal dynamics. This demonstrates that Islamic law possesses a certain flexibility in responding to various contemporary issues, without abandoning its fundamental, immutable principles. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the structure and methodology of Islamic law is necessary to avoid simplifications or misunderstandings in its application.

The concepts of sharia, fiqh, Islamic law, and ushul fiqh are the main elements that form the complete framework of Islamic law. Sharia, as divine decree, is absolute and universal, while fiqh is the result of human *ijtihad*, which is relative and contextual. Meanwhile, ushul fiqh serves as a methodological tool used to explore and formulate law from its sources, namely the Qur'an and the hadith. The interrelationship between these three concepts demonstrates the close relationship between revelation and reason in the formation of Islamic law.

The philosophical approach to Islamic law is important because it provides a deeper perspective on Islamic law, not only in terms of norms but also in terms of values and objectives (*maqasid al-syari'ah*). This approach allows for a critical analysis of the substance of the law, including its relevance, justice, and the benefits resulting from its application. Thus, Islamic law can be understood not simply as rigid rules, but as a living system that adapts to changing times.

Furthermore, in the modern era marked by globalization and the complexity of social issues, Islamic law faces various new challenges that require a more contextual interpretation and approach. Therefore, an in-depth study of the relationship between sharia, fiqh, and ushul fiqh (legal principles) has become increasingly relevant to ensure that Islamic law continues to provide just and beneficial solutions for humanity.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This section describes the research method used. This research uses a normative (juridical-normative) research method, namely research that focuses on studying the

norms, concepts, and principles contained in Islamic teaching sources. This approach is used to understand the essence of Islam through conceptual analysis of the three main pillars, namely faith, sharia, and morals.

The approach used in this research is a conceptual approach and a theological-normative approach, which aims to examine the meaning and relationship between concepts based on arguments sourced from the Qur'an, Hadith, and the thoughts of classical and contemporary scholars.

The sources of legal materials or data used in this research include:

1. Primary legal materials, namely the Qur'an and Hadith as the main sources of Islamic teachings.
2. Secondary legal materials, in the form of interpretation books, Islamic books, scientific journals, and literature relevant to the research theme.
3. Tertiary legal materials, such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other sources that support the explanation of concepts.

The data collection technique was conducted through library research, examining and reviewing various literature related to the research topic. Furthermore, the data analysis technique used was descriptive-analytical analysis, which described the concepts of faith, sharia, and morals, then analyzed the relationship between the three to gain a comprehensive understanding of the nature of Islam.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Research result

Based on the results of a normative study of various literary sources, it was found that the essence of Islam is an integral system of teachings, the elements of which cannot be separated from each other. Faith, sharia, and morals are three main pillars that are interrelated and form a unified whole within Islamic teachings.

First, *aqidah* (belief) holds a fundamental position in Islam. *Aqidah* is related to belief in Allah, the messengers, the holy books, the angels, the Last Day, and predestination

(qada') and predestination (qad'). Research shows that aqidah forms the foundation for all aspects of a Muslim's life, as it is from this belief that spiritual awareness is born, influencing how one thinks, behaves, and acts.

Second, sharia is a practical manifestation of faith (aqidah) in the form of rules and regulations governing human relationships with God (worship) and with other humans (muamalah). This study found that sharia serves as a guide to life, providing direction and boundaries for action, thus creating order and justice in individual and social life. Sharia also demonstrates flexibility through the process of ijtihad, enabling it to adapt to changing times without abandoning its fundamental principles.

Third, morality is a concrete manifestation of the implementation of Islamic faith and sharia in daily behavior. Research shows that morality is an indicator of the quality of a person's faith and obedience. Good morality reflects perfection in understanding and practicing Islamic teachings, while poor morality indicates an imbalance between religious belief and practice.

Furthermore, the analysis shows that the relationship between faith, sharia, and morality is both hierarchical and functional. Faith serves as the basis (foundation), sharia serves as the framework (rules), and morality serves as the ultimate goal (output) of all Islamic teachings. These three are inseparable, as weaknesses in any one aspect will result in imperfect understanding and practice of Islam as a whole.

Furthermore, this research also found that in the context of modern life, these three aspects are often understood fragmentarily. Some people tend to emphasize the aspect of faith (aqidah) without balancing it with the application of sharia and morals, or vice versa. This leads to inequality in religious practice. Therefore, a holistic understanding is needed so that Islamic teachings can be applied in a balanced and relevant manner to the challenges of the times.

Thus, the results of this study confirm that the essence of Islam lies in the harmonious

integration of faith, sharia, and morals as a unified, comprehensive value system, which not only regulates human relations with God, but also forms a just character and social order.

B. Discussion

I. UNDERSTANDING SHARIA, FIQH, AND ISLAMIC LAW

a. Understanding Sharia

Sharia is derived from the word syara'a. According to Ar-Razi in his book Mukhtar-us Shihab, this word can mean nahaja (to follow), awdhaha (to explain), and bayyan al masalik (to show the way). According to Al-Jurjani, Sharia can also mean madzhab (school of thought) and thriqah mustaqim (the straight path). Thus, the word Sharia has many meanings linguistically.

Imam Al-Qurtubi said that Sharia means the religion established by Allah SWT. for his servants consisting of various laws and provisions. Allah's laws and provisions are called sharia because they have similarities with drinking water sources which are the source of life for living creatures. That's why, according to Ibnul Manzbur, sharia means the same as religion [M. Amin Abdullah, Religious Studies: Normativity or Historicity (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2021), p. 45].

What is meant by sharia or written with Sharia, literally, means the path to the source (spring), the straight path that every Muslim must follow. Sharia is the Muslim way of life. It is the decrees of Allah and the provisions of His Messenger, both in the form of prohibitions and commands, encompassing all aspects of human life and living. [Paryadi, MAQASHID SYARIAH: DEFINITION AND OPINION OF THE SCIENTISTS, Journal, Vol 4 No.2 July-December 2021, pages 201-216].

Viewed from a legal science perspective, sharia is the basic legal norm established by Allah, which Muslims must follow based on faith related to morals, both in their relationship with Allah and with fellow humans and objects in society. These basic legal norms were explained and detailed further by the Prophet Muhammad saw. As His

Messenger. Therefore, the Shari'ah is found in the Koran and in the hadith books.

Sharia, in its broadest sense, refers to all of Allah SWT's commands concerning human behavior. It is a revelation containing practical laws from Allah to humanity through the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Sharia encompasses rules governing all aspects of human life, both in relation to Allah and to fellow human beings. In Islamic legal philosophy, Sharia is viewed as a comprehensive guide to life with the primary goal of realizing the welfare of humanity and preventing harm. The objectives of Sharia (maqashid sharia) encompass protecting religion, life, intellect, property, and descendants, as fundamental values in Islamic law.

Islamic Sharia aims to:

- Implementing the sharia that Allah has established for mankind. This is because Allah has established their own sharia for each people, as stated in His words in Surah Al-Hajj verse 67: This means that for each people we have determined certain sharia which they follow, so never let them dispute with you in this (shariah) matter and call to (the religion of) Your Lord. Indeed, you are on the straight path.
- Shows that the values of God's teachings and provisions are higher and noble compared to human thinking. This is in accordance with the words of Allah in Surah At-taubah verse 40: Meaning: and Allah makes the call of those who disbelieve the lowest. And the word of Allah is the highest. Allah is Mighty, Most Wise.

b. Understanding Fiqh

Linguistically, fiqh comes from the word faqiha yafqahu-faqihan, which means to understand or comprehend. Understanding refers to the intellectual effort to comprehend Islamic teachings derived from the Quran and Sunnah. In Arabic, fiqh means knowing something through understanding. Ibn Al-Qayyim stated that the science of fiqh is more specific than understanding, namely, a deep understanding of the various textual and contextual signs of the Quran. [Huda, Miftahul.

(2023). "Integration of Aqidah, Sharia, and Morals in Islamic Education." *Journal of Islamic Education*, Vol. 8(2), 115-130].

The words fiqh and tafaqquh mean deep understanding. Both are often used in the Koran and Hadith. As mentioned in Surah At-Taubah 122. Rasulullah SAW. has ordered some of his friends to understand deeply or has chosen them as experts in jurisprudence or fuqaha.

In the terminology of the Quran and Sunnah, fiqh is a broad and in-depth knowledge of the commandments and realities of Islam and has no specific relevance to any particular branch of knowledge. However, in the terminology of Islamic scholars, the term fiqh is specifically applied to a deep understanding of Islamic law.

Fiqh is the human understanding or interpretation of sharia, derived from the Quran and Sunnah. Fiqh is the result of ijtihad and human reasoning in understanding and applying sharia in practical life. Fiqh emphasizes legal reasoning and the technical aspects of sharia implementation, so it can serve as a guide for action for Muslims in various situations.

Fiqh aims

- To study Islamic laws relating to human life.
- Fiqh shows us the Sunnah of the Prophet and protects humans from the dangers in life. Someone who knows and practices fiqh will be able to protect themselves from anxiety, fear and being respected by enemies.
- To seek understanding and understanding of the Islamic religion.
- Muslims must perform tafaqquh both in the field of aqidah and morals as well as in the field of muamalat.

c. Understanding Islamic Law

Islamic law is law that was revealed by Allah SWT. The rules in Islamic law are rules whose outlines were established by Allah through the Prophet Muhammad and must be followed by Muslims based on their faith and relationship with Allah SWT. The basics of Islamic law were explained and detailed by the Prophet Muhammad, as contained in the Qur'an and the Hadith or As-Sunnah. These

two sources, namely the Qur'an and As-Sunnah, are then used as a foundation for regulating relationships between humans and also between humans and other creatures of Allah.[Suryana, Toto. (2024). "The Essence of Islam as a System of Life." *Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol. 10(1), 45–60]

Islamic law is the legal rules and regulations derived from Sharia and Islamic jurisprudence that govern actions in the social, political, economic, and daily lives of Muslims. In Islamic legal philosophy, Islamic law is not merely a normative regulation, but reflects the values of justice, welfare, and moral goals desired by Sharia. Islamic law serves as an instrument for implementing these principles to create social balance and harmony.

Islamic legal philosophers such as Ibn Sina and Al-Ghazali viewed Islamic law not only as normative rules but also as containing philosophical and moral meaning. Ibn Sina emphasized Islamic law as part of natural and moral law, based on rationality, while Al-Ghazali strengthened the relationship between revelation and reason and emphasized the importance of the maqasid shari'ah (objectives of sharia). Islamic law is a revelation that must be understood using reason to achieve justice and the welfare of the people.

II. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SYARI'AH, FIKIH AND USHUL FIQH

The relationship between sharia, fiqh, and ushul fiqh in the context of Islamic legal philosophy is:

- a. Sharia is the totality of Allah's laws that regulate all aspects of the lives of Muslims, sourced from the Qur'an and Sunnah, and encompassing moral goals and the welfare of the people.
- b. Fiqh is the result of human interpretation and understanding of sharia, in the form of practical rules applied in daily life based on the ijtiḥad of scholars in understanding sacred texts.
- c. Usul fiqh is the science that studies the methods and principles for interpreting and exploring sharia law, providing a methodological framework for scholars to establish consistent and relevant

laws.[Zuhaili, Wahbah az-. (2021). *Islamic Fiqh wa Adillatuhu*. Damascus: Dar al-Fikr].

In other words, ushul fiqh serves as the foundation and method for understanding and establishing laws in Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), which is the practical application of sharia. Ushul fiqh helps maintain the consistency, accuracy, and adaptability of Islamic law to changing times without abandoning the fundamental principles of the religion. Therefore, the three are interrelated: sharia is the basic law, fiqh is its details, and ushul fiqh is the methodology or science that guides the understanding and formulation of that law.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusion

The philosophy of Islamic law is the science that studies the nature, purpose, and secrets of Islamic law methodically, systematically, and scientifically using a philosophical approach. Islamic law itself is a set of rules derived from the revelation of Allah SWT, aimed at creating welfare and justice for humanity. Sharia is God's law, encompassing all aspects of life, while fiqh is the science that interprets and details Sharia in an applicable manner, forming practical laws.

The relationship between Islamic law and fiqh and usul fiqh is very close. Islamic law is the primary source of law, while fiqh is the science that studies and understands that law according to its sources, such as the Qur'an, Hadith, ijma', and qiyas. Usul fiqh is a branch of science that serves as the methodological basis or principles for exploring, interpreting, and establishing Islamic law, so that fiqh can be applied appropriately and contextually.

Overall, Islamic legal philosophy helps to understand the essence and purpose of Islamic law so that it can be applied fairly and correctly in various contexts of time and society, and bridges the gap between normative law (sharia) and applicable law (fiqh) through the scientific and rational methodology of usul fiqh.

B. Suggestion

Based on the results of the study on the nature of Islam, which includes aspects of faith,

sharia, and morals, it is recommended that Muslims can understand Islamic teachings comprehensively and not partially by balancing faith, obedience to the law, and noble behavior in daily life. Furthermore, educational institutions are expected to be able to integrate these three aspects in the learning process to shape a generation that is not only intellectually superior, but also strong in faith and has good morals. For future researchers, it is recommended to develop this study through a broader approach, such as empirical research or case studies, to observe the real implementation of the concepts of faith, sharia, and morals in community life. Furthermore, society in general is expected to make Islamic values a guideline in social life to create a harmonious, peaceful, and just life.

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