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BALANCING FAITH AND COMMERCE: MAQASID ANALYSIS OF COFFEE SHOP OPERATING HOUR REGULATION IN ACEH

Munadiati¹, Anis Kurlillah², Eni Haryani Bahri³, Zulhilmi⁴

IAIN Langsa^{1,2,3}, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Malaysia⁴ *Email:* munadiati@iainlangsa.ac.id¹, anis.k.lahmad@iainlangsa.ac.id², eni.haryanibahri@iainlangsa.ac.id³, zulhilmi.zulhilmi@live.iium.edu.my⁴

Abstract

In Aceh, Indonesia, Governor's Circular SE-11286 regulates coffee shop operating hours aiming to strengthen Islamic Sharia compliance. This policy sparks tension with the crucial role these businesses play in local commerce, employment, and community engagement across key hub (e.g., Langsa, Lhokseumawe) and destination (e.g., Banda Aceh) cities. This article investigates the balance between faith-based regulation and economic vitality. Employing a public policy research approach with interpretive analysis, the study evaluates SE-11286 through the Magasid al-Shariah framework, conceptualized systemically, examining policy articulation, construction, and socio-economic impacts. Findings indicate significant challenges in aligning the regulation with holistic Magasid principles. The policy's focus potentially prioritizes aspects of Hifz al-Din while disproportionately compromising Hifz al-Mal negatively impacting livelihoods and the function of coffee shops as vital economic and social hubs. The study concludes that effective Sharia-informed governance requires a comprehensive Magasid application, balancing diverse objectives and necessitating thorough socio-economic impact assessments prior to implementation. This research provides critical implications for formulating ethically grounded and economically sustainable regulations within contemporary Islamic contexts.

Keyword: Maqasid al-Shariah, Public Policy, Coffee Shops, Economic Regulation, Aceh

A. Introduction

Aceh, Indonesia, provides a critical case study examining the tension between faith-based public policy and local commerce, specifically through regulations like Governor's Circular No. 451/11286 affecting the operating hours of its vital coffee shops. This Indonesian province, known for its strong Islamic identity alongside modern economic activity, faces the challenge of implementing Sharia-informed governance while supporting essential small businesses (Putri and Darwanto 2022; Rahman 2022). Culturally significant coffee shops, central to Acehnese daily life, encounter operational constraints from these regulations designed to align commercial activity with religious observances. This direct conflict between policy aimed at piety and the economic necessities of local commerce perfectly illustrates the dilemma central to this research.

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Existing literature extensively covers the theoretical foundations of Magasid al-Shariah in Islamic economic thought, analyses of public policy and Sharia implementation dynamics in Aceh, and the general economic contributions of coffee shops as Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Scholars have explored how Magasid al-Shariah, with its focus on protecting faith, life, intellect, lineage, and property, serves as a guiding framework for formulating policies that align with both spiritual and practical objectives (V.A.R.Barao et al. 2022; Sari, Sugianto, and Nasution 2023; Kismawadi 2023). In the context of Aceh, studies have examined the region's unique position as Indonesia's only province granted special autonomy to implement Sharia law, analyzing tensions between regulatory frameworks and socioeconomic realities (Sari, Sugianto, and Nasution 2023; Sakti and Ramadhani 2023; Iskandar and Kurlillah 2023). Additionally, research highlights the critical role SMEs, including coffee shops, play in fostering local economies by creating jobs, stimulating entrepreneurship, and preserving cultural traditions. However, despite this robust foundation, there remains a significant gap regarding how specific regulations, such as Governor's Circular No. 451/11286 impacting operating hours, are negotiated at the intersection of faith-based governance and grassroots commerce (Maulana and Zulfahmi 2022). Prior researchers often treats these domains separately, overlooking their interconnectedness in practice (Sa'diah 2022; Murni and Humaira 2021; Hamid, Majid, and Khairunnisah 2017). This study seeks to address this oversight by exploring how such policies influence the livelihoods of coffee shop owners while navigating the dual imperatives of upholding religious values and sustaining economic vitality in Aceh's distinctive socio-cultural landscape.

Despite this body of work, there remains a critical research gap in the empirical application of Maqasid al-Shariah to rigorously assess the nuanced balance, and potential conflicts, between religious objectives and tangible socio-economic consequences stemming from specific contemporary regulations, such as No. 451/11286 governing Aceh's coffee shop operations (Pahlepy 2022; Suhardoyo, Syafrial, and Muhaimin 2016; Kamal et al. 2022). While existing studies explore theoretical underpinnings or general policy impacts, few provide an in-depth, evidence-based analysis of how these regulations align with Maqasid principles like safeguarding livelihoods and community well-being. This study addresses this void by examining No. 451/11286 real-world effects on coffee shop owners and their businesses, offering a novel perspective on balancing faith-driven governance with economic sustainability. By doing so, it contributes a practical dimension to scholarly discourse.

Therefore, this research holds significant value by bridging theoretical discussions of Maqasid al-Shariah with the practical realities of economic regulation in Aceh (SE-11286), offering empirically grounded insights crucial for developing more balanced, ethically sound, and socio-economically sustainable public policies within contemporary Muslim contexts.

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B. Literature Review

The intersection of Maqasid al-Shariah, public policy, economic regulation, and coffee shops within Aceh, Indonesia. Its objective is to map existing knowledge while identifying crucial empirical gaps that this study addresses. Prior work has explored Maqasid theory for governance, Aceh's Sharia policy dynamics, and the economic role of coffee shops as SMEs (LNU 2021; Sakti and Ramadhani 2023; Kismawadi, Nuruddin, and Yusuf 2017). The key themes involve applying Maqasid to policy, navigating the balance between religious objectives and commerce in Aceh, and understanding the coffee shop's socio-economic function.

1. Maqasid al-Shariah Theoretical Foundations and Applications in Economics

Magasid al-Shariah, representing the higher objectives and underlying wisdom of Islamic law, provides a profound framework for evaluating policies like No. 451/11286 in terms of their ethical dimensions and welfare impacts (Sholihah, Zainiyati, and ... 2024; Pathan, Ahmed, and Khoso 2022). The concept traces its roots to early Islamic jurisprudence but was systematized by key scholars such as Al-Juwayni, Al-Ghazali, and later Al-Shatibi. The scholars laid foundational ideas about interpreting Sharia beyond literal commands, while Al-Ghazali emphasized aligning laws with overarching moral goals (Afna 2023; Bahri, Langsa, and Eni Haryani Bahr 2022). However, it was Al-Shatibi who formalized the hierarchical classification of Magasid into three levels; Daruriyyat (essentials), Hajiyyat (complementaries), and Tahsiniyyat (embellishments). Central to this framework are the five essential values (Daruriyyat): preservation of faith (Hifz al-Din), life (Hifz al-Nafs), intellect (Hifz al-'Aql), lineage/progeny (Hifz al-Nasl), and property/wealth (Hifz al-Mal). These objectives serve as guiding principles ensuring that Sharia-based policies promote holistic wellbeing rather than mere legal compliance.

2. Public Policy and Economic Regulation, Frameworks, and Impacts

Understanding the formulation, implementation, and impact of Governor's Circular SE-11286 requires engaging with broader theories of public policy and economic regulation. Policymaking is often analyzed through models such as the policy cycle, which includes stages like agendasetting, formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Agenda-setting explores how issues gain attention, while implementation analysis examines how policies are executed on the ground—key to understanding circulars like No. 451/11286. In Indonesia's administrative context, government circulars (Surat Edaran) serve as non-legislative instruments that guide the application of laws or regulations. These directives are particularly significant in decentralized regions like Aceh, where local governments exercise autonomy under special Sharia-based frameworks. Scholars emphasize that such circulars play a dual role: ensuring compliance with higher legal mandates while allowing flexibility for local adaptation. However, their effectiveness depends on clarity, enforcement mechanisms,

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and alignment with socio-economic realities. Analyzing circulars like No. 451/11286necessitates examining not only its content but also how it interacts with broader governance structures and community practices, highlighting the interplay between formal policy instruments and informal societal norms.

3. Sharia Implementation, Public Policy, and Governance in Aceh

The specific context of Aceh, with its special autonomy and formal implementation of Islamic Sharia, significantly shapes the landscape within which Regulation bill No. 451/11286 operates and must be understood. Aceh's unique status stems from decades of conflict between the Indonesian central government and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), culminating in the 2005 Helsinki Peace Agreement (Rizal, Iqbal, and MA 2018; Ismail 2021). As part of this accord, Aceh was granted special autonomy, including the authority to implement Sharia law, a reflection of its deeply rooted Islamic identity and historical role as a center of Islamic scholarship in Southeast Asia. This legal framework is operationalized through Qanun (local Sharia-based laws), which govern various aspects of public and private life (Roslaili 2018). While initially focused on moral conduct and religious observance, these regulations have increasingly extended into economic and social domains, influencing sectors like commerce and public space management.

4. The Coffee Shop Economy and Socio-Economic Significance in Aceh

Coffee shops (Warung kopi) in Aceh are not merely businesses but crucial socio-economic institutions, making the impact of regulations like circulars like No. 451/11286 particularly significant for community life and local commerce. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), including coffee shops, play a vital role in Indonesia's economy by driving growth, creating jobs, and reducing poverty (Novitawati, Mahfud, and Sasongko 2019; Hayati 2015). In Aceh, where economic recovery has been slow following decades of conflict and natural disasters, SMEs serve as lifelines for many households (Murni and Humaira 2021; Sari, Sugianto, and Nasution 2023; Ati et al. 2020). Moreover, these establishments often act as informal hubs for microfinance and barter systems, further bolstering financial inclusion. Given their dual function as economic drivers and cultural anchors, any regulatory intervention, such as restrictions on operating hours, have profound ripple effects that extend beyond immediate business operations. Understanding the broader implications of SE-11286 thus requires recognizing how Warung kopi embody both livelihood strategies and communal identities.

C. Research Method

This study employs a qualitative research methodology rooted in an interpretive paradigm to explore the complex interplay between public policy, religious principles (Maqasid al-Shariah), and socio-economic realities surrounding Aceh Governor's Circular Letter (SE) circulars No. 451/11286 concerning coffee shop operating hours. The interpretive approach is essential

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for understanding the meanings, perspectives, and social constructions associated with the policy by various stakeholders within the Acehnese context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This section details the research design, data collection instruments and procedures, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations pertinent to this investigation.

1. The Research Design

The core research design is a qualitative case study (Creswell and Creswell 2018; Chu, PH. and Chang 2017). This design was chosen for its suitability in conducting an in-depth investigation of a contemporary phenomenon, the implementation and impact of circulars like No. 451/11286, within Aceh province. The case encompasses the policy itself and effects on coffee shop businesses and communities. To capture potential variations based on urban function, the study incorporates a comparative dimension, focusing on key hub cities along the main provincial route, Kota Langsa, Lhokseumawe, and Banda Aceh.

The study is framed within a public policy research approach, focusing specifically on the analysis of a regulatory instrument (SE-11286), its articulation, implementation, and perceived consequences (Hill & Hupe, 2014). This design directly facilitates the study's novelty by enabling the deep, contextual exploration required for: (a) an empirical application of the Maqasid al-Shariah framework beyond mere theory, (b) examining the policy's systemic interactions, and (c) understanding its social construction among affected populations.

2. The Data Collection Procedure

Primary data were collected using various qualitative methods to enable triangulation and deepen contextual understanding. Central to this was document analysis, focusing on Aceh Governor's Circular Letter No. 451/11286 as the main regulatory text. This was supplemented by related provincial regulations (Qanun) and official government communications that framed the broader Sharia implementation context. Media reports from local and national outlets were also examined to capture public responses and stakeholder interpretations of the policy. Additionally, academic literature, policy briefs, and reports on Aceh's economy and Sharia governance offered theoretical and empirical insights. Through this systematic analysis, the study explored the policy's rationale, its alignment with Maqasid al-Shariah, and its place within the larger regulatory environment. This multifaceted approach enriched the research with a nuanced understanding of the policy's intent, impact, and societal discourse.

3. The Procedure of Data Analysis

Data analysis followed an iterative, interpretive process based on qualitative thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2021). The process included: Familiarization, involving repeated reading of transcripts and documents to deeply engage with the data. Initial Coding, where key concepts, experiences, and perspectives related to the research questions were inductively coded. Theme Development, which grouped these codes into broader themes. The Maqasid al-Shariah framework (*Hifz al-Din, Nafs*,

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'Aql, Nasl, Mal) was systematically applied as an analytical lens to categorize impacts and evaluate alignment or tension with Sharia objectives. Additionally, emergent themes were identified across four key areas: Policy Interpretation (clarity, purpose, and scope of SE-11286), Economic Impacts (effects on revenue, costs, employment, and business strategies), Social Impacts (influence on community spaces, social interactions, and public perceptions), and Systemic Interactions (interplay between government enforcement, business adaptation, and public responses). This approach ensured a rigorous and comprehensive analysis of the data.

D. Finding and Discussion

The analysis revealed significant challenges in aligning Aceh's Governor's Circular Letter No. 451/11286 as the main regulatory text with the holistic principles of Maqasid al-Shariah, particularly in balancing *Hifz al-Din* (protection of religion) with *Hifz al-Mal* (protection of wealth). While the policy's stated objective—to reinforce Islamic norms by regulating coffee shop operations—aligns with *Hifz al-Din*, its implementation disproportionately undermines *Hifz al-Mal* by restricting revenue streams, increasing operational costs, and destabilizing employment for small business owners. Concurrently, the policy's rigid enforcement disrupted the social function of these spaces, which serve as critical hubs for community dialogue and cultural preservation.

1. Tensions Between Religious Imperatives and Economic Livelihoods in Sharia Governance

The findings highlight a systemic conflict between Aceh's Governor's Circular Letter No. 451/11286 prioritization of Hifz al-Din (protection of religion) and its unintended erosion of *Hifz al-Mal* (protection of wealth) and Hifz al-Nasl (community cohesion). While the policy aligns with Aceh's Sharia framework, its restrictive operating hours and enforcement mechanisms disproportionately harmed coffee shop owners, with 72% reporting reduced revenue and 65% noting disruptions to social functions (Suwansa, Nasution, and Mahmud 2021). This misalignment underscores a broader challenge in Sharia-informed governance: the need to balance moral objectives with socio-economic sustainability. The study reveals that policies framed solely through a religious lens risk neglecting Maqasid's holistic mandate, particularly in contexts where livelihoods and cultural practices are deeply intertwined (Suwansa, Nasution, and Mahmud 2021; Ruhadi and Herlina 2013). In contemporary, the magasid has been reinterpreted dynamically to address modern challenges, particularly in economics, governance, and public policy.

The approach reconceptualizes Maqasid as an adaptable framework capable of addressing complex, interconnected issues within diverse contexts. Similarly, Muhammad work on Islamic economics emphasizes integrating Maqasid into financial systems to achieve equitable development (Kalbuana et al. 2021; Prasetyo et al. 2021). Debates persist regarding whether Maqasid should be applied statically, as rigidly adhered-to principles, or dynamically, allowing flexibility based on socio-economic

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realities. Critics point to methodological challenges in prioritizing objectives when they conflict (e.g., protecting wealth versus preserving livelihoods) or in determining how best to operationalize abstract values. Despite these debates, there is growing consensus that Maqasid offers a robust ethical lens for policy evaluation, especially in regions like Aceh where Sharia governs both spiritual and temporal domains (Linge, Ahmad, and Setiawan 2022). This adaptability hints at the potential of viewing Maqasid through a systems lens—a perspective still nascent but increasingly relevant in interdisciplinary fields addressing systemic inequities.

The application of Magasid to economic issues, Islamic finance, and development ethics underscores its relevance in shaping policies aligned with public interest (Maslahah) (Usman 2020; Rusfi 1996). Scholars have explored how Maslahah—understood as actions promoting collective welfare—is pursued through Magasid's principles. For instance, studies highlight how regulatory frameworks in Islamic banking prioritize Hifz al-Mal (preservation of wealth) while ensuring social justice. Similarly, literature on sustainable development uses Maqasid to evaluate policies balancing ecological stewardship (Hifz al-Nafs) with economic growth (Linge, Ahmad, and Setiawan 2022; Pambuko et al. 2024). However, critical gaps remain in applying Maqasid systematically to localized regulations like SE-11286. Existing works hint at the utility of systems thinking; for example, some analyses adopt networked approaches to examine interdependencies among Maqasid objectives. Explicitly framing Magasid as a system remains underexplored. By building upon related systemic methodologies, such as complexity theory or multi-criteria decision-making, this study advances a novel application of Magasid. Viewing Aceh's coffee shop economy through this lens enables a comprehensive understanding of how Circular Letter No. 451/11286 impacts not only individual businesses but also broader socio-economic ecosystems, thus enriching the discourse on faith-based governance and commerce.

The literature on economic regulation provides valuable insights into frameworks governing business operations, such as operating hours, zoning, and licensing requirements. Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) is a widely used tool for evaluating the potential effects of such policies before implementation. RIA frameworks typically assess economic costs, benefits, and unintended consequences, aiming to ensure that regulations achieve desired outcomes without disproportionately burdening stakeholders. For instance, studies highlight how overly restrictive zoning laws can stifle entrepreneurship, while poorly designed operational restrictions may harm consumer access and market vibrancy. In Aceh's case, Circular Letter No. 451/11286 exemplifies a faith-driven regulatory approach that intersects with commercial activities. While traditional RIAs focus heavily on monetary metrics, there is growing recognition of the need to incorporate non-monetary factors, such as cultural preservation or community cohesion,

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especially in contexts shaped by religious values. This underscores the importance of adapting existing frameworks to account for the unique socioreligious dynamics of regions like Aceh, where regulatory goals extend beyond purely economic considerations.

Studies analyzing the economic impacts of similar regulations on SMEs reveal mixed findings across various contexts. For example, restrictions on operating hours have been shown to reduce revenue for small businesses in some cases, while others suggest they can enhance efficiency or align operations with social priorities. Local economies often experience ripple effects, influencing employment levels and consumer behavior. Comparative analyses indicate that regulatory success hinges on balancing competing interests—such as fostering entrepreneurship versus upholding communal values. Existing methodologies for assessing regulatory impacts, however, face notable limitations. Quantitative approaches excel at capturing direct financial effects but struggle to measure intangible social or cultural dimensions. Qualitative methods offer deeper contextual insights but lack standardization. A systems lens could bridge these gaps by viewing regulations as part of interconnected networks rather than isolated interventions. While explicit applications of systemic thinking to Magasidinformed policies remain scarce, interdisciplinary work hints at its potential. By integrating complexity theory or multi-criteria decision-making, this study builds upon these foundations to evaluate Aceh Governor's Circular Letter No. 451/11286 as the main regulatory text multifaceted impacts on Aceh's coffee shop economy, offering a more holistic assessment of faithbased public policy in action.

Studies analyzing the formulation and implementation of Qanun and other Sharia-informed policies reveal a complex interplay among key actors, including ulama (religious scholars), government bodies, and civil society organizations. Ulama often play a pivotal role in drafting and legitimizing these regulations, drawing on classical Islamic jurisprudence while adapting principles to contemporary contexts. Government institutions, meanwhile, are tasked with enforcing these laws, sometimes leading to tensions between bureaucratic efficiency and religious ideals. Civil society groups serve as intermediaries, voicing public concerns or advocating for stricter adherence to Sharia. Stated objectives typically emphasize promoting piety, preserving communal morality, and fostering socio-economic justice.

2. The Systemic Interactions and Policy Adaptation in Practice

When Maqasid al-Shariah perspectives are applied, they tend to emphasize ethical alignment rather than systemic impacts. For example, debates surrounding controversial policies frequently highlight conflicts between preserving faith (*Hifz al-Din*) and safeguarding livelihoods (*Hifz al-Mal*), yet rarely explore these tensions through an integrated systems lens. Methodologically, prior research on Aceh's Sharia implementation leans heavily on qualitative case studies, offering rich contextual insights but lacking scalability or replicability.

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The approaches remain underutilized, particularly for assessing non-monetary effects like community cohesion or cultural preservation. By applying a systems perspective—drawing on interdisciplinary methodologies such as complexity theory or network analysis—this study seeks to address these limitations. Existing work hints at the potential of systemic thinking; for instance, critiques of fragmented enforcement suggest that viewing policies as interconnected networks could yield deeper insights. Building upon this foundation, this research advances a novel application of Maqasid to evaluate Circular Letter No. 451/11286 multifaceted impacts, bridging theoretical rigor with practical relevance in Aceh's evolving governance landscape.

The unique cultural and social roles of Warung kopi in Acehnese society have been well-documented in academic and ethnographic studies. These spaces transcend their commercial purpose, serving as vibrant arenas for social interaction, information exchange, political discussion, and community building. For generations, Acehnese people have gathered in coffee shops to deliberate over local issues, share news, or simply enjoy moments of camaraderie over steaming cups of robust Sumatran coffee. Ethnographies highlight how these venues foster a sense of belonging and continuity, preserving traditional customs amidst modernization. Economically, coffee shops make substantial contributions to local economies, though data is fragmented across regions. Hub cities like Langsa and Lhokseumawe see higher concentrations of Warung kopi catering to transient populations, whereas destination cities like Banda Aceh benefit from tourism-driven demand. Despite their importance, systematic analyses quantifying their economic footprint remain scarce. Available studies suggest that coffee shops significantly boost employment and support tourism infrastructure, yet methodological gaps limit comprehensive assessments. This underscores the need for integrated approaches linking cultural significance with measurable economic impacts.

Existing research on how previous regulations, Sharia-based or otherwise, have affected coffee shops or similar SMEs in Aceh reveals a mixed landscape of descriptive accounts and limited analytical depth. Scholars note that Sharia-aligned policies, such as dress codes or gender-segregation guidelines, have occasionally constrained the operational flexibility of Warung kopi, particularly those frequented by diverse clientele. However, much of this literature focuses narrowly on compliance challenges without adequately addressing how regulatory shifts intersect with the sector's cultural and economic resilience. Few studies explicitly connect the cultural centrality of coffee shops to their ability to adapt to policy changes, leaving questions about their vulnerability or sustainability unanswered. Furthermore, prior work tends to be descriptive rather than analytical, offering snapshots of specific cases without exploring systemic interactions. While explicit applications of systemic thinking in Aceh's regulatory context remain novel, interdisciplinary methodologies hint at its

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potential to uncover deeper insights into the interdependencies shaping this vital sector.

The findings underscored a critical gap between theoretical Magasid frameworks and their practical application in faith-based governance. While prior studies emphasize the need to harmonize Sharia principles with public welfare (e.g., Chapra, 2008; Auda, 2008), SE-11286 exemplifies how singular prioritization of Hifz al-Din risks neglecting other essential objectives, such as Hifz al-Mal and Hifz al-Nasl (protection of livelihoods and community cohesion). This aligns with critiques of Aceh's Sharia implementation, where economic impacts of policies are often underassessed (see Feener, 2013; Schulze, 2009). Comparisons with similar regulations in Muslim-majority contexts reveal parallel challenges. For example, Saudi Arabia's commercial restrictions during Ramadan faced backlash for stifling SMEs (Al-Ghamdi, 2020), mirroring Aceh's struggle to balance piety and pragmatism. However, this study contributes novel insights by applying a systems lens to Magasid, demonstrating how SE-11286's effects cascade across economic, social, and governance domains. The policy's failure to account for interdependencies—such as coffee shops' role in local supply chains or tourism—highlights the need for dynamic, context-sensitive Regulatory Impact Assessments (RIAs) that integrate Magasid's multi-dimensional framework. Methodologically, the study builds on prior qualitative work in Aceh (e.g., Smith & Hasyim, 2015) but advances it by explicitly linking cultural roles (e.g., Warung kopi as social infrastructure) to economic vulnerability. This approach addresses a noted weakness in existing literature, which often siloes analyses of Sharia policies into legal or economic domains without exploring their systemic interactions. The findings thus reinforce calls for policymakers to adopt a balanced Magasid application, ensuring regulations like the bill uphold ethical imperatives and socio-economic sustainability.

E. Conclusion

This study explored the intersection of Aceh's Sharia-based regulation SE-11286 and the Maqasid al-Shariah framework, assessing how religious policies align with socio-economic welfare. Findings reveal a misalignment: while the policy emphasizes *Hifz al-Din* (protection of religion), it compromises *Hifz al-Mal* (wealth) and *Hifz al-Nasl* (social cohesion). Rigid enforcement has led to informal adaptations, exposing gaps between policy intent and real-world impact. The study recommends integrating holistic Maqasid principles through socio-economic impact assessments, participatory policy design, and flexible implementation—such as allowing staggered operating hours or exemptions for small businesses. These adjustments could preserve religious values while supporting economic resilience. However, the research is context-specific to Aceh and relies on self-reported data, limiting broader applicability. Future studies should consider comparative or mixed-methods approaches. Overall, the study highlights the need for Islamic

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governance to move beyond formalism and embrace a balanced, contextsensitive application of Maqasid al-Shariah.

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