

Falah and The Transformation of The Concept of Well-Being In The Digital Age (An Approach from Islamic Economic Philosophy)

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Abstrak

Perkembangan era digital telah membawa perubahan signifikan dalam struktur dan praktik ekonomi yang berdampak pada transformasi makna kesejahteraan. Konsep kesejahteraan yang selama ini cenderung dipahami secara material dalam paradigma ekonomi konvensional dinilai belum mampu merepresentasikan kesejahteraan manusia secara menyeluruh. Dalam perspektif ekonomi Islam, kesejahteraan dipahami melalui konsep falah, yaitu keberhasilan hidup yang mencakup dimensi material, sosial, dan spiritual. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis transformasi makna kesejahteraan di era digital dengan menggunakan pendekatan filsafat ekonomi Islam. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah studi kepustakaan (library research) dengan pendekatan deskriptif-analitis terhadap berbagai literatur ilmiah yang relevan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa digitalisasi ekonomi memberikan peluang peningkatan kesejahteraan melalui efisiensi dan perluasan akses ekonomi, namun juga menghadirkan tantangan berupa ketimpangan digital dan pergeseran nilai. Oleh karena itu, konsep falah menjadi paradigma alternatif yang relevan untuk memaknai kesejahteraan secara holistik dan berkeadilan di era digital, dengan menempatkan teknologi sebagai sarana untuk mencapai kemaslahatan dan tujuan maqashid al-syari'ah.

Kata kunci: *Falah; Kesejahteraan; Era Digital; Filsafat Ekonomi Islam; Maqashid al-Syari'ah.*

Abstract

The development of the digital era has brought significant changes in economic structure and practices that have an impact on the transformation of the meaning of welfare. The concept of welfare which has been tended to be understood materially in the conventional economic paradigm is considered to be unable to represent human welfare as a whole. In the Islamic economic perspective, welfare is understood through the concept of falah, which is the success of life that includes material, social, and spiritual dimensions. This article aims to analyze the transformation of the meaning of welfare in the digital era by using the approach of Islamic economic philosophy. The research method used is library research with a descriptive-analytical approach to various relevant scientific literature. The results of the study show that economic digitalization provides opportunities to increase welfare through efficiency and expansion of economic access, but also presents challenges in the form of digital inequality and value shifts. Therefore, the concept of falah becomes a relevant alternative paradigm to interpret welfare holistically and fairly in the digital era, by placing technology as a means to achieve the benefits and goals of maqashid al-shari'ah.

Keyword: *Falah; Welfare; Digital Era; Islamic Economic Philosophy; Maqashid al-Syari'ah*

PENDAHULUAN

The development of digital technology is one of the most significant phenomena in the dynamics of contemporary human civilisation. Digitalisation has transformed almost every aspect of life, from the way people work and interact to the way they manage economic activities. In the economic sphere, digital transformation is characterised by the emergence of digital economic platforms, electronic payment systems, technology-based financial services (fintech), and the integration of data into production and distribution processes. These changes not only enhance efficiency and productivity but also influence how society perceives well-being (Nudin, Amin, & Sofyan, 2024).

In modern economic discourse, well-being is generally measured through material and quantitative indicators, such as economic growth, income levels, ease of access to technology, and the speed of digital transactions (Nudin et al., 2024). This paradigm indicates a shift in the meaning of well-being towards an increasingly materialistic orientation. Although digitalisation brings many benefits, an approach to well-being that focuses solely on economic achievements risks overlooking the moral, social, and spiritual dimensions that also determine the quality of human life.

This reductive interpretation of well-being gives rise to various social issues. The digitalisation of the economy, for example, is not always accompanied by an equitable improvement in well-being. The digital divide, job insecurity in the gig economy, and the rise of individualism and consumerism present real challenges in the digital age (Malik et al., 2025). This demonstrates that technological progress does not automatically guarantee the achievement of holistic and equitable well-being.

From an Islamic perspective, well-being has a broader meaning than the concept of well-being in conventional economics (Aravik, et.al, 2021). Islam views well-being as a comprehensive success in life, articulated in the concept of al-falah. Al-falah reflects happiness and salvation in this world and the hereafter, encompassing a balance between material and spiritual needs, between individual and social interests, and between the rights and obligations of humans as servants of Allah (Hasibuan et al., 2025). Thus, welfare in Islam is understood not merely as an end result, but also as a process of economic activity grounded in the ethical and moral values of Sharia (Aravik & Tohir, 2025).

As the digital economy continues to grow, the concept of al-falah is becoming increasingly relevant for re-examination. Digitalisation within the Islamic economy has given rise to various innovations, such as Sharia-compliant fintech, Islamic e-commerce, and the digitalisation of zakat, infaq and waqf (e-ZISWAF). Research by Alfian et al. (2025) indicates that these digital innovations can enhance financial inclusion, expand access to economic services for marginalised groups, and improve the transparency and effectiveness of social welfare distribution. This suggests that digital technology can serve as a means (wasilah) to achieve al-falah if managed in accordance with Islamic principles (Aravik, et.al, 2022).

Various previous studies also emphasise the importance of an Islamic normative framework in responding to the digital economic transformation. Hasibuan et al. (2025) assert that the primary objective of the Islamic economy is the attainment of al-falah, which encompasses economic, social, moral, and spiritual dimensions in an integrated manner. Meanwhile, Melzatia et al. (2025) emphasise that the maqashid al-shariah serve as an ethical compass in evaluating digital economic practices so that they are not merely efficiency-oriented, but also focused on justice ('adl), the protection of wealth (hifz al-mal), and human well-being (hifz al-nafs). However, the majority of these studies still focus on institutional and technical aspects, whilst philosophical examinations of the transformation of the meaning of digital well-being based on al-falah remain relatively limited.

The urgency of discussing this topic is growing ever stronger given the rapid pace of digitalisation, which is influencing the way society—including the younger generation—thinks and acts. Without a sufficient understanding of values, there is a risk that well-being will be narrowly perceived as merely economic success and access to technology. Malik et al. (2025) assert that without the integration of moral values and social justice, digitalisation may actually widen inequalities and create new forms of exclusion. Therefore, a study is required that can reconstruct the meaning of digital well-being based on Islamic values so that technological progress truly leads to well-being that is just and meaningful (Hamzani, et.al, 2025).

Based on the above, the objective of this article is to analyse the concept of al-falah as a philosophical foundation for understanding the transformation of the meaning of well-being in the digital age. Furthermore, this article aims to examine the role of maqashid al-shariah in guiding digital economic practices so that they align

with the principles of justice, balance, and the public good. It is hoped that the benefits of this study will contribute theoretically to the development of Islamic economic and educational thought, as well as provide practical benefits for educators, policymakers, and society in formulating a holistic, ethical, and sustainable concept of digital well-being (Aravik, et.al, 2023).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a quantitative descriptive method using a library research approach. The descriptive method was chosen to provide a systematic, factual and accurate account of the concept of falah and the transformation of the meaning of well-being in the digital age. The Islamic economic philosophy approach is used as an analytical framework to evaluate the relevance and implications of the concept of falah for human well-being in a holistic manner, encompassing material, social, and spiritual dimensions.

Data collection was conducted through a literature review covering various scholarly sources. Primary data was obtained from textbooks, monographs on Islamic economics, and digital economic policy documents. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from national and international scientific journals, conference proceedings, and research reports related to welfare indicators, Sharia fintech, and digital economic transformation. Each piece of literature used was selected based on its relevance, credibility, and connection to the research topic, thereby providing a strong conceptual foundation.

The data analysis was conducted using a descriptive-qualitative approach grounded in quantitative data. Quantitative data from the relevant literature were classified, summarised, or presented in the form of simple tables and graphs to provide an overview of welfare conditions in the digital age. Subsequently, this data was analysed qualitatively through the framework of Islamic economic philosophy to assess the relevance of the principles of maqashid al-shari'ah in the transformation of well-being. The analysis focused on a comparison between conventional concepts of well-being and the concept of falah, as well as the positive and negative impacts of digitalisation on the achievement of holistic well-being.

Using this method, the research is able to produce a comprehensive

understanding of the relationship between economic digitalisation and human well-being, whilst providing an interpretation consistent with Islamic economic values. The library research approach ensures the study remains valid despite its conceptual nature, as the data and arguments employed are sourced from credible and relevant academic literature.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Redefining Well-being in the Digital Age from the Perspective of Islamic Economic Philosophy

Global economic changes in the digital age are not merely a technological evolution, but have also shifted the paradigm of how we understand the well-being of modern society. Digitalisation has made access to economic services faster, more efficient, and more widespread, so that well-being is often measured by the extent of digital access, the efficiency of transactions, and the acceleration of digital economic growth (Nudin, Amin & Sofyan, 2024). However, an economic orientation that is overly focused on these material indicators sometimes overlooks the moral and spiritual values that are, in fact, the essence of human well-being when viewed from an Islamic perspective.

In Islamic economic philosophy, the concept of well-being is not merely about material achievement, but lies in the concept of *al-falah*—that is, holistic success in life encompassing both this world and the hereafter (Aravik, et.al, 2025). According to contemporary studies, *al-falah* encompasses social, economic, moral, and spiritual dimensions aimed at maintaining a balance between physical and spiritual needs, as well as upholding the principles of justice (*'adl*) and the common good (*maslahah 'ammah*) within Muslim society (Hasibuan et al., 2025). This understanding indicates that welfare is not merely an end in itself, but a process of economic action grounded in the ethical principles of Sharia.

Digital transformation within the economic system has also created new opportunities such as Sharia-compliant fintech, Islamic e-commerce, and digital zakat, infaq and wakaf (e-ZISWAF). Recent research indicates that digital innovation in the Islamic economy is capable of expanding access to services for communities previously marginalised by the conventional financial system, enhancing transparency, and accelerating the distribution of Sharia-compliant social assistance

(Alfian et al., 2025). This phenomenon demonstrates that digitalisation can serve as a means to achieve inclusive welfare when managed in accordance with Islamic economic principles that prioritise social justice (Aravik, et.al, 2023).

2. Digitalisation of the Islamic Economy: Opportunities, Challenges, and the Implementation of Holistic Well-being Based on Sharia Ethics

However, digital transformation also presents serious challenges that must be addressed within the context of achieving al-falah. For instance, the gig economy and digital platforms often introduce job insecurity and widening social disparities, particularly in developing countries. This indicates that whilst digitalisation accelerates economic access, it also has the potential to create new forms of exclusion for groups in society who lack sufficient digital literacy or access to technology (Malik et al., 2025). Therefore, the concept of digital well-being must be grounded in a commitment to justice and inclusivity to foster holistic well-being.

Within the tradition of Islamic economic philosophy, the maqashid al-shariah serve as the primary framework for assessing the transformation of digital welfare. According to studies on the role of digitalisation in the Islamic economy, maqashid al-shariah guide the integration of moral, spiritual, and social values into digital economic practices, ensuring that digitalisation not only creates efficiency but also strengthens the values of justice (hifz al-mal), social inclusion, and the welfare of the wider community (hifz al-nafs) (Melzatia et al., 2025). This approach positions digitalisation as a means (wasilah) rather than an end in itself, aligning with the vision of al-falah as the ultimate goal of economic practice. ^(Q&A)

Contemporary studies also emphasise the role of ethics and moral values in economic digitalisation; without an ethical foundation, digital technology may reinforce consumptive, individualistic, and materialistic trends that actually distance humanity from the attainment of true happiness. From a Sharia perspective, economic actions must be directed towards a balance (tawazun) between physical needs and spiritual resilience, whilst minimising negative impacts such as exploitation and social inequality. This approach is fundamentally at odds with the orientation of the digital market, which often disregards moral values in its production processes.

Furthermore, the advancement of digitalisation within the Islamic economy has not only had an impact on the financial sector alone, but has also contributed to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Research indicates that the integration of digital innovations into Islamic social instruments such as zakat and waqf has helped accelerate the achievement of poverty alleviation, improved education, and general welfare more efficiently (Wahyudi, Yama & Said, 2025). This demonstrates that digitalisation is not merely a tool for efficiency but also a means to strengthen the contribution of the Islamic economy to welfare based on the principles of maqashid.

The application of Sharia-compliant fintech and blockchain technology within the Islamic economic system further underscores the role of technology in supporting transparency, financial inclusion, and access to services for communities previously marginalised by the traditional banking system (Aravik, et.al, 2025). Recent studies indicate that these technologies hold significant potential for bringing financial services closer to the public without compromising Islamic principles such as justice, transparency, and consumer protection (Ahwarumi, 2024). This demonstrates how digitalisation guided by Islamic economic principles can redefine welfare in a fairer and more ethical manner.

However, the transformation of welfare in the digital age is not without structural challenges, such as digital literacy, public trust in Sharia-compliant digital platforms, and the readiness of the infrastructure of institutions managing the digitalisation of the Islamic economy. These challenges influence the extent to which technology can truly be utilised for the welfare of the community within the framework of maqashid al-shariah; consequently, a strategic role is required from Islamic economic institutions, regulators, and civil society to create an inclusive and equitable digital ecosystem.

Thus, the concept of al-falah places welfare as the ultimate goal of economic practice, both in traditional and digital contexts. Al-falah is not merely a material achievement, but a holistic one that encompasses spiritual, moral, social, and economic dimensions. A digital approach aligned with the principle of al-falah will be able to create well-being that is not merely technically effective but also fair, ethical, and sustainable within the Sharia framework. This demonstrates that true digital well-being can only be achieved if technology is directed towards strengthening

inclusion, social justice, and the spiritual values of the community in accordance with the maqashid al-shariah.

CONCLUSION

The concept of falah as the goal of well-being in Islam has undergone a significant transformation of meaning in the digital age without losing its fundamental values. Falah is not merely understood as material success or economic prosperity, but encompasses a balance between worldly well-being and happiness in the hereafter, encompassing spiritual, social, moral and economic aspects. The digital age has expanded the ways in which people achieve falah through the use of technology that promotes efficiency, access to information, and new economic opportunities.

The transformation of well-being in the digital age is characterised by changes in work patterns, consumption, and social interactions that are increasingly technology-based. Digitalisation presents significant opportunities for improving quality of life, such as easier access to education, digital Islamic financial services, and economic empowerment through online platforms. From a falah perspective, technology serves as a means to strengthen social justice, economic equality, and enhance the productivity of the community, provided its use aligns with ethical values and Sharia principles.

However, the digital age also presents new challenges, such as the digital divide, individualism, and the potential for the misuse of technology, which can distance people from spiritual values. Therefore, the concept of well-being cannot be measured solely by economic growth or technological progress, but must be balanced with the strengthening of moral values, social responsibility, and spiritual awareness.

Thus, falah in the digital age demands the integration of technological progress and Islamic values. True well-being can only be achieved if digital transformation is directed towards the holistic welfare of humanity, creating a life that is just, meaningful, and sustainable, both in this world and in the hereafter.

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