

Harnessing *Qawaid Lughawiyah* in the Context of Information Economics Ethics for Tackling the Global Hoax Epidemic

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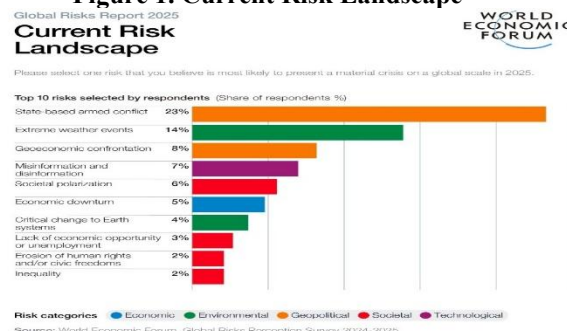
Abstract: This paper develops a moral-linguistic framework for tackling the hoax epidemic by linking information economics ethics with Islamic normative principles and *Qawa'id Lughawiyah*. A three-layer structured literature review is employed to (i) map digital information ethics and the attention economy, (ii) formulate Islamic evaluative criteria for communicative responsibility (*ṣidq*, *amanah*, *ʿadl*, *tabayyun*, and *maṣlaḥah*), and (iii) operationalize *Qawa'id Lughawiyah* as a text-analytic instrument for detecting meaning manipulation. The synthesis yields a set of contemporary anti-hoax maxims and a practical checklist that targets semantic and pragmatic mechanisms frequently used in disinformation, including implied claims, ambiguity, and interpretive leaps beyond available evidence (*manṭuq-maḥmūm* distinctions and *ihṭimal al-lafẓ*). The framework is discussed in relation to Indonesia's legal-institutional response, showing how ethical-linguistic diagnostics can complement source-based fact-checking, particularly for economically harmful scams, identity-based hostility, and hoaxes that escalate into public unrest. While the analysis is qualitative and context-sensitive, it indicates a plausible pathway for integrating Islamic moral reasoning and linguistic accountability into contemporary digital governance.

Keywords: *Qawa'id Lughawiyah*, Information economic ethics, *Tabayyun*, Disinformation, Digital governance.

Introduction

Today's information circulation increasingly follows platform logic. it moves fast, scales massively, and is often shaped more by attention than by accuracy. Within this ecosystem, data and narratives function not only as communication, but also as commodities that are exchanged, promoted, and contested, which can blur the boundaries between information, opinion, and propaganda when engagement becomes the primary design goal. In the broader landscape of the information economy, digital infrastructures appear less like neutral channels and more like systems that tend to prioritize user engagement over substantive accuracy. Algorithmic biases in machine learning can intensify this tendency by rewarding emotionally arousing content, allowing false narratives to be amplified because they generate value for platforms. The problem is further complicated by audiences' reliance on "public opinion cues (visible social signals, such as likes, shares, and engagement counts, that people use to infer what others believe)" such as likes and shares as cognitive shortcuts (mental heuristics used to make quick judgments without full deliberation) for credibility judgments, even though such cues are increasingly susceptible to manipulation through bots or distorted representation, potentially obscuring perceptions of actual social consensus (Sooth, 2025; Shin & Shin, 2025). When these technical incentives interact with psychological vulnerabilities, misinformation can spread through what has been described as a cascade of falsehoods, moving along a steeper and faster diffusion curve (the pattern by which information spreads across a population over time) than conventional information. Disinformation also tends to exploit cognitive biases, including the illusion of truth and confirmation bias (the tendency to favor information that confirms prior beliefs or expectations), and algorithmic logics can reinforce these effects, making correction efforts less effective. Given that hoaxes often outpace fact-checking and become embedded within community belief structures, purely technical interventions may be insufficient, which points to the need for ethical-linguistic approaches that can address distortions of meaning at their source (Morrison et al., 2021).

Figure 1. Current Risk Landscape

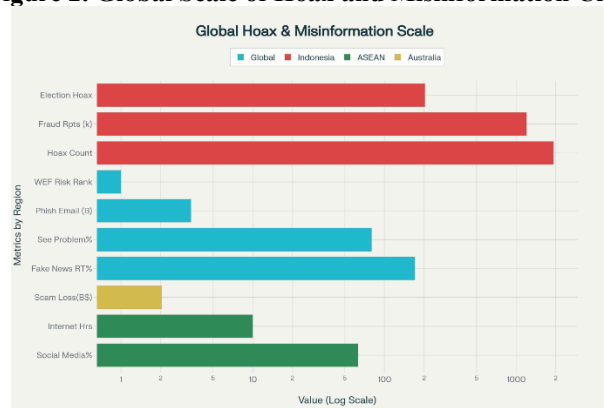


Source: World Economic Forum, Global Risk Perception Survey 2024-2025

Figure 1 draws on the World Economic Forum's *Global Risks Report 2025* (a strategic analysis document that maps the most pressing global threats) to situate information disorder within the broader global risk landscape. In the 2024–2025 risk perception survey, respondents most often named state-based armed conflict (23%) and extreme weather (14%) as the leading threats for 2025, while misinformation and disinformation also appeared in the top ten (7%), alongside social polarization (6%) and economic decline (5%). These rankings indicate a growing tendency to view disruptions in the information ecosystem not merely as problems of communication quality, but as risks with material implications for social cohesion, political stability, and resilience. The challenge is arguably intensified by two concurrent shifts: misleading content is becoming cheaper and easier to produce, whereas verification remains comparatively slow and resource-intensive, and disinformation frequently takes forms that resist clean refutation through insinuation, emotionally charged phrasing, strategic omissions, blurred agency, or vague appeals to authority.

Synthetic media (digitally generated or manipulated media, including deepfakes and voice cloning), including deepfakes (highly realistic synthetic audio, video, or images generated to imitate real persons or events) and voice cloning, further weakens the evidentiary status of visuals, a concern that becomes more acute during high-stakes election cycles when legitimacy and trust are under pressure. Although fact-checking, content moderation, digital literacy, and platform regulation have expanded, each encounters practical and normative tensions, including perceptions that aggressive moderation constrains expression and the tendency for technical solutions to lag behind adversarial innovation. Given these constraints, information ethics scholarship may need to treat language less as a neutral conduit and more as the site where intent, meaning emphasis, and persuasion operate, raising two questions: what ethical criteria can evaluate responsibility, impact, and communicative intent alongside accuracy, and how might such criteria be translated into analytical tools that can systematically read linguistic work in texts rather than relying on intuition?

Figure 2. Global Scale of Hoax and Misinformation Crisis



Source: Primary Data, Processed 2025

Figure 2 reinforces the thesis that the escalation of hoaxes is related to a decline in social trust and the fragility of institutional legitimacy. Hoaxes can be understood as a “shock” to the information market: they increase uncertainty, force the public to work harder to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and then create space for polarization. By framing the hoax crisis as a systemic problem, this image opens up space for approaches that go beyond technical solutions. This is where *Qawa'id Lughawiyah* (linguistic maxims or interpretive rules in Islamic legal theory used to determine the meaning, scope, and implication of wording) makes sense as a moral-linguistic reading tool, because many hoaxes do not always convey blatant lies, but rather construct meaning through insinuation, ambiguity, and framing that is difficult to capture if the analysis is only based on metadata or sources.

Table 1. Global Misinformation and Disinformation

No	Indicator	Value	Years	Source
1	Misinformation/Disinformation Risk Ranking	#1 Global Risk (2nd consecutive year)	2025	World Economic Forum Global Risks Report
2	Daily Phishing Emails	3.4 billion emails	2024-2025	KeepNet Labs Phishing Statistics
3	Fake News Spread Rate	70% more likely to be retweeted	2024	MIT Study via Statista
4	Global Concern Level	80%+ see as big problem, 59% as "very big problem"	2025	Pew Research Global Survey (35 countries)
5	COVID-19 Misinformation	40% saw false	2023	Global Survey

	Exposure	COVID info weekly		
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Source: Data primary, Processed (2025)

The table 1 helps clarify the crisis at an international scale, moving from risk ratings to indicators that signal how quickly and widely misleading content can circulate. Several figures can be read as evidence that disinformation tends to operate according to the attention-economy logic: content is produced in volume, distributed rapidly, and then competes for public visibility. From the standpoint of information economics ethics (an ethical approach that evaluates the production, circulation, and consumption of information in light of incentives, asymmetries, social costs, and public harm), this pattern suggests the need for evaluative “filters” that do more than verify factual correctness, namely tools that can also examine how meaning is constructed and directed. In that sense, the global table can be positioned as an opening move in the paper’s argument: *Qawa'id Lughawiyah*-based approaches do not sit outside global debates, but may complement them by foregrounding intention, responsibility, and the ethics of meaning, dimensions that are often underdeveloped in mainstream responses.

Table 2. Number of Hoax Content in Indonesia

No	Indicator	Value	Years	Source
1	Total Hoax Content Identified	1,923 hoax content	2024	Ministry of Communication and Digital
2	Hoax by Category (Top 3)	Fraud: 890, Politics: 237, Government: 214	2024	Ministry of Communication and Digital of AIS Team
3	Election-Related Hoax	203 hoax issues, 2,882 contents	2024	Ministry of Communication and Information Technology Election Monitoring
3	Pre-Election Hoax Spike	96 hoax issues, 355 contents	2023	Ministry of Communication and Information Technology Campaign Monitoring
4	Digital Fraud Reports	1.2 million reports	2025 (mid-year)	Ministry of Communication and Digital Public Complaint
5	Cybercrime Losses	Rp. 476 million	2025	Ministry of Communication and Digital
6	Monthly Tracking (2025)	Jan: 129 issues, Feb: 124 hoax issues	2025	Ministry of Communication and Digital of AIS Team

Source: Data primary, Processed (2025)

Table 3. Financial Losses Due to Hoaxes in Indonesia

No	Aspect	Loss Value
1	Total scam losses (Nov 2024-Sep 2025)	Rp 7 trillion
2	Average loss per victim	Rp 20 million
3	Reports received by the IASC	~300.000 Reports
4	Illegal investment losses (2022)	Rp120,79 trillion
5	Total illegal investment losses (2012-2022)	Rp152,87 trillion
6	OJK stops illegal financial entities	1.840 entity

Source: Data primary, Processed (2025)

The table 2 complements the global overview by showing local texture, including content volume, dominant hoax categories, and spikes that tend to coincide with political periods. The prominence of fraud and election-related issues, together with the cadence captured in monthly monitoring, suggests that hoaxes often intensify when public vulnerability is high and attention is concentrated, rather than spreading randomly. This interpretation is reinforced by the financial loss table, which reframes the issue from a “truth crisis” into an economic crisis, since data on scams, illegal investments, and complaint reports point to negative externalities (harmful social costs produced by an action but borne by others rather than by the actor who caused them) borne by victims and the wider public. In this sense, the “information economics ethics” framing becomes analytically useful because hoaxes can erode knowledge while also producing social and transaction costs that translate into material losses. The discussion could be sharpened further by connecting these harms to *maqasid* (the higher objectives or overarching purposes of Islamic law), especially *hifz al-mal* (preservation of wealth or property) and *hifz al-aql* (preservation of intellect), and by showing how *Qawa'id Lughawiyah* can help detect recurring fraud-oriented language patterns, including absolute claims, manufactured urgency, and fictitious authority.

Platform distribution data also clarifies where attention-economy dynamics appear most concentrated. The dominance of social media and messaging applications indicates that hoaxes often circulate in environments optimized for speed, social proximity, and repetition, rather than in deliberative settings that demand evidence, which helps explain why takedowns and verification frequently arrive after narratives have already diffused widely. This connects directly to the research title: when hoaxes travel through short texts, captions, and compressed stories, linguistic analysis sensitive to *dalalah* (semantic indication; the way a word or expression points to meaning), *ihimal al-lafz* (semantic indeterminacy or the possibility that one expression may bear multiple plausible meanings), and the relationship between *manṭuq* (the explicit meaning directly conveyed by the wording of a text) and *mafhum* (the implied meaning understood from a text, though not directly stated in it) may offer more forward-looking mitigation by targeting meaning production, not only post hoc correction. Consistent with attention-driven information economy discussions, message value is often shaped by appeal and reach rather than semantic accuracy or responsibility, so fact-checking alone may be insufficient when hoaxes deploy ambiguity, insinuation, vague authority claims, and affective language that accelerates emotion ahead of judgment (Aflisia et al., 2022).

Building on these considerations, the study develops an information economics ethics framework enriched by Islamic values and tests it through *Qawa'id Lughawiyah*, grounded in a three-layered literature review: digital information ethics and the attention economy (a digital environment in which human attention functions as a scarce and monetizable resource), Islamic communication ethics as evaluative criteria (*siddiq* (truthfulness; the moral obligation to speak and communicate honestly), *amanah* (trustworthiness; responsible custody and transmission of information), *'adl* (justice or fairness; giving each party its due without distortion or bias), *tabayyun* (careful verification and clarification before accepting or disseminating information), *maslahah* (public or moral benefit recognized as conducive to human welfare)), and the operationalization of *Qawa'id Lughawiyah* for semantic-pragmatic reading, including *manṭuq* versus *mafhum* and ambiguity arising from *ihimal al-lafz* (semantic indeterminacy or the possibility that one expression may bear multiple plausible meanings) (Norlaila et al., 2025; Wekke, 2018a). Rather than replacing source-based fact-checking (the verification of claims through identifiable sources, documents, records, and traceable evidence), this integrated approach is positioned to complement it with moral-linguistic tools that can identify how messages restrict verification, steer interpretation, or obscure actors and responsibility, thereby strengthening the basis for hoax mitigation at both individual and institutional levels.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive-analytical methods to formulate and test an ethical framework for information economics based on *Qawa'id Lughawiyah* in the reading of hoaxes. The focus of the study is directed at how hoax texts shape meaning, produce ambiguity, and direct the emotions and judgments of readers, then link them to ethical consequences in the attention economy ecosystem. The research data sources were constructed from three main groups. First, classical and contemporary literature relevant to *Qawa'id Lughawiyah*, *dalalah al-alfaz*, *ihimal al-lafz*, as well as the traditions of *adab al-kalam* (the ethics of speech; norms governing proper, responsible, and morally disciplined expression) and the principle of *tabayyun*, including works that discuss the relationship between language, intention, and moral responsibility in communication. This aligns with the historical development of semantic studies (*Ilmu Dalalah*) which has evolved from classical eras to modern linguistic theories to better understand text interpretation (Wekke, 2018a). Second, academic literature and recent policy reports on information ethics, misinformation, disinformation, and the information economy that explain the role of incentives, information asymmetry, and the commodification of attention (the process of turning user attention into economic value) in the spread of hoaxes. Third, a corpus of Indonesian-language hoaxes that have been verified by fact-checking institutions is used as test material to assess whether the developed framework is capable of working in real cases, not just at a conceptual level. Data analysis was conducted through two main complementary stages. In the first stage, content analysis was applied to identify linguistic elements and discourse strategies that frequently appear in hoaxes. The reading focused on semantic, pragmatic, and syntactic markers, such as ambiguity, extension of meaning, insinuation, absolute claims without supporting evidence, or omission of actors that complicate the attribution of responsibility. This approach recognizes that grammatical elements (*qawaid*) are crucial for determining the position of sentences and their compositional meaning to ensure the intended message is understood correctly (Hanun et al., 2025; Pramana & Waslam, 2025). The results of this stage were compiled into a list of operational indicators that can be used consistently across texts.

The second stage uses normative analysis to evaluate these linguistic indicators within the framework of information economy ethics and Islamic ethical principles. The evaluation is conducted by linking linguistic findings to criteria such as *siddiq* (truthfulness and anti-distortion), *amanah* (responsibility and traceability), *'adl* (potential injustice and social harm), *tabayyun* (obligation of verification), as well as *maslahah* orientation and *mudarat* (harm, injury, or damaging consequence that ought to be prevented) prevention. Through this stage, the relationship between language form, dissemination incentives, and social impact is constructed as a traceable

argument, then summarized in a matrix or table of *Qawa'id Lughawiyah* application for hoax analysis. To ensure that the reading does not fall solely on the author's intuition, the search for indicators is carried out using a record sheet that binds three things at once: text quotations, linguistic marker categories, and the normative reasons used when drawing ethical conclusions. In this way, the proposed framework can be understood as an information “filtering” device that combines language reading and ethical considerations in dealing with the hoax epidemic.

Foundation (Mazhab and Kaidah)

Table 4. Linguistic Profiles and Core Maxims of the Four Sunni Mazhab

No	Mazhab	General linguistic profile	Key linguistic maxims
1	Hanafi	Highly technical and systematic in analyzing wording, builds many rules from language and logic, develops a detailed theory of verbal indication (<i>dalalah lafziyyah</i> (verbal indication; meaning derived from the wording itself)).	1) العبرة بعموم اللفظ لا بخصوص السبب Legal consideration follows the generality of the wording, not the specificity of the occasion. 2) الأمر للوجوب ما لم تصرفه قرينة An imperative denotes obligation unless there is an indicator diverting it. 3) Systematic use of: دلالة العبارة, دلالة الإشارة, دلالة النص, دلالة الاقتضاء.
2	Maliki	Consistently links language with social context (<i>'urf</i> , <i>maslahah</i> , and the practice of Madinah), not rigid about surface wording while preserving textual authority.	1) حَمْلُ الْمُطْلَقِ عَلَى الْمُقَيَّدِ عِنْدَ اتِّحَادِ السَّبَبِ An unrestricted expression is limited by a restricted one when the legal cause is the same. 2) الْعِبْرَةُ بِالْمَعْنَى لَا بِالْأَلْفَاظِ Legal weight is given to meanings and substance, not merely to labels and wording.
3	Shafi'i	Most text-driven and linguistic, treats classical Arabic usage and sound transmission as the main foundation, very cautious in accepting figurative readings (<i>majaz</i> (figurative or non-literal meaning, as opposed to literal usage)).	1) الْأَصْلُ فِي الْكَلَامِ الْحَقِيقَةُ The default in speech is the literal meaning. 2) لَا يُغْذَلُ عَنِ الظَّاهِرِ إِلَّا بِدَلِيلٍ One may not depart from the apparent sense without evidence. 3) العام يبقى على عمومته حتى يرد مخصص A general expression remains general until a valid particularizer appears.
4	Hanbali	Close to <i>Shafi'i</i> in prioritizing the apparent meaning, but gives even stronger weight to Companion reports (<i>athar</i> (transmitted report or trace, especially from the Companions)); minimal use of speculative <i>ta'wil</i> (interpretive redirection from the apparent meaning to another meaning supported by evidence), especially in worship.	1) – حَمْلُ اللَّفْظِ عَلَى ظَاهِرِهِ أَوْلَى Preferring the apparent sense of the wording is superior. 2) يُعْمَلُ بِالظَّاهِرِ مَعَ مُرَاعَاةِ الْأَثَرِ The apparent meaning is applied while observing transmitted reports. 3) الْأَصْلُ فِي الْعِبَادَاتِ التَّوْقِيفُ The default in acts of worship is strict adherence to explicit evidence.

Source: Data primary, Processed (2025)

Table 4 serves as the basis for legitimizing tradition, *Qawa'id Lughawiyah* is not a new idea imposed on digital issues, but rather an interpretive tool that exists within the framework of *usul* (foundational principles; in this context, usually shorthand for the principles of legal interpretation) and *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence; the human understanding of practical rulings derived from the sources). Differences in emphasis between madhhabs also help you highlight methodological nuances. For example, a literalist tendency and caution in interpretation provide justification for rejecting “wild interpretations” in hoaxes, while attention to *'urf* and *maslahah* opens up space for reading the social context of dissemination. When connected to the title, this table supports the thesis that hoax filtering can be constructed as an “ethics of meaning” that does not conflict with the plurality of Islamic methodologies (Yanto, 2021).

Table 5. Textual Examples and Methodological Implications

No	Mazhab	Representative textual examples	Key methodological implications
1	Hanafi	- Qur'an 49:6 "if a <i>fasiq</i> (a morally compromised person whose report requires scrutiny) comes to you with news, verify (<i>fatabayyanu</i> (verify, ascertain, or investigate carefully))" is revealed for a specific incident (<i>al-Walid</i> (refers to Allah as the advisor and protector who supports His servants) by 'Uqbah (has several meanings, including "The End Of Everything" and "replacement")) yet generalized to all news bearers (application of <i>al-'ibrah bi 'umum al-lafz</i> (taking lessons or laws from the generality of the lafzh, not from the specificity of the cause)). - Imperatives such as "establish prayer" (Q 2:43) are read as obligatory in the absence of a diverting indicator, whereas "disperse in the land" (Q 62:10) is downgraded to permissibility due to Companions' practice. - Layered use of <i>dalalah al-'ibarah</i> (meaning directly indicated by the wording itself), <i>al-isharah</i> (meaning inferred by indication rather than by direct wording), <i>al-nass</i> (emphatic or directly textual meaning strongly conveyed by the text), <i>al-iqtida</i> (a required implied meaning necessary for the statement to be coherent or legally operative)' to extract explicit, implicit, emphatic and required meanings.	- Strong reliance on general wording allows legal norms to extend beyond the original historical case, which is useful for modeling rules that govern new fact patterns (e.g., digital misinformation and the duty of verification). - The multi-layered theory of verbal indication offers a fine-grained analytical grid for distinguishing what the text explicitly states, implies, emphasizes, or presupposes, which is valuable for legal text mining and normative reasoning.
2	Maliki	- The unrestricted "freeing a slave" (Q 58:3) is read together with "freeing a believing slave" (Q 4:92); because both address expiation, the unrestricted wording is constrained to believing slaves. - In contracts, an utterance labeled "deposit" that in substance grants use and imposes liability is classified as <i>'ariyah</i> (a loan for use; temporary transfer of benefit without transfer of ownership) or <i>qard</i> (a loan that must be repaid with an equivalent), not <i>wadi'ah</i> (a trust deposit placed in another's custody for safekeeping), since meaning overrides naming. - The hadith discouraging price-fixing is limited by public interest: state intervention becomes permissible or even obligatory in cases of monopoly or hoarding to prevent public harm.	- Linguistic analysis is systematically integrated with <i>maṣlaḥah</i>, <i>'urf</i>, and communal practice, so general wording can be narrowed to safeguard social welfare and equity. - This pattern supports a methodology for reading normative texts alongside empirical realities, which is highly relevant for contemporary policy and market regulation (e.g., price controls, digital platform governance).
3	Shafi'i	Imperatives such as "establish prayer" (Q 2:43) retain their default meaning of obligation unless a strong proof lowers the	Emphasis on literal and apparent meanings provides a clear "default semantics (the principle

		level of demand. • Basmala at the start of <i>Al-Fatiḥah</i> is treated as an integral verse to be recited in ritual prayer because it appears in the <i>muṣḥaf</i> and is supported by accepted reports. • The hadith “actions are only by intentions” uses <i>innama</i> (a particle of restriction meaning “only” or “nothing but.”) as a particle of restriction, making intention a pillar (<i>rukn</i>) of <i>wuḍu</i> (ritual ablution performed before prayer)’ and <i>ṣalah</i> (ritual prayer in Islam), not merely a condition. • General terms such as “the thief, male and female” (Q 5:38) are restricted only by sound textual evidence defining <i>nisab</i> (the minimum threshold required for the legal application of a given rule) and conditions, not by extra-textual policy considerations.	that the apparent or literal meaning should be taken first unless evidence requires otherwise)” for norms, limiting judicial and interpretive discretion. • The rule that general expressions can only be particularized by strong evidence is useful when encoding when a norm may be narrowed in formal legal reasoning systems. • Cautious treatment of <i>majaz</i> is significant for computational representations, preventing premature reinterpretation of sensitive expressions (e.g., divine attributes) as mere metaphors.
4	Hanbali	• “The All-Merciful rose over the Throne” (Q 20:5) is affirmed according to its apparent linguistic sense, without likening or inquiring into the how, and without philosophical reinterpretation. • Practice-based evidence suggests the Prophet began recitation with “<i>al-ḥamdu lillah</i> (al-ḥamdu lillah is this Praise for the blessings given to us by the Creator, Allah SWT)”, so basmala in prayer is read quietly and not treated as a loudly recited verse of <i>Al-Fatiḥah</i>. • The imperative to “establish prayer” (Q 2:43) is taken as obligatory, but Hanbali jurists are ready to adjust if strong Companion reports indicate a qualified application. • The hadith cursing frequent female visitors to graves is understood as implying prohibition or severe reprehensibility, unless reliably particularized.	• Combines apparent linguistic meaning with a hierarchy of transmitted evidence, using Companion practice to calibrate how strictly wording is applied in real cases. • The maxim that worship is purely script-bound (<i>tawqifi</i> (restricted to explicit textual authority and not open to free innovation)) shapes a conservative stance on ritual innovation, which can inform discussions on the limits of acceptable innovation in religious technology and digital worship tools. • Methodologically, this school models a prudential rule: do not extend normative meaning in acts of worship without explicit precedent, even if rationally appealing.

Source: Data primary, Processed (2025)

In this table 4 and 5, textual examples and methodological implications can be used to show that rules are not mere slogans, but working rules that can be adapted to digital communication patterns. Generalization of wording, imperative standards, and *dalalah* theory provide tools for distinguishing between explicit claims, insinuations, and those that require preliminary evidence. When linked to “information economics ethics,” the implications are quite strong: the clearer the tools are for distinguishing levels of meaning, the smaller the information asymmetry (the imbalance of information control between one party and another party), and the higher the chances of restoring trust (Fadillah et al., 2022).

Within an information-economics lens, *tabayyun* can be framed less as a pious exhortation and more as a procedural obligation suited to digital circulation. The Qur’anic imperative in Q. al-Ḥujurāt:6, read alongside the juristic sensibility that general wording carries normative force beyond a single occasion of revelation, supports a practical standard: where a message is plausibly capable of producing public harm, whether in politics, security, health, or economic life, verification of source and context should precede redistribution. This move aligns with a growing scholarly tension between speed-driven platform logics and the slower epistemic labor required for responsible knowledge production. In such an environment, virality is a weak proxy for truth. Consistent with the

maxim *al-yaqin la yazulu bi al-shakk* (certainty is not removed by doubt), information anchored in stronger evidentiary forms, such as primary documentation, official records, or reliable fact-checking trails, ought not to be displaced by trending assertions that do not offer commensurate proof (Alamudi et al., 2025; Asni, 2017).

Qawa'id Lughawiyah sharpen this ethical stance by directing attention to how meaning is manufactured, redirected, and strategically left incomplete. For factual claims, the explicit semantic content (*manṭuq* (the explicit meaning directly conveyed by the wording of a text)) should ordinarily take priority, while implied meanings (*mafhum* or *isharah*) are better treated as hypotheses rather than conclusions, unless corroborating indicators are available. This becomes especially salient when a statement exhibits *ihtimal al-lafz*, a semantic openness that permits multiple plausible readings (Norlaila et al., 2025; Wekke, 2018a). Where no clear *qarinah* (a contextual indicator or interpretive clue that restricts or clarifies meaning) constrains interpretation, the text should not serve as a basis for accusation, moral condemnation, or motive attribution at most, it warrants suspension and further inquiry. A related issue concerns attempts to evade responsibility through labels. In line with the principle *al-ibrah bi al-ma'ana la bi al-alfāz* (what is used as a benchmark is the meaning, not the editorial/pronunciation), disclaimers such as “I only shared it,” “allegedly,” or “just an opinion” do not necessarily reduce ethical accountability when the substance of the message functions as deception, incitement, or reputational harm. Taken together, these contemporary formulations position language as a site of accountability: not only what is said matters, but also how meaning is staged, insinuated, and circulated within the attention economy.

Results and Discussion

1. Contemporary anti-hoax rules

This principle is based on the principle of verification, which is normatively rooted in QS al-Hujurat:6, and methodologically in line with the principle of “العبرة بعموم اللفظ لا بخصوص السبب”. If the wording is read as a general guideline, then *tabayyun* can be understood as a procedural obligation that does not depend on the type of platform or message format. This perspective aligns with (Harizan & Mydin, 2024), who characterize *tabayyun* as a critical self-regulatory measure encompassing technical mechanisms and ethical practices to ensure information accuracy. In the digital space, this obligation takes on new urgency because a short post can resonate widely, transcending its original context and having a public impact in the political, security, health, or economic spheres. Recent studies reinforce this necessity, while (Tanjung et al., 2023) emphasize *tabayyun* as a self-regulatory measure for consumers to prevent discord, argue that it is also a fundamental ethical requirement to counter the digital era's tendency to prioritize speed over accuracy and source credibility.

Within the framework of *Qawa'id Lughawiyah*, *tabayyun* is not only concerned with the source, but also with how meaning is formed, aligning with (Hasanah, 2024) who emphasizes that rigorous verification is essential to ensure the accuracy of message transmission in the digital era. Therefore, the principles of “الأصل في الكلام الحقيقة” and “لا يعدل عن الظاهر إلا بدليل” are relevant to read together. Literal reading is the default, while leaps of interpretation, for example from official statements to accusations of conspiracy or criminalization, should be rejected if there is no adequate evidence to support them. At the practical level, this discipline prevents the public from being dragged into a chain of speculative meanings that hoaxes often use to manipulate readers' emotions. A phenomenon (Sulaiman Muhammad et al., 2025) describe as the exploitation of cognitive biases and sensationalism to incite social discord. (Putra & Ayyaisy, 2025) demonstrate that operationalizing *tabayyun* in digital platforms can effectively counter it, evidenced by a significant increase in user verification awareness from 45% to 85%.

The ethics of speech closes this first rule as a minimum form of self-control. The hadith “Say something good or remain silent” provides a simple but firm social standard, when verification is insufficient, delaying posting is closer to ethical behavior than being considered a weakness. In the attention economy, this kind of pause actually serves as an interruption to the logic of virality that benefits hoaxes. This restraint is particularly critical given that high levels of online engagement and political participation have been empirically linked to an increased likelihood of sharing misinformation (Valenzuela et al., 2019). In the attention economy, this kind of pause actually serves as an interruption to the logic of virality that benefits hoaxes, a phenomenon which has historically driven millions of engagements across major social platforms (Allcott et al., 2019).

The principle of “اليقين لا يزول بالشك” which serves as a fundamental pillar for legal certainty and stability (Arlan, 2025), teaches that certainty does not collapse simply because doubt arises, especially doubt based on repetition or popularity. In the digital space, virality often acts as a substitute for evidence. Claims that are shared repeatedly appear “reasonable” and are then accepted as true, even though they do not have a corresponding evidentiary basis. A cognitive bias confirmed by recent studies on the illusory truth effect (the tendency to believe a statement more easily after repeated exposure to it) (Orchinik et al., 2025; Pillai & Fazio, 2021). Using this principle, data that has been verified through official documents, primary evidence, or fact-checking should not be invalidated by trending claims that do not provide equivalent proof. This application of *Qawa'id Fiqhiyah* (the basic rules or principles in the science of fiqh which function as guidelines in understanding and applying Islamic

law) is essential in resolving contemporary issues in *mu'amalah* (Islamic rules that regulate human affairs in worldly social interactions) and *siyasah* (governance, policy, and public administration in relation to collective order and welfare), ensuring that decisions are based on valid legal grounds rather than speculation (Eka Zakran, 2024).

From the perspective of information economics ethics, virality creates problematic incentives. Content that triggers emotions tends to spread faster, while content that is neat in terms of evidence often loses speed. It is this tension that makes “المصلحة العامة مقدمة على المصلحة الخاصة” and “درء المفاسد مقدم على جلب المصالح” relevant as derivative rules, reinforcing the priority of preventing harm within the ethical hierarchy of *Maqasid al-Shariah* (the higher aims of the Shari'ah directed toward preserving essential human goods) (Ibrahim et al., 2019). When the risk of social harm is dominant and supporting evidence is weak, restrictions on content dissemination by platforms, governments, or social institutions can be understood as preventive measures against harm, not merely restrictions on expression. By the same logic, the individual right to “voice” claims does not automatically override the public's right to be safe from misinformation that disrupts order and safety, consistent with the principle of *al-maslahah al-mursalah* (an unrestricted public interest not explicitly mentioned in the texts but consistent with the objectives of the law) which prioritizes the preservation of public good over individual interests (Ahmed & Khalid Mohammed Al Sakkaf, 2025).

Literature findings and readings of hoax texts tend to show that much disinformation operates in the realm of “half-truths.” It rarely states outright lies; what happens more often is the production of insinuations, the steering of assumptions, and the shifting of the burden of conclusion to the reader. Here, the distinction of *dalalah* is key. *Dalalah al-ibarah*, or the explicit meaning captured from the structure of speech, needs to be positioned as the basis when a statement is treated as a factual claim, aligning with the epistemological function of *mantuq* which serves as the primary anchor for legal and textual certainty (Darma Fitra et al., 2025). Meanwhile, implied meanings such as *mafhum* or *isyarah* are more appropriately treated as hypotheses awaiting reinforcement, not verdicts. This caution mirrors the methodology of Al-Syatibi, who emphasized rigorous standardization in interpreting implied texts (*mafhum*) to prevent divergent understandings that could lead to public confusion or conflict (Asni, 2017).

This rule takes on new relevance when hoaxes enter the synthetic content phase. In Hoax 4.0, deepfakes and voice cloning not only falsify facts, but also mimic authority, faces, and voices to lock recipients into false perceptions, effectively generating fake digital content to impersonate individuals with high realism (Veerasamy & Pieterse, 2022). At this point, the prohibition of unauthorized identity simulation can be formulated as a form of modern *ghish* (fraud, deception, or misleading conduct for wrongful gain), because its modus operandi is to deceive through representations that are deliberately constructed to appear valid. In the language of this research framework, such manipulation is a distortion of meaning that violates the ethics of information delivery, while taking advantage of the high cost of verification in the public sphere caused by the growing sophistication and scale of automated disinformation (Jungherr, 2025).

The concept of “iḥtimal al-lafẓ” indicates that a phrase can contain more than one possible meaning. In certain situations, ambiguity is natural, but in the ecosystem of hoaxes, ambiguity is often deliberately produced so that the message appears safe from refutation. Therefore, when there is insufficient *qarinah* to lock in the interpretation, a sentence that is open to multiple interpretations should not be used to accuse, convict, or conclude motives. It is more appropriate to treat it as information that does not yet meet the requirements for circulation.

Here, the rule of “لا ضرر ولا ضرار” provides clear ethical guidance. If a piece of content has the potential to cause economic loss, panic, violence, or hostility, then withholding its distribution is closer to an obligation than a justification in the name of freedom of expression. Once a hoax has been proven to cause harm, “الضرر يزال” directs proportional corrective measures, ranging from public clarification, reporting, restriction of reach, to takedown. This mechanism can be understood as an effort to eliminate danger, not merely silencing, especially when corrective actions are accompanied by transparent and traceable reasons.

Here, the rule of “لا ضرر ولا ضرار” provides clear ethical guidance, serving as a fundamental principle to prohibit actions that harm oneself or others (Alamudi et al., 2025). If a piece of content has the potential to cause economic loss, panic, violence, or hostility, then withholding its distribution is closer to an obligation than a justification in the name of freedom of expression, a preventive approach akin to implementing strict protocols to curb the spread of a virus (Mohamad & Arizan, 2021). Once a hoax has been proven to cause harm, “الضرر يزال” directs proportional corrective measures, ranging from public clarification, reporting, restriction of reach, to takedown. This mechanism can be understood as an effort to eliminate danger, not merely silencing, especially when corrective actions are accompanied by transparent and traceable reasons."

The principle of “العبرة بالمعاني لا بالألفاظ” emphasizes that judgment should not be based on the wording, but rather on the meaning and impact, a core tenet of Islamic legal maxims that prioritizes substance over form in establishing accountability (Muiz, 2020). In the practice of spreading hoaxes, disclaimers such as “he said,” “just sharing,” or “just an opinion” are often used to create a moral distance between the spreader and the consequences of the message. However, if the substance of the content remains deceptive, inflammatory, or damaging to reputation, then ethical responsibility remains, as the dynamics of rumor sharing often exploit these low-

commitment behaviors to amplify falsehoods regardless of the sharer's stated intent (Pröllochs & Feuerriegel, 2023). At the level of the information economy, disclaimers also function as a risk reduction strategy for disseminators, while social risks are transferred to the public who must bear the consequences.

This fifth rule emphasizes the meeting point between ethics and linguistics. Language is not treated as a neutral medium, but as a tool that shapes intentions, manages credibility, and regulates the burden of proof thus, the *Qawa'id Lughawiyah* tool in this study functions as a filter that assesses information based on its meaning structure, not just on surface claims (Farina Faradina et al., 2024; Jalili et al., 2024). As a result, mitigating hoaxes is not merely a matter of “hunting down fake news,” but also of correcting public communication that is deliberately obscured to produce uncertainty, necessitating robust interventions to restore informational trust (Chen & Lu, 2024).

Table 6. *Qawa'id Lughawiyah*

No	<i>Qawa'id Lughawiyah</i>	Translation	Digital Ethics	Information	Related <i>Maqasid</i>
1	الأصل في الكلام الحقيقة حتى يقوم دليل على المجاز	The origin of a statement is its true meaning until there is evidence of a figurative meaning.	Information should not be manipulated with double meanings without clarification.		<i>Hifẓ al-din</i> (preservation of religion), <i>Hifẓ al-'aql</i> (preservation of intellect)
2	العبرة بعموم اللفظ لا بخصوص السبب	Legal considerations based on the generality of the wording, not the specificity of the cause	Do not misuse context to mislead the public.		<i>Hifẓ al-din</i> , <i>Hifẓ al-'aql</i>
3	المطلق يجري على إطلاقه ما لم يرد ما يقيد	The wording is absolutely applicable unless there is something that limits it.	Information must be clear; do not release it without binding context.		<i>Hifẓ al-'aql</i>
4	الخاص يقضي على العام	That which specifically restricts the general	General information must be supplemented with details if there are important details.		<i>Hifẓ al-mal</i> (preservation of wealth or property), <i>Hifẓ al-'aql</i>
5	اليقين لا يزول بالشك	Faith is not lost because of doubt	Facts cannot be dismissed by rumors or speculation.		<i>Hifẓ al-nafs</i> (preservation of life), <i>Hifẓ al-mal</i>
6	الضرر يزال	Harm must be eliminated	Information that is harmful or detrimental to the public must be prevented/removed.		<i>Hifẓ al-nafs</i> , <i>Hifẓ al-māl</i>
7	ما لا يتم الواجب إلا به فهو واجب	Something that is a prerequisite is also obligatory.	Conveying accurate information must be accompanied by verification/sources.		<i>Hifẓ al-din</i> , <i>Hifẓ al-'aql</i>
8	المفهوم معتبر إذا لم يخالف منطقاً	<i>Mafhūm mukhālafah</i> is valid as long as it does not contradict the meaning of the original text.	Do not draw conclusions that contradict the original text.		<i>Hifẓ al-'aql</i>
9	الأصل بقاء ما كان على ما كان	Originally, something remains as it is until there is evidence of change.	Do not make new claims without valid evidence (anti-misinformation)		<i>Hifẓ al-mal</i> , <i>Hifẓ al-'aql</i>
10	إذا تعارض المفسدتان روعي أعظمهما ضرراً بارتكاب أخفهما	If two evils meet, choose the lesser one.	In digital moderation, restricting some content can be more ethical than allowing significant harm.		<i>Hifẓ al-nafs</i> , <i>Hifẓ al-'ird</i> (preservation of honor, dignity, or reputation)

Source: Data primary, Processed (2025)

The *Qawa'id Lughawiyah* table functions as a “normative engine (an operational normative framework that converts principles into criteria for judgment)” that connects classical principles with digital information ethics. By linking each principle to practical implications, this table makes it easy for readers to see that the framework you offer is not a moral abstraction, but rather a standard for assessing the manipulation of meaning. Its strength lies in its ability to withstand two extremes, the relativism of meaning that justifies anything, and the technical positivism that assumes the source alone is sufficient. In the hoax space, the problem often lies somewhere in between, namely, meaning that is deliberately obscured to evade rebuttal.

Table 7. Application of *Qawa'id Lughawiyah* in Hoax Analysis

No	Rules	Linguistic Principles	Relevance to Hoaxes	Implications in Information Economics
1	<i>Al-bayan</i> (clarity of expression and intelligibility of meaning)	Clarity of meaning and structure of expression	Identifying ambiguous claims	Increase information transparency
2	<i>Tarkib</i> (syntactic or compositional structure; the arrangement of elements in a sentence)	Logical coherence between subject–predicate–adverb	Detecting invalid arguments / non-sequiturs	Reducing information asymmetry
3	<i>Tahqiq al-Isnad</i> (verification of attribution, transmission, or source authority)	Verify source and authority	Detecting fake sources and authority manipulation	Strengthening trust in the information ecosystem
4	<i>Majaz</i>	Rhetorical balance and style	Distinguishing reasonable rhetorical expression from emotional manipulation	Suppressing the negative externalities of hoaxes

Source: Data primary, Processed (2025)

This application table should ideally serve as primary evidence that “harnessing confirmable tools” actually occurs. Principles like *tahqiq al-isnad* demonstrate the relationship between source verification and trust as an economic asset, *tarkib* and logical coherence mitigate information asymmetry, while the recitation of *majaz* helps distinguish reasonable rhetoric from emotional manipulation. If you want this table to be more “locked in,” add a small column showing the decision output, such as “risk level” or “ethical status,” followed by a sentence of justification. This way, your title’s contribution feels concrete. *Qawa'id Lughawiyah* is not only explained, but used as an ethical filter for the information economy to address the hoax epidemic.

2. Legal implications in Indonesia

In terms of legal implications, the moral-linguistic framework (an analytical framework that connects ethical judgment with the way) that you have constructed can be “translated” into Indonesian positive norms without forcing the two to be identical. Law No. 1 of 2024, as the second amendment to the ITE Law, for example, explicitly places the digital space within the horizon of public interest and public order (Nurul Indah Cahyani & Fadillah, 2025). From the perspective of information economy ethics, this signals that the state is not merely

regulating technology, but also regulating the social consequences of the circulation of misleading messages, especially when the impact crosses over into real losses or social conflict.

First, the norm regarding hoaxes that result in economic fraud can be read in parallel with the categories of *amanah* and *ghish* in Islamic ethics. Article 28 paragraph (1) of Law 1/2024 prohibits the distribution or transmission of false or misleading information that causes material losses to consumers in electronic transactions, and the criminal provisions open up the possibility of imprisonment for up to 6 years and/or fines of up to IDR 1 billion when the elements of the offense are fulfilled. With this construction, investment scams, fake stores, or e-commerce fraud can not only be positioned as violations of *amanah* within the framework of *maqasid* and *fiqh muamalah*, but also have a fairly clear criminal liability pathway when transaction losses can be proven (Nugraha et al., 2024).

Second, for hoaxes that produce hatred or hostility based on identity, Article 28 paragraph (2) regulates acts that incite, encourage, or influence hatred or hostility towards certain individuals or groups based on identity categories, with criminal penalties of up to 6 years imprisonment and/or a fine of Rp1 billion. However, following the Constitutional Court Decision No. 105/PPU-XXII/2024, the legal interpretation of this article has shifted from a formal offense to a material offense, requiring proof of actual consequences such as real discrimination or violence, to prevent the misuse of "rubber articles (vaguely worded legal provisions susceptible to overly broad interpretation or misuse)" that could stifle legitimate criticism (Hadi Musthofa & Irwansyah, 2025). Here, the principle of *dar'u al-mafasid* (preventing damage) and the priority of public interest can be used as ethical rationales to explain why restrictions on such content are often considered legitimate in public ethics. This aligns with the concept of *Siyasah Qadhaiyyah* (specifically discusses the trial of violations of legal regulations that have been made or determined by legislative institutions), where judicial policy must aim to realize *maslahah* (welfare) and avoid *mafsadah* (harm) for humanity, ensuring that freedom of expression does not violate the constitutional rights of others. This restriction is crucial given that patterns of identity-based disinformation typically resonate quickly and increase social costs. Empirical studies indicate that hoaxes are frequently utilized as tools to steer public opinion and black campaigns (hostile campaigns aimed at discrediting opponents, often through distortion, slander, or falsehood), which then solidify into polarization, intimidation, or social conflict that is difficult to reverse (Dunan et al., 2021).

Third, Law 1/2024 also contains a more specific form related to false notifications that cause unrest in society through Article 28 paragraph (3), with criminal penalties in the same range. At this point, *la darar* (an action that harms or harms other people, and is prohibited in Islamic teachings) and *ad-darar yuzāl* (harm must be removed) can be used as normative language in line with the objective of maintaining public order, but their interpretation must remain precise so as not to be broadened. The Constitutional Court, for example, has emphasized that "unrest" in the context of this article refers to unrest that occurs in physical space, not disturbances that only take place in cyberspace. Notes like this help your paper demonstrate methodological caution, ethics encourage the prevention of harm, but positive law works with specific thresholds of proof (P. Y. Senja et al., 2022).

Fourth, regarding the role of the government and platforms, Law 1/2024 provides sufficient scope for prevention, including the authority of the government to terminate access or order electronic system operators to remove illegal content when technologically feasible. Normatively, this legal provision functions as an "institutional mechanism (a formal process or legal device through which institutions manage, enforce, or mitigate risks)" designed to mitigate wider harm, particularly concerning content that poses risks to public safety or health. This approach aligns with the ethical framework in Islamic economics rooted in the maxim *la darar wa la dirar* (there should be neither harm nor reciprocating harm) (no harm shall be inflicted or reciprocated), which mandates that harmful actions must be actively prevented and that greater detriments should be averted even at the cost of lesser inconveniences. Consequently, while the termination of access serves as a necessary intervention to uphold social welfare, academic discourse must simultaneously emphasize accountability and traceability. This ensures that such measures are not applied as blanket restrictions but rather as measured, proportional, and testable responses consistent with ethical governance principles (Mustofa, 2019; Mustofa Mustofa et al., 2024).

Finally, the Indonesian context provides a bridge between Islamic ethics and public policy through normative-religious instruments. MUI Fatwa No. 24 of 2017 concerning the laws and guidelines for conducting business through social media, for example, contains a prohibition on producing and disseminating false content, including hoaxes, and emphasizes the obligation of *tabayyun* and communication ethics (Al Faruq & Sudirman, 2020; Shuhufi et al., 2022). Although fatwas are not laws, they can be positioned as reinforcing social legitimacy to controlling hoaxes is not only understood as a technical agenda or legal compliance, but also as part of fostering communication ethics. Thus, your paper's contribution appears more complete, as it brings together *qawa'id* (as an instrument for interpreting meaning), information economy ethics (as a critique of virality incentives), and national law (as a risk control mechanism in the public sphere).

3. Cross-madhab epistemic discipline: why *tabayyun* is more than "individual piety"

Reading *tabayyun* through a comparative *usul al fiqh* (the methodology and principles used to derive legal rulings from scriptural and textual evidence) lens helps clarify that it is not merely a moral slogan, but an epistemic

discipline shared across Sunni methodologies. The common denominator is straightforward: when the downstream harm of a message is plausible, the threshold for accepting and recirculating it must be higher than ordinary conversation. This matters in digital spaces because hoaxes exploit the low cost of forwarding and the social comfort of “everyone is sharing it,” even when the claim itself is vague, evidence light, and engineered to trigger quick emotional agreement rather than careful judgment.

In the Hanafi tradition, prudential reasoning and consequence sensitive judgment, (often associated with *ra'y* (reasoned juristic judgment based on considered opinion) and the broader logic of *istihsan* (juristic preference; departure from a strict analogy in favor of a stronger equitable or public-interest consideration)) can be read as a warning against epistemic shortcuts. Information is not evaluated only by how persuasive it sounds, but also by whether its acceptance is likely to produce unjust or destabilizing outcomes. In a platform driven public sphere, this translates into verification as risk management. The higher the potential for economic loss, reputational damage, or social conflict, the stronger the obligation to slow down, identify the factual core of the message, and ask what would count as sufficient proof.

A Maliki framing reinforces this caution by adding a social welfare calibration. By foregrounding *maṣlaḥah*, *urf* (established social custom recognized as relevant in legal reasoning), and public stability, Maliki reasoning creates room to reject narratives that appear “technically factual” yet are presented in ways that predictably generate *fitnah* (social discord, trial, destabilizing conflict, or morally disruptive turmoil), panic, or collective loss. This is crucial for contemporary disinformation, which often operates through selective framing. Individual sentences may be defensible in isolation, while the overall communicative act functions as deception by suppressing context and steering interpretation toward a preset conclusion.

Shafi'i and Hanbali sensibilities, meanwhile, strengthen the case for semantic discipline. Shafi'i methodology supports a default-semantics stance, the apparent meaning (*ẓāhir* (the apparent or surface meaning of a text)) and literal reading (*ḥaqīqah* (the literal or original meaning of an expression)) are the starting point, and interpretive leaps require compelling indicators (*qara'in* (contextual indicators or interpretive signs that support a particular reading)). In digital contexts, this acts as a guardrail against conspiracy escalation, where ambiguous wording is converted into accusation, criminal attribution, or moral condemnation without proof. Hanbali prudence adds a complementary rule of restraint, when evidence is insufficient, *tawaqquf* (suspension of judgment when evidence is insufficient for a decisive conclusion) (withholding judgment) is not indecision, but an ethic of caution designed to prevent irreversible harm.

This cross-madhab framing also clarifies why the maxim *البقين لا يزول بالشك* should not be treated as a passive slogan. It works as a stabilizer against viral doubt. Established facts and verifiable records should not be displaced by repetition-based plausibility. Practically, where a message remains semantically slippery or evidentially weak, restraint is not merely advisable. it is often the more defensible public-ethics position, especially when harms are asymmetric and hard to reverse.

4. Information-economics reading: incentives, asymmetry, and why hoaxes resemble market failure

An information-economics lens makes the normative argument sharper by explaining why hoaxes persist even when many users claim to value truth. Producing misleading content is often cheap, while verification is slow and costly. That asymmetry creates a predictable imbalance, private actors (individual creators, coordinated groups, and sometimes platforms) can capture short term gains such as attention, identity reinforcement, visibility, and monetization, while the social costs are diffused across the public. The result is a classic pattern of negative externalities. As hoaxes accumulate, people spend more time and cognitive effort sorting truth from noise; trust in institutions and legitimate media erodes; and economic and political decisions become more error-prone. Because the costs of correction are borne collectively, the system tends to under-invest in verification, creating a practical “market failure (a condition in which a system fails to allocate resources or risks efficiently, producing socially harmful outcomes)” in the information ecosystem. This is precisely the point where ethical principles and governance interventions become rational rather than merely moral.

Within this framing, *tabayyun* and *Qawa'id Lughawiyah* function as tools for raising the price of manipulation and reducing information asymmetry. They do so by enforcing meaning accountability: separating explicit claims (*manṭuq*) from insinuated conclusions (*mafhum*), requiring contextual binding when wording is open-ended (*iḥtimal al-laḥẓ*), and refusing reputational or legal inferences when a text lacks the indicators needed to lock interpretation. In economic terms, the framework helps shift the burden back onto the producer or distributor of a claim, if a message cannot carry its own evidential weight, its circulation should be treated as ethically risky. The same logic explains why “low-commitment sharing (the act of forwarding or reposting information while attempting to avoid full responsibility for its consequences)” is not ethically neutral. Disclaimers such as “just sharing,” “allegedly,” or “only forwarding” often function as a private risk-reduction strategy, while the external risk is transferred to the community that must absorb confusion, hostility, or financial harm. A *Qawa'id*-based reading closes that loophole by treating responsibility as a matter of meaning and impact, not merely of verbal hedging. When the communicative act functions as deception or incitement, accountability remains, even if the sender tries to hide behind labels.

Conclusion

The analysis suggests that the hoax epidemic persists not merely because verification is weak, but because the attention economy rewards plausibility, emotional salience, and rapid circulation. Under such conditions, disinformation often succeeds through linguistic tactics rather than explicit falsification, for example by exploiting ambiguity, implied meanings, and rhetorical shortcuts that shift the burden of proof onto the audience. By integrating three research layers, this paper advances a framework that is simultaneously evaluative and operational. Information economics ethics clarifies the incentive structure and the social costs of polluted information markets. Islamic communication ethics provides a normative compass through *ṣidq*, *amanah*, *ʿadl*, *tabayyun*, and *maṣlaḥah*, allowing ethical judgments to be articulated beyond a simple true–false binary. *Qawaʿid Lughawiyah*, in turn, supplies a disciplined way to read meaning production inside texts, which supports the formulation of contemporary anti-hoax maxims and a checklist for identifying manipulation at the semantic and pragmatic levels.

The discussion also indicates points of convergence with Indonesia’s legal response. Where misinformation produces material loss, identity-based hostility, or public disorder, a *Qawaʿid*-informed reading helps explain why prevention, correction, and proportionate restriction may be ethically defensible as harm reduction, while still requiring transparency and accountability in implementation. Future work would benefit from broader cross-linguistic testing, clearer operational coding rules, and reliability checks so that the proposed diagnostics can be applied consistently across cases and institutional settings.

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