



Protecting Children in Political Mobilization: A Maqāṣid Framework for Sustainable Child Rights Governance

Bustanul Arifin

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam At-Taḥdzib Rejoagung Ngoro Jombang, Indonesia

 arifelbustany@gmail.com

Abstract

This article examines child protection in political mobilization and public protests in Indonesia by integrating child rights, sustainability, and maqāṣid al-sharī'ah perspectives. The main issue addressed is the involvement of children in adult political spaces that may expose them to violence, arrest, psychological trauma, social stigma, and disruption of educational continuity. This study employs a qualitative-normative approach based on document analysis and literature review. The primary data are drawn from the KPAI/LNHAM report on the August–September 2025 protests and riots, while the theoretical analysis is supported by literature on child rights governance, juvenile justice, sustainable human development, and maqāṣid al-sharī'ah. The findings show that children's involvement in political mobilization is a structural child protection problem marked by digital mobilization, heroic narratives, socio-economic vulnerability, weak family-school protection, and the shifting position of children from victims to objects of legal enforcement. The study also finds that child protection governance remains reactive, sectoral, and unsupported by an integrated national database. The theoretical implication is the formulation of the Maqāṣid-Based Sustainable Child Protection model grounded in ḥifẓ al-nafs, ḥifẓ al-'aql, ḥifẓ al-nasl, ḥifẓ al-dīn, and ḥifẓ al-māl. Practically, this model recommends child-sensitive protest policing protocols, prevention of digital exploitation, legal and psychosocial assistance, guarantees of educational continuity, and an integrated national database for children affected by political mobilization.

Keywords: Child Protection; Political Mobilization; Indonesia; Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah; Child Rights Governance.

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INTRODUCTION

Child protection in political mobilization is an important issue in the study of children's rights, democratic governance, sustainable human development, and Islamic legal ethics. Children normatively have the right to live, grow, develop, obtain protection from violence, and participate in social spaces safely. However, in practice, adult political spaces often drag children into risky situations, especially when political action turns into conflict, riots, police violence, mass arrests, criminalization, and disruption to the sustainability of education.

In the Indonesian context, this problem can be seen in the KPAI/LNHAM report on the August-September 2025 protests and riots. The report noted that these events not only resulted in 5,147 deaths, injuries, damage to public facilities, and

mass arrests, but also showed the state's failure to ensure the protection of vulnerable groups, including children. Therefore, this article places child protection in political mobilization as a structural issue that needs to be analyzed through the integration of children's rights, sustainability, and *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*. (Daly, 2018; Freeman, 1983; KPAI, 2026; Tobin, 2019; Todres & King, 2020)

The state of the art international study of children's political participation shows that children cannot be positioned solely as objects of protection, but also as social subjects who have voices, experiences, interests, and agency. The literature on child participation emphasizes the importance of child voice, civic education, deliberative participation, and recognition of children as social actors in democracy. However, most of the studies still focus on safe and institutional participation, such as children's forums, children's councils, policy consultations, civic education, and social campaigns. Studies of children in high-risk political mobilization especially when demonstrations turn into riots, mass arrests, police violence, criminalization, and psychological trauma—are still relatively limited. (Taft, 2011; Thomas, 2007) (Shier, 2001) (Hart, 1992)

The gap is clearly seen in the KPAI/LNHAM data. LNHAM's final report shows that the handling of children at the 2025 protests does not fully reflect the principles of special protection. In some cases, boys are placed in the same detention room as adults; in Bekasi there were ten children who were arrested and detained for five days; the examination is carried out without assistance; three children under the age of 14 were at the police station for more than 24 hours; and in East Java there are children who are detained for about 45 days at the Marsudi Putra Social Protection and Rehabilitation Unit Surabaya. This condition shows that child detention is at risk of shifting from the principle of *ultimum remedium* to the state's main response in situations of social unrest. (KPAI, 2026) (Scott, 2016)

The study of child rights governance has confirmed that child protection is not only a family affair, but a responsibility across actors: the state, law enforcement officials, schools, child protection institutions, communities, and civil society. This perspective is important because violations of children's rights often occur not only because of individual actions, but because of systemic failures in prevention, data collection, mentoring, supervision, and recovery. The LNHAM report shows that access to legal assistance and child companionship is often limited; children's mobile phones were confiscated so that communication with the family was cut off; Some parents do not immediately know the whereabouts of their children; and there are obstacles to the external supervision mechanism of KPAI. This shows the weakness of the child protection governance ecosystem in a socio-political emergency situation. (Holzscheiter et al., 2019) (Sandin et al., 2023) (Lundy, 2007) (Tisdall & Davis, 2004)

In the perspective of sustainability, child protection is not sufficiently understood as the settlement of a momentary legal case. Children who experience

violence, arrest, stigma, trauma, loss of access to education, or loss of communication with family are at risk of long-term impacts on mental development, education, social trust, and quality of life. (Adami et al., 2023) (*UNICEF and the Sustainable Development Goals* / UNICEF, n.d.) (Arjun Appadurai, 2013) (Donger, 2022) Therefore, child protection must be linked to the sustainable human development agenda, namely sustainable human development that maintains safety, mental health, education, welfare, and the future of generations. The LNHAM report also confirms that after the incident, victims experience stigmatization and marginalization in society, schools, and workplaces; Vulnerable groups such as children face layered impacts due to the absence of a vulnerability-based recovery approach.

On the other hand, the study of children's rights and sustainable development has linked children's rights with education, health, social protection, a safe environment, and future development. However, the study still rarely links child sustainability to political mobilization and social unrest. In fact, children involved or affected in demonstrations are at risk of educational disruption, psychological injury, social stigma, criminalization, and obstacles to social reintegration. In this context, LNHAM's recommendations are important because they require the state to guarantee access to recovery, rehabilitation, compensation, health services, education, and psychological support for women, children, and persons with disabilities.

The study of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* provides a strong ethical-normative basis for reading child protection as part of the public good. (Auda, 2008) (Auda et al., 2008) (Ibn Ashur, 2006, 2013; Kamali, 2008) (Saifurrijal & Wafa, 2025) Child protection can be attributed to *ḥifẓ al-nafs* to guard the soul from death, injury, torture, and violence; *ḥifẓ al-'aql* to maintain intellect, education, literacy, and mental health; *ḥifẓ al-nasl* to maintain generational sustainability; *ḥifẓ al-dīn* to maintain moral values, trust, justice, and the prohibition of exploitation; and *ḥifẓ al-māl* to maintain access to social services, recovery costs, and public facilities. However, the study of *maqāṣid* and child protection generally still focuses on child marriage, custody, child labor, and sexual violence, and has not been directed much on the issue of children in political mobilization, security actions, mass arrests, and democratic governance.

In the context of *fiqh*, children are subjects who have honor, protection rights, and special needs because they do not fully have the socio-legal capacity like adults. The rule of *al-ḍarar yuzāl* affirms that danger must be eliminated, so that any form of involvement of children in high-risk situations must be prevented. The rule of *taṣarruf al-imām 'alā al-ra'iyah manūṭun bi al-maṣlahah* also emphasizes that state policies towards the people must be oriented towards the benefit. Thus, the policy of securing protests, handling children, examinations, detentions, and restores must not only follow the logic of order and security, but must be subject to the principles

of child welfare, the best interests of children, and generational protection. (Zuhayli, 1989) (Al-Suyuti, 2000) (Al-Syatibi, 2004) (Muttaqin et al., 2026)

Based on this description, there are several important research gaps. First, the study of children's political participation has not sufficiently distinguished between conscious, safe, and educative children's participation and manipulative, exploitative, and risky child mobilization. Second, the study of child protection has not integrated much positive law, human rights, sustainability, jurisprudence, and *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* in one framework of analysis. Third, the study of child rights governance has not enough to place security forces, schools, families, social media, child protection institutions, and the justice system as an ecosystem of responsibility. Fourth, the study of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* still tends to be normative and has not been widely used as a public policy framework to read the political mobilization of children in contemporary democratic countries. (Holzscheiter et al., 2019) (Taft, 2025) (Auda, 2008; Auda et al., 2008; Sirait et al., 2022)

The novelty of this research lies in the development of the *Maqāṣid*-Based Sustainable Child Protection framework, which is a child protection model that integrates legal protection, sustainability of human development, governance of children's rights, and *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*. This framework positions children not only as subjects of the law, but also as the mandate of the generation that must maintain their safety, intellect, dignity, education, and future. Within this framework, child protection does not stop at response after a violation occurs, but includes exploitation prevention, risk mitigation, child-friendly legal assistance, psychosocial recovery, educational sustainability, digital literacy, and state accountability. (Fadhilah et al., 2026) (Asman, 2025) (Gabriel, 2025) (Affandi et al., 2025)

This study formulates three main questions. First, what are the patterns of child involvement, exploitation, and vulnerability in political mobilization and protests in Indonesia based on KPAI/LNHAM data? Second, what are the weaknesses of child protection governance in handling protests, especially related to prevention, law enforcement, mentoring, recovery, and sustainability of education? Third, how can *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* be formulated as a conceptual framework for building a sustainable model of child protection in the context of political mobilization? This question is important because the LNHAM report recommends strengthening education regulations so that schools do not sanction dismissal or revocation of scholarships, developing an integrated national data collection system regarding children who are victims of protests, and strengthening digital literacy for children and parents.

An important aspect of this research lies in its theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions. Theoretically, this study expands the use of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* from family law issues to public governance, democracy, children's rights, and sustainable human development. Methodologically, this study offers an

integrative reading of human rights data, KPAI/LNHAM reports, child rights governance literature, sustainability studies, and maqāṣid theory. Practically, this research can be the basis for the formulation of child protection policies in situations of political mobilization, including child-friendly security procedures, prevention of digital exploitation, ABH assistance, trauma healing, education guarantees, and cross-sectoral recovery systems.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative-normative approach based on document studies and literature reviews. The main data is sourced from the KPAI/LNHAM report on the August-September 2025 protests and riots, especially the section that contains child involvement, child arrest, violence, trauma, legal aid barriers, and recovery recommendations. The data is used as an empirical-institutional document to read the issue of child protection in political mobilization in a contextual manner. (Creswell et al., 2018) (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018) (Bryman, 2016)

The research sources consist of three types. First, institutional documents, namely the 2026 LNHAM/KPAI Fact Finding Report and its executive summary. Second, primary and secondary legal materials, including the Child Protection Law, the Juvenile Criminal Justice System Law, the Special Protection Regulation for Children, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and related human rights instruments. Third, academic literature in the form of journal articles, books, and dissertations on child rights governance, juvenile justice, sustainable development, and maqāṣid al-syarī'ah. (Patton, 2015) (Braun & Clarke, 2021)

Literature mapping was carried out with inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria include academic sources that discuss child protection, child political mobilization, child rights governance, juvenile justice, sustainability, or maqāṣid al-syarī'ah; relevant to children as legal subjects and vulnerable groups; and have a conceptual, empirical, or normative contribution to the research focus. Exclusion criteria include non-academic popular writings, media opinions without data, sources without a clear author/publisher identity, adult political studies with no relevance to children, and maqāṣid literature that is not related to human protection or public policy.

As a normative legal research, this article uses three legal interpretation techniques. First, systematic interpretation, namely reading the Child Protection Law, the SPPA Law, the Special Child Protection PP, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and human rights instruments as a unit of protection norms. Second, teleological interpretation, which is to interpret norms based on the goals of child protection, especially the best interests of the child, special protection, diversion, restorative justice, and detention as a last resort. Third, sociological interpretation, namely reading legal norms by considering the empirical context in the form of digital mobilization, children's socio-economic vulnerability, the actions of the authorities, school stigma, and post-event recovery needs.

Data analysis was carried out through qualitative content analysis and conceptual-normative analysis. Content analysis was used to identify key themes in the KPAI/LNHAM report, such as patterns of child involvement, exploitation, violence, arrest, barriers to mentoring, trauma, stigma, and recovery. Conceptual-normative analysis was used to assess the findings with the principles of children's rights, child protection governance, restorative justice, and *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*. Within the framework of *maqāṣid*, *ḥifẓ al-nafs* is used to read the protection of children's lives, *ḥifẓ al-'aql* for education and mental health, *ḥifẓ al-nasl* for generational sustainability, *ḥifẓ al-dīn* for anti-exploitation public ethics, and *ḥifẓ al-māl* for socio-economic access and rehabilitation services.

The validity of the research is maintained through triangulation of sources and triangulation of theories. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing LNHAM/KPAI reports, national-international legal materials, and academic literature. Theoretical triangulation is carried out by integrating the perspective of children's rights, children's rights governance, juvenile justice, sustainable development, *fiqh*, and *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*. Through this method, the research is directed to formulate the *Maqāṣid-Based Sustainable Child Protection* model as a child protection framework that includes exploitation prevention, child-friendly security, legal assistance, psychosocial recovery, educational sustainability, digital literacy, apparatus accountability, and an integrated national database.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Patterns of Child Involvement, Exploitation, and Vulnerability in Political Mobilization

Based on KPAI/LNHAM data, children's involvement in political mobilization and protests in Indonesia shows a repeated, widespread, and high-risk pattern. The LNHAM report confirms that child abuse and exploitation in political activities, campaigns, large demonstrations, and social unrest is not an anomaly, but rather a phenomenon that occurs in several cycles of mass mobilization. Historical data collected by KPAI shows that in the 2014 Presidential Election campaign there were 248 complaints of violations of children's rights; in the riots after the 2019 presidential election, there were three children killed by sharp bullets in Jakarta and one child in Pontianak; in the demonstration against the 2020 Job Creation Law, 3,565 junior high school and vocational school students were arrested by the police, 91 children were processed by the law; and in the August-September 2025 protests, one child died, namely 16-year-old ALF, and more than 2,000 children were arrested by the police. This data shows that children repeatedly enter the adult political space without adequate protection systems, risk education, mentoring, and harm mitigation.(KPAI, 2026)

The first pattern is the normalization of the presence of children in the political crowd of adults. Children not only appear as passive observers, but are involved in electoral campaigns, post-election protests, policy demonstrations, and

demonstrations that end in riots. This normalization occurs because the line between children's political participation and children's political exploitation is often blurred. In the theory of child participation, children do have the right to be heard and participate in public life. However, legitimate participation requires adequate information, safe spaces, volunteerism, mentoring, and protection from manipulation. When children are present in mass mobilization without an understanding of risks, without protection, and in potentially rioting situations, then participation turns into exploitative involvement. The LNHAM report shows that this recurring pattern reflects not only the weak protection of children, but also the neglect of the neglect of children's basic rights in adult socio-political movements. (Hart, 1992) (Lundy, 2007) (Shier, 2001; Taft, 2011)

The second pattern is digital mobilization through social media algorithms, the role of influencers, and cyber-balkanization. The LNHAM/KPAI report shows that invitations to children to participate in the protest appeared through social media on August 25, 2025, accompanied by the representation of children as "heroes" or saviors in mass actions. This pattern shows that child engagement occurs not only through direct invitations in physical spaces, but also through digital architectures that shape children's perceptions, emotions, and decisions. In this context, social media cannot be understood simply as a neutral communication tool, but rather as an algorithmic space that can strengthen children's exposure to emotional, provocative, and risky political content. When children are constantly exposed to content that displays the courage of protesters, police violence, invitations to take to the streets, or heroic narratives about students as the savior of the nation, the platform's algorithms can increase the chances of children receiving similar content repeatedly. As a result, children's involvement in protests can be influenced by cognitive processes shaped by intense digital exposure, rather than simply by mature political awareness. (Atar, 2025; Lim, 2023)

Psychologically, social media algorithms work through engagement amplification patterns, which are the tendency of platforms to display content that triggers high emotional reactions, such as anger, solidarity, fear, or group pride. (Nisrina et al., 2025) For children and adolescents, this kind of content has a strong appeal because their developmental phases are still characterized by the search for identity, the need for social recognition, sensitivity to peer pressure, and the tendency to make emotion-based decisions. When political action content is packaged in the form of short videos, digital posters, pieces of violence, heroic slogans, and moral appeals, children can understand participation in action as a form of courage, solidarity, or social existence. Thus, digital mobilization not only disseminates information, but also shapes children's political imaginations about who is considered brave, who is considered cowardly, and what actions are considered meaningful. In this situation, the line between conscious political

participation and psychological exploitation becomes increasingly blurred.(Khamdan et al., 2025) (Nugroho, 2025)

The role of influencers, anonymous accounts, micro-celebrities, and digital opinion leaders is also important in explaining children's involvement. Children and adolescents often obtain political information not from official state channels, schools, or families, but from digital figures they consider close, authentic, funny, courageous, or representative of the voice of the younger generation. Influencers can accelerate mobilization because they have the symbolic power to frame action as a moral movement, an expression of courage, or a social trend worth following.(Boratov, 2025) Although not all influencers directly invite children to take to the streets, the content they produce can create an emotional atmosphere that encourages children to feel the need to be present so as not to be left behind in their group. This is where the social proof mechanism emerges, where children feel that an action is right or important because many people in their digital environment do, share, or praise it. In the context of the LNHAM/KPAI report, the narrative of children as "heroes" shows how digital symbols can transform children from subjects who must be protected into icons of mass mobilization.

In addition to algorithms and influencers, the phenomenon of cyber-balkanization deepens the risk of children's involvement in dangerous actions. Cyber-balkanization refers to a condition when social media users are fragmented into closed information spaces that reinforce their own group's views and weaken exposure to countervailing information. Children in this kind of digital space tend to receive homogeneous narratives: that action is a moral obligation, that all parties outside the group are opposites, that the risk of violence is part of the struggle, or that the presence of students is a symbol of courage.(Haq et al., 2020) In a digital echo chamber, information about legal risks, potential violence, trauma, or educational impacts can be masked by narratives of solidarity and collective anger. As a result, children do not obtain balanced information to assess the danger. This strengthens children's cognitive vulnerability because the decision to take action is shaped by a narrow, emotional, and less corrective digital environment.

Cyber-balkanization can also reinforce identity polarization. Children who are building social identities are easily encouraged to distinguish between "us" and "them". In the context of protests, this polarization can make children understand action not as a space for expressing opinions that must be safe and responsible, but as an arena for confrontation between groups that are considered right and those that are considered oppressive. When this kind of narrative is reinforced by violent video clips, provocative comments, memes, and viral calls, children can be pushed toward more impulsive actions. Children's decisions to be present at the action site are no longer only influenced by substantive issues, but by the need to be part of a digital community that is angry, solid, and feels that it has a moral mission. In these circumstances, digital mobilization can turn into exploitation because children are

pushed into risk spaces without adequate physical, legal, and psychosocial protection.

Thus, the pattern of children's digital mobilization in the protest can be read through three layers of process. (Kulsum et al., 2025) First, the algorithm reinforces exposure to emotionally and repetitive political content. Second, digital influencers and opinion leaders provide symbolic legitimacy that involvement in action is a cool, bold, or moral act. Third, cyber-balkanization creates a closed information space that narrows children's ability to weigh risks rationally. These three layers have a direct impact on a child's cognition: forming a perception of low risk, increasing collective emotions, reinforcing peer pressure, and encouraging impulsive decisions to attend high-risk actions. Therefore, digital mobilization in the case of children is not enough to be analyzed as the dissemination of invitations through social media, but must be read as an algorithmic ecosystem that influences the way children understand politics, courage, solidarity, and risk.

The implication is that child protection in political mobilization must include a digital child protection dimension. Countries, schools, families, and digital platforms need to build prevention systems that include algorithmic literacy, mass action risk literacy, information verification, early detection of malicious invitations, protection of children's personal data, and rapid response to content that exploits children. Within the framework of *maqāṣid al-shari'ah*, this step is part of *ḥifẓ al-'aql*, as it aims to maintain the child's intellect, awareness, and ability to make healthy decisions; It is also part of *Ḥifẓ al-naḥs*, because it prevents children from entering situations that endanger their soul and body. Thus, LNHAM's recommendations on strengthening digital literacy for children and parents need to be expanded into more concrete digital governance policies: mapping of child mobilization channels, school-parent-platform collaboration, education on algorithms, and reporting mechanisms for content that invites children to high-risk political activities. (Mustofa et al., 2024) (Islam et al., 2025) (Asimakopoulos et al., 2025) (Taft, 2025)

The third pattern is the involvement of children through high-risk instruction and actions. The LNHAM report said that there are indications of child exploitation that cannot be ignored, ranging from the invitation of adult actors, the provision of tactical instructions, to the involvement of children in risky actions such as destruction and looting. These findings are important because they show that some children are not only present at the scene of the action, but can be directed to the point of conflict or potentially criminal action. In such a context, children become tools in socio-political conflicts, not subjects of protected participation. The involvement of children in high-risk actions shows an unequal power relationship between adult and child actors. Children can be used as additional masses, moral shields, or field actors who are easily sacrificed when the situation turns into a riot. Therefore, this issue is not enough to be analyzed as juvenile delinquency, but must

be read as political exploitation of children. (Wahanisa et al., 2025) (Werang & Werang, 2026)

The fourth pattern is the socio-economic vulnerability of children involved in the action. The LNHAM report concluded that most of the children arrested and suspected of being abused came from lower socio-economic backgrounds, incomplete families, and conditions of poverty. This vulnerability shows that children who enter the vortex of political mobilization are not in an equal social position. They are more susceptible to invitations, provocations, disinformation, the lure of solidarity, or environmental pressure due to the lack of family protection, weak school supervision, limited access to legal literacy, and low capacity to understand risks. In the study of violence against children, factors such as poverty, family dysfunction, and exposure to violence in the social environment often increase the risk of children experiencing violence, exploitation, and involvement in dangerous situations. Thus, children's political mobilization must be understood as a symptom that intersects with social inequality, not just the child's individual choice. (Mahfiana et al., 2026; Rumpaidus, 2026)

The fifth pattern is that children experience double vulnerability as victims of mobilization and victims of state violence. On the one hand, the state has an obligation to protect children when they want to express their opinions. On the other hand, the state is also obliged to prevent the exploitation of children for certain political interests. The LNHAM report states that the security approach and use of excessive force in dealing with the August-September 2025 protests resulted in thousands of children being arrested and hundreds subjected to torture and police violence. This situation illustrates the paradox of protection: children who are supposed to be saved from exploitation face violence in the process of safeguarding. As a result, children experience multiple vulnerable positions, namely as victims of adult invitations, victims of riots, victims of police actions, and victims of stigma after the event. From the perspective of children's rights, this condition violates the principle of the best interests of the child because the state fails to distinguish between children as subjects of protection and adults as subjects of prosecution. (Holzscheiter et al., 2019; Lundy, 2007)

The sixth pattern is the shift in the status of children from victims to objects of criminalization. In riot situations, children are often positioned as perpetrators of disturbances, not first and foremost as children who need special protection. The LNHAM report found mass arrests, indications of arrests without warrants, violence in arrests, and obstacles to access to legal aid. The summary of the report also states that the arrest and detention process of many victims was not accompanied by notification of their rights, and some victims did not have access to legal aid. In the context of children, such practices are particularly problematic because the principles of juvenile justice demand different treatment from adults. The child must be accompanied by a family, legal counselor, community counselor, social worker,

or psychologist; Meanwhile, detention must be the last resort. When children immediately enter into the logic of mass oppression, the child protection system fails to work.

The seventh pattern is the termination of the protection relationship between children, families, and companions. In LNHAM's various findings, children experienced communication restrictions, barriers to legal aid, and difficulty meeting family. The confiscation of mobile phones or the termination of communication access makes the family not immediately aware of the whereabouts of the child, while the child is in a situation of unbalanced checks by power. For children, communication disconnection is not just an administrative problem, but a traumatic experience because the child loses a safe figure in a stressful situation. The juvenile justice literature emphasizes that the presence of family and companions is an important part of procedural and psychological protection. When children are examined unaccompanied or have difficulty accessing legal aid, the risk of forced confession, intimidation, violence, and trauma increases. Thus, the vulnerability of children to political mobilization is exacerbated by weak procedural guarantees after arrest.

The eighth pattern is the multidimensional impact on the child's body, mental, education, and future. The LNHAM report notes that children face physical injuries, psychological trauma, social stigmatization, the threat of dropping out of school, and potential criminalization that can ruin their future. These findings are important because the impact of political mobilization does not stop when children are repatriated or legal proceedings are completed. Children who have been arrested can experience fear, embarrassment, stigma at school, labeling as a rioter, conflicts with family, and even administrative obstacles later in life. In adverse childhood experiences studies, exposure to violence, bullying, separation from family, and criminalization in childhood can have a long-term impact on mental health, social relationships, and educational achievement. Therefore, children who are victims of political mobilization must be rehabilitated through psychosocial and educational approaches, not just released from custody.

The ninth pattern is the absence of a single and segregated database. The LNHAM report clearly states that there is not yet a single, complete and segregated database of children in socio-political movements. In fact, a decade of consistent data is needed to recognize the root of the problem and formulate solutions. The absence of data makes the state's response tend to be reactive, partial, and sectoral. Children who are arrested, children who are injured, children who are traumatized, children who have lost access to education, and children who need legal assistance are not always included in the same recovery system. In child rights governance, segregated data is an important instrument for state accountability, program planning, budgeting, and monitoring of the fulfillment of children's rights. Without

integrated data, the most vulnerable children are easily lost from the policy radar.(Heryati et al., 2026)

Thus, the pattern of child involvement, exploitation, and vulnerability in political mobilization in Indonesia can be formulated as a five-stage cycle. First, children are exposed to political narratives through social media, peer environments, or adult actors. Second, children are encouraged to attend the action because of solidarity, collective emotions, or symbols of heroism. Third, children are in potentially rioting crowds without adequate protection. Fourth, when violence occurs, children are injured, arrested, or criminalized. Fifth, after the event, children face trauma, stigma, educational threats, and weak recovery. This cycle shows that child protection cannot be placed only at the end of the process through legal handling, but must start from mobilization prevention, digital literacy, safe citizenship education, family supervision, child-friendly security, to post-event recovery.

This data-driven analysis confirms that children in political mobilization should be placed as subjects of special protection. Children may have the right to participate, but the right to participate must not be used as an excuse to allow children to be in situations that endanger their soul, intellect, education, and future. The difference between participation and exploitation lies in four aspects: child awareness, the safety of the participation space, the absence of manipulation, and the presence of protection. If children are moved through emotional narratives, directed to risky locations, unaccompanied, and then arrested or stigmatized, then what happens is not democratic participation, but the exploitation of children in adult political conflicts. Therefore, KPAI/LNHAM data is a strong basis for formulating a child protection model that is more preventive, data-based, recovery-oriented, and sensitive to children's social vulnerability.

Weaknesses in Child Protection Governance in Handling Protests

The weakness of child protection governance in handling protests lies not only in state security institutions, but also in the weak coordination of the broader child protection ecosystem, especially families, schools, communities, child protection services, and the digital space. The LNHAM report does confirm systemic failures in controlling the use of state force, arbitrary arrests, criminalization, and weak due process of law. However, from the perspective of child rights governance, child protection cannot be imposed only on law enforcement officials. Children are in a multi-layered social ecosystem: the family as the primary protection space, the school as the space for education and early detection, the community as the social environment, and the state as the guarantor of rights and accountability. Therefore, the failure of child protection in the protests must be read as a multi-actor failure, not merely a failure of the police.(Dekatama et al., 2025; Tisdall & Davis, 2004)

First, weaknesses arise at the family/parent level as the earliest protection ecosystem. Children who are exposed to invitations to political mobilization, digital

provocation, peer pressure, or heroic narratives on social media need supervision, communication, and risk literacy from families. However, the LNHAM report shows that during the incident there were parents and families who lost contact with their children, so the Ministry of PPPA opened a special complaint hotline service for parents and families who do not know the whereabouts of their children. This fact suggests that families often do not have quick mechanisms to detect a child's whereabouts, understand the child's digital activities, or respond to situations when the child moves toward a risky space of action. Thus, child protection governance must include parental capacity building programs in digital literacy, family communication, risk monitoring, and emergency response when children are involved in mass situations.(Herawati et al., 2023; Shier, 2001)

Second, weaknesses are seen at the school level as an institution of education, supervision, and recovery. The LNHAM report noted that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education has issued several response measures, such as appealing to schools not to participate in demonstrations, ordering schools to stay from home when approaching the action, and requiring children who had been detained to report regularly to homeroom teachers. However, these measures still tend to be administrative and reactive. Schools have not been fully developed as an early detection system for vulnerable students to be mobilized, peaceful citizenship education spaces, post-event counseling centers, and educational reintegration mechanisms for stigmatized children. In fact, the LNHAM report specifically recommends that schools not sanction dismissal or revocation of scholarships to students involved in protests and ensure the sustainability of access to education without discrimination.(Santoso et al., 2026)

Third, schools also have the potential to become a place for secondary victimization if children who are arrested or affected by the protests are actually labeled negatively, humiliated, threatened with expulsion, or considered to damage the good name of the institution. The LNHAM report noted that there is a social impact in the form of stigma from neighbors, the community, and schools who consider children to be involved in riots or demonstrations, even though some children are victims of wrongful arrest. Even stigma can also attack families through accusations that parents fail to educate children. These findings show that governance weaknesses do not stop at the actions of the authorities, but continue in the child's immediate social environment. From a child protection perspective, school should be a space for recovery, not a space for social punishment; the family should be strengthened, not blamed; and children should be reintegrated, not stigmatized.(Devi et al., 2026; Donger, 2022)

Fourth, it needs to be emphasized that parents are not just the blame party, but protection actors that need to be strengthened. In many cases, families can be in a vulnerable position: not knowing the whereabouts of the child, not understanding legal procedures, not having access to legal help, not having the ability to read social

media dynamics, or experiencing social distress after the child is arrested. Therefore, the approach to child rights governance needs to avoid the pattern of blaming parents. What is needed is to strengthen family capacity through simple legal education, digital literacy, risk communication, rapid reporting mechanisms, and family psychosocial assistance. The LNHAM report also recommends strengthening digital literacy for children and parents so that social media is used rationally and wisely. This recommendation is important because families are the first defense in preventing children from being exposed to risky mobilization invitations and digital disinformation.

Fifth, the weakness of governance is also seen from the lack of strong school-family-child protection service collaboration. The LNHAM report shows that there are responses such as counseling and recovery services for children who are processed by law at the Metro Jaya Police, brief trauma healing, and collaboration between the Metro Jaya Police, the PPPA Office, and the Education Office. The Ministry of PPPA also encourages the facilitation of psychosocial assistance for children dealing with the law and the fulfillment of educational rights for children detained at the East Java Social Service UPT. This response shows an initial effort, but it has not yet become a permanent institutionalized system. Child protection governance should build a standard mechanism: schools report and assist, families get quick information, UPTD PPA provides assessments and counseling, education offices ensure school sustainability, and officials ensure access to families and legal companions from the beginning.

Sixth, the role of schools and families must also be expanded to the area of digital mobilization prevention. Children are not only mobilized through physical invitations, but also through social media content, conversation groups, short videos, influencers, and heroic narratives. Therefore, civic education in schools is not enough to only teach the right to express opinions, but must be accompanied by literacy of the risk of mass action, ethics of digital participation, how to verify information, and an understanding of the boundaries between democratic participation and political exploitation of children. At the family level, parents need to be encouraged to build open communication about their children's digital activities without simply prohibiting or punishing. Thus, prevention is not carried out with a repressive approach, but through the formation of children's capacity to be able to assess risks and make safe decisions.

Seventh, from the perspective of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, the role of the family and the school is part of the safeguarding of *ḥifẓ al-nafs*, *ḥifẓ al-'aql*, and *ḥifẓ al-nasl*. The family safeguards the child's soul and mind through affection, supervision, communication, and protection from danger. Schools protect children's intellect and future through education, mentoring, literacy, and reintegration after children experience traumatic events. If families and schools are not involved, then the child protection model will be limp because it only moves at the level of law enforcement

after the child becomes a victim. Therefore, the Maqāṣid-Based Sustainable Child Protection model needs to place the family and school as core components, not complementary: the family as the basis for early detection and emotional support, the school as the basis for education and recovery, while the state as the guarantor of regulation, accountability, and cross-sectoral services.

Thus, the discussion of governance weaknesses needs to be revised from the narrative of "apparatus failure" to the narrative of failure of the child protection ecosystem. The authorities still have a great responsibility because arrests, violence, and legal proceedings are within their authority. However, sustainable child protection can only be built if families, schools, communities, education offices, the Ministry of PPPA, KPI, UPTD PPA, Komdigi, and law enforcement officials work in one system. This approach is more in line with the principles of child rights governance, because children do not live in abstract state spaces, but in networks of families, schools, peers, digital communities, and public institutions that influence each other.

Maqāṣid al-Syarī'ah as a Sustainable Child Protection Framework

Maqāṣid al-syarī'ah can be formulated as a conceptual framework for building a sustainable child protection model because maqāṣid does not only talk about formal legality, but also about the moral direction, social goals, and quality of benefits that the law seeks to embody. In the context of children's political mobilization, maqāṣid needs to be operationalized as a public policy framework that is able to assess whether an action of the state, apparatus, schools, families, community organizations, and digital platforms really protects children or actually places children in a new mafsadah. Al-Ghazālī in *al-Mustaṣfā* explains that the benefit is not merely to attract benefits or reject harm according to human desires, but "المحافظة على مقصود الشرع", namely maintaining the purpose of sharia. The purpose of the sharia is to protect religion, soul, intellect, descendants, and property. Thus, every policy that protects these five points is called *maslahat*, while every action that damages it is *mafsadah*. In the issue of children, the involvement of children in riots, mass arrests, violence, trauma, stigma, and loss of access to education is *mafsadah* because it damages *ḥifẓ al-nafs*, *ḥifẓ al-'aql*, and *ḥifẓ al-nasl*. (al-Ghazālī, 1993; Al-Syatibi, 2004; Auda, 2008; Auda et al., 2008; Saifurrijal & Wafa, 2025)

The framework of al-Ghazālī provides an important basis that the protection of children should be placed at the level of *ḍarūriyyāt*, not merely an administrative necessity or an additional social program. Al-Ghazālī asserts that the five points of maqāṣid are at the most powerful level of primary necessity, since their destruction would destroy the human order of life. Therefore, when a child is at risk of death, serious injury, torture, or trauma due to political mobilization, the problem is not enough to be seen as a violation of security procedures, but as a failure to maintain the primary needs of the sharia. In the context of the LNHAM/KPAI report, the presence of children who have died, thousands of children arrested, and children

who have experienced violence and trauma show that the state has not fully placed child protection as a blessing of the world. Child protection should be above the interests of momentary order, the political interests of adults, or the logic of deterrent effects, because the safety of children concerns the sustainability of human life and generations.(al-Ghazālī, 1993; Mu'alim, 2022)

It is also important to pay attention to al-Ghazālī's warning about the rejected *maslahat*. In *al-Mustaṣfā*, he rejects the example of a mufti who ordered a king who broke the fast of Ramadan to fast for two consecutive months, instead of freeing slaves, on the grounds that the king would be more deterrent. Al-Ghazālī called this opinion null and void because it used the pretext of *maslahat* to violate the *nash*. The methodological message is that *maslahat* should not be used to justify arbitrary actions. In child protection, the pretext of "educating", "providing a deterrent", "maintaining order", or "preventing riots" should not be used to justify mass arrests of children, unaccompanied examinations, disconnection with families, disproportionate detention, or educational sanctions in the form of dismissal and revocation of scholarships. Policies that appear to bring security benefits, but undermine the basic rights of children, are not legitimate benefits according to *maqāṣid*.

Al-Āmidī in *al-Iḥkām fī Uṣūl al-Aḥkām* reinforces this construction by stating that the *maqāṣid ḍarūriyyah* returns to the five purposes that no religion and sharia have ever neglected, namely to safeguard religion, soul, intellect, descent, and property. He called these five *maqāṣid* the highest level of conformity of the law with the benefit of the law (Al-Ummid, 1984) (Islam et al., 2025; Mustofa et al., 2024). This concept is important to assess state governance in protest situations. If mass security results in children losing their lives, experiencing violence, experiencing trauma, losing access to education, or experiencing social stigma, then the policy fails to meet the *maqāṣid ḍarūriyyah*. It is not enough for the state to simply state that security is carried out for public order; The state must prove that the chosen method does not damage the child's soul, intellect, and future. Thus, *maqāṣid* becomes a tool for ethical evaluation of public policy, not just normative theory in *fiqh*.

Within the framework of *ḥifẓ al-dīn*, child protection is not enough to be interpreted as the protection of public ethics in general, but should be directed at the protection of children from the manipulation of religious doctrine in political mobilization. In certain situations, adult actors may use religious narratives such as "jihad", "defending religion", "against tyranny", or "saving the people" to build emotional legitimacy for children to engage in risky political actions. Such narratives are dangerous when delivered without critical education, without the assistance of families and schools, and without a complete understanding of *maqāṣid*, because children can understand involvement in action as a religious obligation, not as a political action that must be measured based on the safety and best interests of the

child. Therefore, ḥifẓ al-dīn serves to protect religion from political distortions that exploit children. Claims to defend religion cannot be justified if the practice comes at the expense of ḥifẓ al-nafs, ḥifẓ al-'aql, and ḥifẓ al-nasl, such as death, injury, trauma, school dropouts, criminalization, and social stigma. In the Maqāṣid-Based Sustainable Child Protection model, ḥifẓ al-dīn is operationalized through maqāṣid-based religious literacy, peaceful citizenship education, involvement of religious leaders to reject child exploitation, supervision of digital content that mobilizes children with religious symbols, and psychosocial-religious rehabilitation for children who experience moral distress due to involvement in actions. Thus, religion is placed as a source of protection, common sense, affection, and benefit, not as an instrument of political mobilization that endangers children.(Affandi et al., 2025; Gabriel, 2025; Nurjanah et al., 2025)

Within the framework of ḥifẓ al-nafs, the protection of children must begin with the prevention of physical risks before the child enters a dangerous situation. LNHAM/KPAI data shows that the series of protests from August to September 2025 caused casualties, including children, and many injuries. In maqāṣid, the death of a child is not only a legal event, but a failure to maintain the most basic purpose of the Shari'ah in the form of the protection of the soul. This principle is in line with the fiqh rule "الضرر يزال" that danger must be eliminated. Therefore, the procedure for securing the action must have child-specific protocols: identification of children in crowd locations, separation of children from adult crowds, safe evacuation routes, prohibition of physical violence, involvement of social workers, family access, and rapid medical response. A policy that allows children to be at the point of clash between the authorities and the masses is the same as allowing mafsadah to occur before the state acts.

Hifẓ al-nafs also demanded that the state not make a repressive approach the main response to children. Children who are in political crowds must first be read as subjects of special protection. At this point, it is relevant to connect the maqāṣid with the example of a horse racing fatwa that allows the use of robots as a substitute for human jockeys when child riders are at risk of falling, injuring, and even dying. The fatwa chose an opinion that prioritizes human safety because one of the purposes of sharia is to protect the soul. His maqāṣid analogy is clear: if the child cannot be placed as a jockey in a dangerous race for the safety of his soul, then the child must not be allowed to become a "political mass" in a potentially riotly mobilization. Technology, policies, education, and prevention systems should be geared towards reducing children's risks, not allowing children to fall victim to the interests of adults.(Squire, 2018; Yusefri et al., 2024)

Within the framework of ḥifẓ al-'aql, child protection includes education, mental health, digital literacy, and the child's ability to understand risks. Child mobilization in contemporary protests occurs not only in physical spaces, but also through social media, heroic narratives, disinformation, provocations, and peer

pressure. Digital invitations that portray children as "heroes" or saviors can affect the way children read political reality emotionally, not rationally. Al-Ghazālī gives an example of the prohibition of khamar as a protection of reason because reason is the basis of taklif. Al-Āmidī also explains that a small prohibition of intoxicating drinks can serve as a refinement of the protection of the mind because a little can lead to many. In the context of children, digital literacy, information verification, peaceful citizenship education, and surveillance of provocative content are forms of intellectual protection from roads that lead to damage. (al-Imam, 1984; al-Ghazālī, 1993; Islam et al., 2025; Mustofa et al., 2024)

Hifz al-'aql also demands psychosocial rehabilitation for children who have been exposed to violence. Children who witness violence, experience arrest, are separated from their families, are examined without accompaniment, or are stigmatized as rioters can experience trauma that interferes with intellect, emotional, and educational development. Therefore, recovery should not stop at the child's release from legal proceedings. The state must provide counseling, psychological assessment, school monitoring, family support, and the restoration of a sense of security. In the perspective of al-Syātibī, the shari'a maintains maqāṣid from the side of wujūd and 'adam: realizing the supporting elements of life and preventing destructive elements. At the wujūd level, the state is obliged to provide education, mental health services, and mentoring. At the 'adam level, the state is obliged to prevent violence, intimidation, stigma, and disconnection of access to learning (Al-Syatibi, 2004) (Ni et al., 2020) (Affandi et al., 2025; Akram et al., 2026; Muttaqin et al., 2026).

Within the framework of ḥifz al-nasl, children should be seen as the mandate of generations, not the source of political masses. The exploitation of children in political mobilization undermines the sustainability of the generation because children can experience trauma, stigma, school dropouts, criminalization, and loss of trust in the state. Al-Ghazālī places the protection of offspring as one of the main goals of the Shari'a, while al-Āmidī mentions that maintaining the nasl is part of the maqāṣid ḍarūriyyah. Rules "الأصل في الأبخاع التحريم" also shows the prudence of the sharia in maintaining the nasab, honor, and family structure. In the context of child protection, the meaning can be broadened: the child's body, dignity, honor, and future should not be made an object of exploitation. If adultery is prohibited because it damages posterity and honor, then the political exploitation of children must also be prevented because it damages the sustainability of generations in other forms: the destruction of children's education, mental, and social future. (al-Imam, 1984; al-Ghazālī, 1993; Santoso et al., 2026)

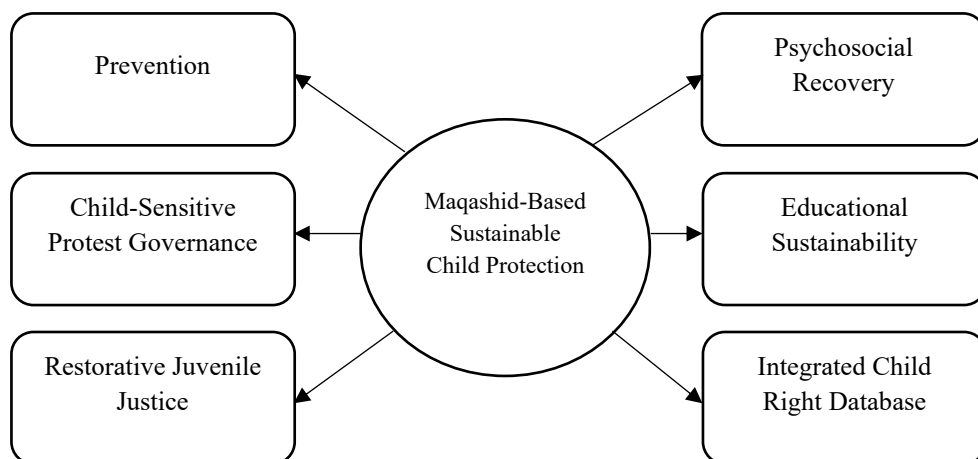
The protection of this generation is in line with the idea of sustainable human development. Children are the subjects of the future, so violations against children today will result in a social burden in the future. Children who are imprisoned, expelled from school, lost scholarships, labeled as rioters, or traumatized by state

violence can lose the opportunity to develop normally. Therefore, the recommendation that schools not sanction dismissal or revocation of scholarships to children involved in the protests should be read as part of ḥifẓ al-nasl and ḥifẓ al-'aql. Education is the main instrument of generational sustainability. Punishing children by cutting off access to education is the same as extending mafsadah from street spaces to school rooms. In maqāṣid, education policy should heal, not multiply children's social wounds.

Within the framework of ḥifẓ al-dīn, the protection of children includes public ethics and moral responsibility. Politics must not be built through manipulation, provocation, violence, and exploitation of vulnerable groups. Al-Sāṭibī explained that worship and the entire Shari'a system ultimately maintain the order of human life in obedience and benefit. If the political space teaches children that violence, provocation, doxing, hatred, and destruction are ways of conveying aspirations, then what is damaged is not only public order, but also public morality. Hifẓ al-dīn in this context does not only maintain religious rituals, but also maintains the values of trust, justice, compassion, honesty, and the prohibition of using the weak party. Children should be educated to participate civilly, not be mobilized in unsafe political anger.

Within the framework of ḥifẓ al-māl, child protection is related to the socio-economic costs of political violence. Riots cause damage to public facilities, health costs, loss of family income, need for legal assistance, and psychological recovery needs. If the victim's child's family comes from a weak economic group, the burden will deepen poverty and increase the vulnerability of children. Therefore, ḥifẓ al-māl should not be understood narrowly as the protection of individual property, but also the protection of the socio-economic access of the victim's family, rehabilitation costs, health services, education, and public facilities. The state must ensure that the victim's child and his family do not bear the cost of the damage caused by the failure of governance. The economic recovery of the victim's family is part of maqāṣid because it maintains the sustainability of the child's life.

Chart 1. Maqāṣid-Based Sustainable Child Protection



Based on this reading, the Maqāṣid-Based Sustainable Child Protection model can be formulated in six components. First, prevention, namely the prevention of child exploitation through digital literacy, mapping vulnerable schools, and monitoring of mobilization calls. Second, child-sensitive protest governance, which is a security protocol that distinguishes children from adults. Third, restorative juvenile justice, namely diversion, mentoring, legal aid, and detention as a last resort. Fourth, psychosocial recovery, which is trauma healing, counseling, and family support services. Fifth, educational sustainability, namely the prohibition of dismissal, revocation of scholarships, and school stigma. Sixth, the integrated child rights database, which is a segregated national data collection for child victims, child witnesses, and children facing the law. These six components are the operational form of maqāṣid: safeguarding the soul, intellect, generation, public morality, and social welfare of children.

The model also answers the weaknesses of child protection governance which has tended to be reactive, sectoral, and not data-based. The LNHAM/KPAI report assesses the need to strengthen education regulations, develop an integrated national database, strengthen digital literacy, and recover victims. By including maqāṣid, the recommendation obtained a more solid ethical-normative basis. The prevention of child exploitation is a manifestation of ḥifẓ al-nafs and ḥifẓ al-'aql; the sustainability of education is a manifestation of ḥifẓ al-'aql and ḥifẓ al-nas; psychosocial recovery is a manifestation of ḥifẓ al-nafs and ḥifẓ al-'aql; National data collection is an accountability instrument to maintain benefits; and accountability of the apparatus is part of the prevention of mafsadah so that violence does not recur.

Thus, maqāṣid al-syarī'ah can be used as a strong conceptual framework for building sustainable child protection in the context of political mobilization. The quotations of al-Ghazālī, al-Āmidī, and al-Syātibī show that the law should be directed at the maintenance of primary maslahat rather than just formal discipline. Child protection must work from two sides: realizing factors that support children's growth and development and preventing all paths that lead to damage. Therefore, children should not be positioned as objects of political mobilization, victims of violence by the authorities, or targets of criminalization. Children must be seen as the mandate of the generation that must be taken care of their soul, intellect, education, honor, and future. This is the essence of maqāṣid-based child protection: preventive in preventing exploitation, restorative in recovering victims, and sustainable in preserving generations.

This research makes a theoretical contribution by expanding the use of maqāṣid al-syarī'ah from the jurisdiction of family and social worship to issues of public governance, children's rights, democracy, and sustainable human development. So far, the study of maqāṣid in child protection has been used more to

discuss child marriage, custody, nasab, sexual violence, and child labor. This research offers an expansion of the field of study by placing children's political mobilization, protests, social unrest, mass arrests, trauma, educational stigma, and digital exploitation as the object of maqāṣid analysis. Thus, maqāṣid is understood not only as a normative theory, but also as an ethical-policy framework for assessing whether the state, apparatus, schools, families, and society are truly maintaining ḥifẓ al-nafs, ḥifẓ al-'aql, ḥifẓ al-nasl, ḥifẓ al-dīn, and ḥifẓ al-māl in contemporary socio-political situations.

The second contribution is the formulation of the Maqāṣid-Based Sustainable Child Protection model as an integrative framework between child protection, sustainability, and maqāṣid al-syarī'ah. This model connects six main components: prevention, child-sensitive protest governance, restorative juvenile justice, psychosocial recovery, educational sustainability, and an integrated child rights database. The six components answer the weaknesses of child protection governance which tend to be reactive, sectoral, not yet data-based, and not sensitive enough to children's vulnerability in political mobilization. The LNHAM/KPAI report itself emphasizes the need for recovery, rehabilitation, health services, education, psychological support, integrated national data collection, and strengthening digital literacy for children and parents.

The third contribution lies in the enrichment of the theory of child rights governance with an Islamic perspective. Children's rights literature generally emphasizes the principles of the best interests of the child, child participation, non-discrimination, and protection from violence. This research adds to the normative basis of maqāṣid that child protection is part of the primary protection of the benefit, not just the fulfillment of the state's administrative obligations. With this approach, children's involvement in political mobilization is not only read as a violation of children's rights, but also as a form of social mafsadah because it damages the safety of lives, intellectual development, educational sustainability, and the future of generations. This is in line with LNHAM's findings that the pattern of child mobilization and exploitation in the protests that ended in riots is evidence of the state's failure to protect Indonesian children.

The fourth contribution is to strengthen the concept of sustainable human development through the perspective of child protection. This research shows that child protection should not stop at the resolution of legal cases, but should be directed at life sustainability, education, mental health, family welfare, and social recovery. Children who experience violence, arrest, stigma, or termination of access to education are at risk of long-term impacts on their personal future and the quality of generations. Therefore, sustainability in this study is not only interpreted as an economic or environmental development agenda, but also as generational sustainability through the fulfillment of children's rights as a whole. The LNHAM report corroborates this by noting the stigmatization and marginalization of victims

in society, schools, and workplaces, as well as the absence of a vulnerability-based recovery system.

Research Limitations

This research has limitations because it uses a qualitative-normative approach based on document studies and literature reviews. The main data used came from LNHAM/KPAI reports and academic literature, so this study has not conducted direct interviews with the victim's child, family, legal assistant, teacher, apparatus, or service institution. As a result, the child's subjective experiences, family dynamics, school practices, and recovery mechanisms in the field have not been able to be described ethnographically and in depth. Advanced research needs to use empirical approaches such as in-depth interviews, observations, school case studies, or participatory child research while still paying attention to the ethics of child research.

The second limitation is the limitation of segregated data. The LNHAM/KPAI report has documented a recurring pattern of children's involvement in political mobilization, including data on 3,565 students arrested in the 2020 Job Creation Law demonstrations and more than 2,000 children arrested in protests in August-September 2025. However, the report also confirms that there is no single complete and segregated database on children involved in or affected socio-political movements. The absence of integrated data limits the ability of this study to map in detail age, gender, socio-economic background, educational status, forms of violence, legal processes, recovery conditions, and long-term impacts on children.

The third limitation has to do with the conceptual scope of *maqāṣid*. This study uses five main *maqāṣid* as the framework of analysis, namely *ḥifẓ al-dīn*, *ḥifẓ al-naḥs*, *ḥifẓ al-'aql*, *ḥifẓ al-naṣl*, and *ḥifẓ al-māl*. However, contemporary *maqāṣid* debates are actually broader, including issues of human dignity, freedom, justice, equality, the environment, and civic rights. Therefore, the model formulated in this study is still preliminary conceptual and can be further developed by including contemporary *maqāṣid* such as *ḥifẓ al-karāmah al-insāniyyah* or the protection of human dignity, *ḥifẓ al-ḥurriyyah* or the protection of freedom, and *ḥifẓ al-bi'ah* or the protection of a safe social environment for children.

The fourth limitation is that this study has not tested the effectiveness of the *Maqāṣid*-Based Sustainable Child Protection model in policy practice. The six components of the model formulated are still conceptual and normative, so they have not been tested through implementation in schools, child protection institutions, the police, social services, the Ministry of PPPA, or local governments. Follow-up research needs to develop operational indicators, evaluation instruments, and implementation studies to assess whether these models can improve child exploitation prevention, child-friendly safeguarding procedures, legal assistance, psychosocial recovery, educational sustainability, and national data collection.

The fifth limitation is that the research context still focuses on Indonesia and the August-September 2025 protests. Therefore, generalization of research results to other countries, other legal systems, or other forms of political mobilization must be done carefully. Nevertheless, the findings of this study can still make a comparative contribution to Muslim countries or pluralistic societies that face similar issues: children's involvement in political mobilization, digital exploitation, police violence, and weak child recovery systems. Further research can compare Indonesia's case with Malaysia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Egypt, or other countries that have a tradition of Islamic law and the challenges of street democracy.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the involvement of children in political mobilization and protests in Indonesia is a structural problem of child protection, not just an incidental event or violation of public order. KPAI/LNHAM data shows a recurring pattern of children's involvement in risky political activities, ranging from campaigns, post-election protests, policy demonstrations, to protests in August-September 2025 that caused child deaths, thousands of children arrested, and the emergence of violence, trauma, stigma, and threats to the sustainability of education. These findings show that children often shift from subjects of protection to objects of mobilization, oppression, and criminalization.

In the perspective of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, the protection of children should be placed as a *maslahat daruriah*. *Ḥifẓ al-naḥs* demands the protection of the child's soul from violence and death; *ḥifẓ al-'aql* demands the protection of intellect, education, digital literacy, and mental health; *ḥifẓ al-nasl* demands the protection of generational sustainability; *ḥifẓ al-dīn* demands anti-exploitation public ethics; and *ḥifẓ al-māl* demanded protection of socio-economic access and rehabilitation services. Therefore, child protection should not stop at legal handling after the event, but should include prevention, child-friendly security, mentoring, psychosocial recovery, educational sustainability, and integrated national data collection. The theoretical contribution of this research is the formulation of the *Maqāṣid-Based Sustainable Child Protection* model, which is an integrative framework that expands *maqāṣid* from the study of family law to public governance, children's rights, democracy, and sustainable human development. This model emphasizes that child protection is a legal, ethical, and civilizational obligation to safeguard the future of generations.

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