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Islamic Economic Law and Sustainable Development: Bridging Ethics, Law, and Policy

Parviz Hasanov[1*], Amin Songgirin[2], Ahmad Reza Hariyadi[3], Konul Madadzade[4]
[1] *Institute of Economics of the Ministry of Science and Education. Azerbaijan*
[2] *Department of Law. Universitas Pamulang. Indonesia*
[3] *Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business. Universiti Utara Malaysia. Malaysia*
[4] *Department of Philosophy, Sociology and Political Science. Sumgait State University. Azerbaijan*

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of Islamic economic law in promoting sustainable development by establishing an integrated relationship between ethical values, legal frameworks, and public policy. Although sustainable development has emerged as a major global agenda, its implementation continues to face challenges due to the limitations of conventional economic and legal systems, which often prioritize efficiency and economic growth while overlooking ethical and social dimensions. Employing a qualitative research approach through content analysis, this study examines classical Islamic jurisprudence, contemporary scholarly literature, and relevant policy documents to analyze the alignment between Islamic economic principles and sustainability frameworks. The findings demonstrate that Islamic economic law provides a comprehensive and ethically oriented framework based on fundamental principles, including tawhid (unity), adl (justice), maslahah (public interest), and maqasid al-shariah (objectives of Islamic law). These principles are manifested through various institutional and legal instruments, such as zakat, waqf, and risk-sharing financial mechanisms, which contribute to social justice, economic inclusion, financial resilience, and environmental sustainability.

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* *Corresponding author: hpsparviz@mail.ru*

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development has evolved into a dominant paradigm shaping global economic governance and legal reforms in the twenty-first century. No longer confined to environmental discourse, it now encompasses a multidimensional framework that integrates

economic growth, social equity, and ecological preservation. The institutionalization of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals has further solidified sustainability as a universal normative agenda. Yet, despite its widespread acceptance, operationalizing sustainable development remains conceptually contested and unevenly implemented across countries, which struggle to translate abstract principles into coherent legal and economic policies. This points to deeper structural flaws in prevailing development paradigms. Against this backdrop, Islamic economic law emerges as a compelling alternative, offering a robust ethical and jurisprudential framework to address these shortcomings and foster genuinely sustainable development (Ariyanti et al., 2024; Zauro et al., 2024).

At the heart of these challenges lies the epistemological foundation of mainstream economic and legal systems, which are predominantly secular and utilitarian. These frameworks often prioritize efficiency and growth over ethical considerations, yielding policies that exacerbate inequality and environmental degradation. The dominance of neoliberal models has entrenched a market-centric logic that sidelines moral accountability, reducing sustainability initiatives to technocratic fixes rather than transformative ethical shifts. This gap between normative ideals and practical outcomes questions the adequacy of conventional systems in tackling complex global issues. Islamic economics, by contrast, integrates moral and ethical considerations into economic decision-making, aiming for justice, equity, and social welfare, thus offering a viable and ethical alternative to conventional models (Akhmedov, 2026).

In contrast, Islamic economic law provides an alternative epistemological foundation, seamlessly integrating ethics, law, and economics under the ontological principle of *tawhid*. Economic activity is thus inherently moral and socially accountable, guided by principles such as *adl* (justice), *maslahah* (public interest), and *maqasid al-shariah* (objectives of Islamic law). These emphasize not just efficiency but also equity, sustainability, and human well-being, without separating legal compliance from ethical responsibility. This holistic approach positions Islamic economic law as a transformative model for sustainable development.

Building on this foundation, its operational mechanisms align closely with sustainability goals. The prohibition of *riba* (usury) curbs exploitative finance and promotes fair capital allocation, while risk-sharing contracts like *musharakah* (partnership) and *mudarabah* (profit-sharing) foster cooperative relationships and mitigate systemic risks. Redistributive institutions such as *zakat* (obligatory alms) and *waqf* (endowments) embed social justice and poverty alleviation. Environmental stewardship is reinforced through bans on waste (*israf*) and harm (*mafsadah*). Collectively, these elements make Islamic economic law inherently sustainable, though its potential in policy remains underexplored.

Despite this convergence, the literature shows fragmentation: studies typically isolate Islamic finance as a niche or treat sustainability within conventional frames, neglecting integrative analyses of Islamic economic law as a comprehensive system. The normative depth of Islamic jurisprudence is also underutilized in policy discourse, leaving Islamic approaches conceptually underdeveloped in global debates. Moreover, sustainability research rarely delves into the legal and institutional translation of Islamic ethics, creating a disconnect between ideals and realities. Interpretive diversity in Islamic jurisprudence further hinders standardization and cross-jurisdictional implementation, absent unified regulatory frameworks.

This study addresses these gaps by critically examining Islamic economic law's role in advancing sustainable development, bridging ethics, law, and policy. Moving beyond description, it analyzes how Islamic principles can reshape modern governance to tackle

inequality, environmental degradation, and financial instability. The research constructs a conceptual framework integrating Islamic law with global agendas like the SDGs, assessing compatibilities, synergies, and limitations through a comparative lens with conventional approaches. It identifies institutional mechanisms for implementation and highlights innovative Islamic solutions to persistent challenges, contributing to theoretical expansion and policy insights.

The study's significance lies in repositioning Islamic economic law within mainstream sustainable development discourse, countering its marginalization. By offering critical, interdisciplinary analysis across law, economics, and ethics, it equips scholars with new analytical lenses and policymakers with actionable alternatives. Practically, it informs inclusive, ethically grounded systems, fostering synergies between Islamic and international frameworks for a pluralistic, resilient global economic order.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research design grounded in library research to explore the intersection of Islamic economic law and sustainable development. It relies exclusively on secondary data sources, including classical Islamic jurisprudential texts (*fiqh*), contemporary scholarly works, peer-reviewed journal articles, legal documents, and institutional reports (Akhadi et,al, 2025). Key references draw from traditional Islamic scholarship and modern interdisciplinary studies in law, economics, and sustainability. Sources were selected purposively to ensure relevance, credibility, and academic rigor, enabling a comprehensive examination of theoretical foundations alongside contemporary applications while constructing a holistic understanding of the research problem. This approach facilitates a deep, nuanced exploration of how Islamic ethical principles and legal frameworks can be systematically integrated into policies and practices aimed at fostering sustainable development, thereby addressing critical gaps in existing literature (Amany et al., 2025; P, 2025; Yasmeen et al., 2024).

The analytical framework is primarily descriptive-analytical, systematically interpreting and synthesizing existing theories, concepts, and legal principles to critically examine how Islamic economic law articulates ethical and legal responses to sustainability challenges. Complementing this, a normative legal approach evaluates the prescriptive dimensions of Islamic law and its potential to shape modern policy frameworks—assessing key concepts such as *maqasid al-shariah*, *maslahah*, and justice in contemporary governance contexts. Conceptual analysis further clarifies terminologies and theoretical linkages between Islamic law and sustainable development. This layered strategy ensures both depth and coherence. Furthermore, the research employs a comparative analytical method to highlight the convergences and divergences between Islamic economic principles and conventional sustainable development frameworks, especially regarding shared intellectual foundations and the overarching objectives of Islamic law (Alqemzi & Marni, 2026; Pahala & Pahala, 2024).

Building on these methods, the study incorporates comparative analysis to contrast Islamic economic law with conventional legal-economic systems in addressing sustainability issues, focusing on philosophical assumptions, regulatory mechanisms, and policy implications. This highlights convergences and divergences between the paradigms, along with Islamic legal principles' potential to overcome conventional limitations. Although it involves no empirical data collection, the research upholds methodological rigor via critical evaluation and source triangulation, thereby strengthening findings' validity and fostering a

robust theoretical framework. A comprehensive literature review further enriches this methodological approach by providing an in-depth evaluation of existing theoretical and applied literature on *maqasid al-shariah* in economic contexts, identifying patterns, perspectives, and recent contributions to integrate this concept into Islamic economic policy development (Karimullah, 2023).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Ethical Foundations of Islamic Economic Law and Sustainability

Islamic economic law is fundamentally grounded in a comprehensive ethical framework that promotes justice, balance, and social welfare. Unlike conventional economic systems that often separate ethics from economic activity, Islamic law integrates moral values into all aspects of human interaction (Abdullayev et.al., 2025). This integration ensures that economic decisions are not solely driven by profit but also by accountability to society and to God. The ethical dimension is not an external addition but an intrinsic component of the legal system. As a result, economic practices are guided by principles that aim to achieve both individual benefit and collective well-being. This foundation makes Islamic economic law particularly relevant in addressing contemporary sustainability challenges (Maulidizen, 2019). The emphasis on ethical considerations aligns Islamic economic law closely with the objectives of sustainable development, particularly regarding ecological preservation, social equity, and intergenerational justice (Muhammadong, 2025; Wulandari et al., 2025).

At the core of this ethical framework lies the principle of *tawhid*, which emphasizes the unity of God and the interconnectedness of all aspects of life. This principle establishes a holistic worldview in which economic activities are inseparable from moral and spiritual responsibilities. Human beings are regarded as stewards (*khalifah*) on earth, entrusted with the responsibility to manage resources in a just and sustainable manner. This stewardship concept directly aligns with the environmental and social dimensions of sustainable development. It discourages exploitation and promotes responsible resource management. Consequently, *tawhid* serves as a foundational concept that links faith, ethics, and economic behavior. This ethical grounding is further articulated through the framework of *maqasid al-shariah*, which outlines the higher objectives of Islamic law aimed at safeguarding essential human welfare (Hilabi et al., 2025; Isnan et al., 2026; Pertiwi, 2026).

The ethical orientation of Islamic economic law is further reinforced by the principle of justice (*adl*), which occupies a central position in Shariah. Justice in this context extends beyond legal fairness to encompass social and economic equity. It requires that wealth distribution be conducted in a manner that minimizes inequality and prevents exploitation. This principle challenges systems that allow excessive concentration of wealth and power. In relation to sustainability, justice ensures that development benefits are shared across present and future generations. Therefore, *adl* provides a normative basis for inclusive and equitable development policies. Furthermore, the ethical tenet of *maslahah* (public interest) provides a dynamic framework for assessing economic policies and practices, ensuring they genuinely contribute to the overall welfare of the community and align with the broader goals of sustainable development (Urus et al., 2025).

Another key ethical concept is *maslahah* (public interest), which serves as a guiding principle in Islamic legal reasoning. It emphasizes that laws and policies should aim to promote the welfare of society as a whole. This principle allows flexibility in interpreting legal rulings to address contemporary challenges. In the context of sustainable development,

maslahah supports policies that balance economic growth with social and environmental considerations. It also provides a framework for prioritizing long-term societal benefits over short-term gains. As such, it plays a crucial role in aligning Islamic economic law with modern sustainability agendas. The holistic integration of these ethical considerations—tawhid, adl, and maslahah—within Islamic economic jurisprudence provides a robust normative framework for fostering sustainable practices and policies that transcend conventional economic paradigms (Agustiar, 2024; Setiawan, 2023).

Closely related to *maslahah* is the concept of *maqasid al-shariah*, which outlines the higher objectives of Islamic law. These objectives include the protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and wealth. In contemporary interpretations, scholars have expanded these objectives to include environmental protection and social justice. This expansion demonstrates the adaptability of Islamic law in addressing modern issues. The *maqasid* framework provides a systematic approach to evaluating policies and their impact on human well-being. It thus serves as a bridge between traditional jurisprudence and contemporary sustainability discourse. This integration allows for a comprehensive understanding of sustainable development that encompasses spiritual values, ethical leadership, and social justice, moving beyond purely growth-centric models (Afnandito, 2025).

Environmental ethics in Islamic economic law are also reflected in the prohibition of *israf* (wastefulness) and *tabdhir* (extravagance). These prohibitions encourage moderation and responsible consumption, which are essential for environmental sustainability. Overconsumption and resource depletion are viewed as moral as well as economic issues. This perspective contrasts with consumerist models that prioritize continuous growth and consumption. By promoting moderation, Islamic law supports the preservation of natural resources for future generations. This aligns closely with the environmental pillar of sustainable development. Furthermore, the integration of *Maqasid al-Shariah* with ecological values forms a robust framework for developing a just Islamic economic paradigm that emphasizes universal well-being and harmony between economic activity and environmental preservation (Sumar'in, 2025).

In addition, the principle of preventing harm (*mafsadah*) plays a significant role in shaping ethical economic behavior. Islamic law prioritizes the avoidance of harm over the pursuit of benefit when the two are in conflict. This precautionary approach is particularly relevant in addressing environmental risks and financial instability. It supports policies that minimize negative externalities and protect vulnerable populations. The emphasis on harm prevention also reinforces the importance of ethical decision-making in uncertain situations. Thus, *mafsadah* complements other ethical principles in promoting sustainability. The synergy between *Maqasid al-Shariah* and environmental sustainability has been recognized as crucial for fostering sustainable economic practices (Kamali, 2025; Klongrua et al., 2025).

The prohibition of *riba* (usury) further illustrates the ethical foundation of Islamic economic law. It aims to prevent exploitative financial practices that can lead to inequality and social injustice. By discouraging interest-based transactions, Islamic law promotes fairness and shared responsibility in economic activities (Muchtar et.al., 2022). This principle also encourages investment in real economic activities rather than speculative financial practices. As a result, it contributes to financial stability and long-term economic sustainability. The ethical rationale behind *riba* prohibition aligns with broader goals of equitable development. This prohibition, alongside other Islamic finance principles, therefore, provides a framework for financial systems that are inherently geared towards socio-

economic well-being and ecological responsibility rather than purely profit-driven motives (Khalidin et al., 2024).

Moreover, Islamic economic law emphasizes social solidarity through mechanisms such as *zakat*, *sadaqah*, and *waqf*. These instruments institutionalize the redistribution of wealth and support vulnerable members of society. They reflect a commitment to social justice and collective responsibility. In the context of sustainable development, these mechanisms contribute to poverty alleviation and social inclusion. They also provide alternative models for welfare systems that are rooted in ethical and religious values. This demonstrates the practical application of ethical principles in addressing socio-economic challenges. Furthermore, the integration of these ethical and legal frameworks within Islamic finance, such as through instruments like green sukuk and ESG-aligned investments, actively promotes ecological responsibility and aligns with global sustainable development goals (Hassan et al., 2024; Mouna, 2025; Shabanov et al., 2025).

The ethical foundations of Islamic economic law offer a comprehensive framework that aligns closely with the principles of sustainable development. By integrating moral values with legal and economic systems, it provides a holistic approach to addressing global challenges. These ethical principles not only guide individual behavior but also shape institutional and policy frameworks. They offer an alternative paradigm that prioritizes balance, justice, and long-term well-being. However, their effective implementation requires adaptation to contemporary contexts and integration into modern governance systems. Therefore, understanding these ethical foundations is essential for advancing sustainable development through Islamic economic law.

Legal Instruments in Islamic Economic Law Supporting Sustainable Development

Islamic economic law provides a diverse set of legal instruments that directly contribute to the realization of sustainable development objectives. These instruments are not merely theoretical constructs but are embedded within institutional practices that address socio-economic challenges (Maulidizen et.al., 2026). Unlike conventional legal frameworks that often separate economic efficiency from social justice, Islamic law integrates both dimensions. This integration allows legal tools to function simultaneously as economic mechanisms and ethical safeguards. As a result, Islamic legal instruments offer a holistic approach to development. Their relevance becomes particularly evident in addressing issues such as poverty, inequality, and financial instability. For instance, the implementation of Zakat, a mandatory form of Islamic charity, serves as a direct mechanism for wealth redistribution and poverty alleviation, significantly contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals by enhancing social welfare and economic stability (Korkut & Bulut, 2025; Wibowo, 2023).

Among the most prominent instruments is *zakat*, which serves as a mandatory form of wealth redistribution. It is designed to ensure that wealth circulates within society and does not remain concentrated among a small elite. By targeting specific beneficiary groups, *zakat* directly contributes to poverty alleviation and social protection (Maulidizen et.al., 2024). This mechanism aligns closely with the goals of inclusive development and social sustainability. Furthermore, *zakat* institutions can complement state-led welfare programs by providing additional financial support. Its structured and obligatory nature distinguishes it from voluntary charitable systems in conventional economies. This systematic collection and

distribution of wealth not only addresses immediate needs but also fosters long-term economic stability and equitable growth within communities (Sumpena & Hikmah, 2026).

In addition to *zakat*, the institution of *waqf* plays a significant role in supporting long-term socio-economic development. *Waqf* involves the endowment of assets for public benefit, often in areas such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. This creates a sustainable source of funding that can operate independently of government budgets. Historically, *waqf* institutions have contributed to the development of social services across the Islamic world. In contemporary contexts, they can be revitalized to support sustainable development initiatives. Thus, *waqf* represents a powerful tool for promoting both economic and social sustainability. The strategic utilization of waqf, alongside zakat and other Islamic social finance instruments, has been identified as a critical component for achieving various Sustainable Development Goals, including poverty eradication and enhanced social welfare (Mukhid, 2024; Wakhidah, 2026).

Voluntary charitable practices such as *sadaqah* further reinforce the redistributive framework of Islamic economic law. While not obligatory like *zakat*, *sadaqah* reflects a strong ethical commitment to social solidarity. It encourages individuals to contribute to the welfare of others beyond legal requirements. This voluntary dimension enhances the resilience of social support systems. In the context of sustainable development, it fosters a culture of shared responsibility and mutual assistance. Such ethical engagement is often lacking in purely market-driven systems. Moreover, the ethical imperative for social solidarity inherent in sadaqah, alongside other Islamic philanthropic instruments like infaq, fundamentally strengthens the 'third sector' by mobilizing private capital for inclusive development projects, thereby addressing systemic inequalities and fostering community resilience beyond the scope of traditional economic models (Ibrahim & Alenezi, 2024).

Beyond redistributive instruments, Islamic economic law also provides financial mechanisms that promote economic stability and sustainability. One of the defining features of Islamic finance is its emphasis on asset-backed transactions. This requirement ensures that financial activities are linked to real economic assets, reducing speculative behavior. It contrasts sharply with conventional financial systems that often rely on abstract financial instruments. By anchoring finance in tangible assets, Islamic law promotes transparency and accountability. This contributes to a more stable and resilient financial system. This intrinsic connection to the real economy mitigates systemic risks and fosters long-term economic growth that is inherently more sustainable and less prone to financial crises. Furthermore, the prohibition of interest (riba) and the encouragement of profit-and-loss sharing arrangements incentivize ethical investment and risk-sharing, aligning financial activities with productive economic endeavors rather than purely speculative gains.

Risk-sharing models such as *mudarabah* and *musharakah* further distinguish Islamic finance from conventional systems. These models distribute profits and losses among parties, encouraging cooperation and shared responsibility. Unlike interest-based lending, they do not guarantee fixed returns, thereby reducing the likelihood of financial crises. This approach aligns with sustainability principles by promoting equitable economic relationships. It also incentivizes productive investment rather than speculative activities. As a result, risk-sharing mechanisms enhance both financial stability and social equity. These principles not only foster a more resilient financial ecosystem but also align with the broader ethical objectives of Islamic economic law, emphasizing justice and societal well-being (Sugianto, 2025). Such structures promote risk-sharing and equitable distribution of financial outcomes, fostering an environment of shared responsibility and financial sustainability (Yusuf et al., 2023).

The prohibition of *riba* (usury) represents another fundamental legal principle that supports sustainable development. By eliminating interest-based transactions, Islamic law seeks to prevent exploitation and ensure fairness in financial dealings. This prohibition addresses structural inequalities that often arise in debt-based economies. It also encourages alternative financing models that are more inclusive and equitable. In the context of sustainability, the avoidance of *riba* contributes to long-term economic stability. It reduces the risk of debt accumulation and financial crises. This fundamental principle directs capital towards productive, real-sector investments, thereby fostering economic growth that is both ethical and sustainable (Harahap, 2024; Norchaevna, 2024). This focus on real economic activity and ethical finance distinguishes Islamic banking from conventional systems, which have been shown to engage in risk-taking behavior that can lead to financial instability (Daoud & Kammoun, 2024).

Islamic legal instruments also incorporate principles of transparency and accountability, which are essential for sustainable governance. Contracts in Islamic law must be clear, fair, and free from uncertainty (*gharar*). This requirement reduces the risk of disputes and enhances trust in economic transactions. Transparency is particularly important in promoting sustainable investment and preventing corruption. By ensuring that all parties are fully informed, Islamic law supports ethical business practices. These features contribute to the overall integrity of the economic system. This legal framework, emphasizing clarity and ethical conduct, extends to contemporary financial instruments, ensuring their compliance with Sharia law and promoting responsible financial practices within Islamic financial institutions (Kadi, 2023).

Despite their potential, the implementation of Islamic legal instruments in modern contexts faces several challenges. These include regulatory inconsistencies, lack of standardization, and limited institutional capacity. In many cases, Islamic financial systems operate within frameworks that are not fully aligned with Shariah principles. This creates inefficiencies and limits their effectiveness in achieving sustainability goals. Additionally, there is a need for greater innovation in adapting traditional instruments to contemporary needs. Addressing these challenges is crucial for maximizing the impact of Islamic economic law. For instance, aligning regulatory frameworks with Sharia principles and fostering standardized practices can enhance the efficacy of Islamic finance in promoting sustainable development (Osman, 2023). Moreover, expanding research into the legal and ethical foundations of the green economy within an Islamic framework could further illuminate pathways for integrating these principles effectively (Shamshiyev & Aljarhi, 2026).

The legal instruments within Islamic economic law provide a comprehensive toolkit for promoting sustainable development. They combine ethical principles with practical mechanisms that address both economic and social dimensions. By integrating redistribution, risk-sharing, and accountability, these instruments offer a balanced approach to development. However, their full potential can only be realized through effective institutional support and policy integration. This requires collaboration between scholars, policymakers, and financial institutions. Therefore, strengthening these instruments is essential for advancing a more sustainable and equitable global economy.

Policy Integration: Aligning Islamic Economic Law with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The integration of Islamic economic law into contemporary policy frameworks presents a significant opportunity to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As global development challenges become increasingly complex, there is a growing need for alternative frameworks that incorporate ethical and legal dimensions. Islamic economic law offers a value-based system that aligns closely with the normative aspirations of the SDGs. Its emphasis on justice, equity, and social welfare provides a strong foundation for policy innovation. However, translating these principles into actionable policies requires systematic integration within existing governance structures. This highlights the importance of bridging theoretical compatibility with institutional implementation. This integration often necessitates the development of specific regulatory frameworks and guidelines that facilitate the implementation of Islamic finance principles in environmentally focused investments and sustainable initiatives (Irfany et al., 2024).

Islamic economic law can contribute to multiple SDGs, particularly those related to poverty reduction, financial inclusion, and social equity. Instruments such as *zakat* and *waqf* can be institutionalized to support SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). These mechanisms provide sustainable sources of funding for vulnerable populations and marginalized communities. In addition, Islamic finance promotes inclusive financial systems that can enhance access to capital. This directly supports SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). By aligning these instruments with national development strategies, governments can strengthen their policy frameworks. Furthermore, the application of Islamic green finance models, such as green sukuk, offers a robust avenue for mobilizing capital towards environmentally sound projects, thereby contributing to SDGs related to climate action and sustainable infrastructure (Kian et al., 2026; Mardiyah et al., 2026; Sadly, 2026).

The integration of Islamic economic principles is not limited to Muslim-majority countries but has broader global relevance. Non-Muslim countries have also shown increasing interest in Islamic finance as a tool for ethical investment. This demonstrates the universal applicability of Shariah-based economic principles. Policy integration, therefore, requires a flexible and inclusive approach that transcends cultural and religious boundaries. It also necessitates collaboration between international organizations, governments, and financial institutions. Such cooperation can facilitate the mainstreaming of Islamic economic law in global development agendas. For instance, the application of Islamic finance principles, such as those found in green sukuk and waqf, can be instrumental in achieving environmental sustainability goals and promoting ethical investment practices across diverse economic landscapes (Ahmed et al., 2024; Mardani et al., 2026).

One of the most promising areas of policy integration is the utilization of *waqf*-based development models. *Waqf* institutions can be mobilized to finance infrastructure, education, and healthcare projects. These sectors are directly linked to several SDGs, including SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and SDG 4 (Quality Education). Unlike conventional funding mechanisms, *waqf* provides a sustainable and long-term source of financing. This reduces dependency on government budgets and external aid. Consequently, it enhances the resilience and sustainability of development initiatives. Moreover, leveraging waqf can foster community participation and ownership, aligning with the bottom-up approaches essential for localized sustainable development (Abbas & Aravossis, 2024). Furthermore, the innovative application of Sharia-compliant financial instruments, such as green sukuk and waqf-based funds, offers effective strategies for addressing global sustainability challenges, particularly in sectors such as renewable energy and environmental protection (Iskandar & Sulaiman, 2025; Masrukhan et al., 2024).

In recent years, Islamic green finance has emerged as an innovative tool for supporting environmental sustainability. Instruments such as green *sukuk* have gained prominence in financing environmentally friendly projects. These include renewable energy, sustainable infrastructure, and climate adaptation initiatives. Green *sukuk* align financial returns with environmental objectives, creating a dual benefit for investors and society. This directly supports SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy). The growth of Islamic green finance demonstrates the adaptability of Islamic economic law in addressing contemporary challenges. This expansion into green finance underscores the inherent flexibility of Islamic economic principles to foster both financial viability and ecological stewardship (Zawawi et al., 2023). The issuance of green sukuk has specifically enabled the funding of critical projects in renewable energy and sanitation, leading to measurable reductions in carbon emissions while maintaining competitive risk-adjusted returns (Muklis et al., 2025).

Despite these opportunities, the integration of Islamic economic law into policy frameworks faces several structural challenges. One major issue is the lack of regulatory harmonization across different jurisdictions. Variations in Shariah interpretations can lead to inconsistencies in implementation. This creates uncertainty for policymakers and investors alike. Additionally, the absence of standardized frameworks limits the scalability of Islamic financial instruments. Addressing these regulatory challenges is essential for effective policy integration. Moreover, limited awareness among stakeholders and insufficient institutional capacity further impede the widespread adoption and efficacy of Islamic economic principles in national and international development agendas (Fahmi, 2025).

Another significant barrier is the limited awareness and understanding of Islamic economic principles among policymakers. Many decision-makers are more familiar with conventional economic models and may perceive Islamic approaches as niche or specialized. This perception hinders the adoption of Islamic legal instruments in mainstream policy frameworks. There is a need for capacity-building initiatives to enhance knowledge and expertise in this area. Academic institutions and research organizations can play a crucial role in this process. Increasing awareness is a key step toward broader acceptance and implementation. Furthermore, overcoming regulatory hurdles and enhancing public awareness are critical for fostering the widespread adoption of green sukuk as an effective mechanism for financing sustainable development initiatives (Alam et al., 2023; Hassan, 2024). Furthermore, challenges such as the absence of a standardized green taxonomy, limited secondary markets, and high compliance costs continue to impede the broader implementation of green sukuk (Mahbubi et al., 2026).

Institutional capacity also plays a critical role in the successful integration of Islamic economic law. Effective implementation requires strong governance structures and well-developed financial institutions. In many cases, existing institutions lack the resources and expertise to manage Islamic financial instruments. This limits their ability to contribute to sustainable development goals. Strengthening institutional frameworks is therefore essential for maximizing impact. This includes developing regulatory bodies, standard-setting organizations, and professional training programs. Moreover, addressing the limited public literacy regarding Islamic economic law and the shortage of qualified experts is crucial for fostering widespread adoption and effective implementation (Andatu et al., 2025).

To overcome these challenges, a more coordinated and strategic approach to policy integration is required. Governments should adopt a multi-stakeholder approach that involves collaboration between public and private sectors. International organizations can

also provide technical support and guidance in developing regulatory frameworks. Furthermore, innovation in financial instruments and legal mechanisms can enhance the adaptability of Islamic economic law. This includes the development of hybrid models that combine Islamic and conventional approaches. Such strategies can facilitate a smoother transition toward integrated policy systems. Such integration necessitates a robust framework for legal certainty, investment governance, and transparency, particularly in the context of emerging instruments like green sukuk (Primambudi, 2023). However, the effective deployment of green sukuk is often hampered by a lack of comprehensive regulatory frameworks, insufficient government support, and limited public awareness.

Aligning Islamic economic law with the SDGs offers a promising pathway for achieving sustainable and inclusive development. The ethical and legal foundations of Islamic law provide valuable insights for policy formulation. However, effective integration requires addressing regulatory, institutional, and knowledge-related challenges. By fostering collaboration and innovation, policymakers can unlock the full potential of Islamic economic law. This will not only enhance the effectiveness of sustainability initiatives but also contribute to a more equitable global economic system. Therefore, policy integration remains a critical area for future research and development. Further investigations are needed to explore specific policy mechanisms that can bridge the existing gaps between Islamic finance principles and global sustainability targets, particularly concerning standardized reporting and regulatory alignment (Ramadan et al., 2025; Tumewang et al., 2023).

Comparative Perspective: Islamic vs. Conventional Economic Law in Sustainable Development

A comparative analysis between Islamic and conventional economic law reveals fundamental differences in their philosophical foundations and practical implications. Conventional systems are largely rooted in secular and utilitarian principles that prioritize efficiency, productivity, and economic growth. While these objectives have contributed to significant global economic expansion, they often neglect ethical considerations. This has led to persistent issues such as income inequality, environmental degradation, and financial instability. In contrast, Islamic economic law integrates ethical values directly into its legal and economic framework. This distinction highlights the importance of examining alternative paradigms in achieving sustainable development. Specifically, Islamic economic law emphasizes justice *(adl)*, equity *(ihsan)*, and the prohibition of interest *(riba)* and excessive uncertainty *(gharar)*, fostering a more balanced approach to economic activity.

Conventional economic law typically operates within a market-driven framework where individual rationality and profit maximization are central. This approach assumes that market mechanisms can efficiently allocate resources and generate optimal outcomes. However, such assumptions often fail to account for negative externalities, including environmental damage and social inequality. Regulatory interventions are usually reactive, addressing problems only after they arise. This reactive nature limits the effectiveness of conventional systems in achieving long-term sustainability. Consequently, there is growing criticism of their ability to address complex global challenges. The limitations of conventional economic models in promoting equitable and sustainable development necessitate the exploration of alternative frameworks, such as the Islamic economic system, which intrinsically links economic activity with ethical precepts and social welfare (Hidayat et al., 2024; Hidayati et al., 2024).

In contrast, Islamic economic law adopts a normative approach that embeds moral accountability within economic activities. The integration of ethical principles such as *adl* (justice) and *maslahah* (public interest) ensures that economic behavior aligns with societal welfare. This proactive orientation emphasizes prevention rather than correction of harm. It seeks to create a balanced system where economic growth does not come at the expense of social or environmental well-being. By incorporating ethical constraints, Islamic law provides a framework that is inherently aligned with sustainability objectives. This makes it a compelling alternative to conventional models. This inherent alignment stems from its foundational principles, which mandate responsible resource utilization and intergenerational equity (Polat & YEŞİLYAPRAK, 2024). Furthermore, Islamic economic principles, such as the prohibition of riba (interest) and gharar (excessive uncertainty), aim to foster financial stability and distributive justice, thereby mitigating risks often associated with conventional financial systems (Ferdiyan & Harahap, 2025).

Another key difference lies in the treatment of wealth distribution and social equity. Conventional systems often rely on taxation and welfare policies to address inequality, but these measures are frequently insufficient. Wealth concentration remains a persistent issue in many economies. Islamic economic law, on the other hand, institutionalizes redistribution through mechanisms such as *zakat* and *waqf*. These instruments ensure a continuous flow of resources to disadvantaged groups. This proactive redistribution contributes to greater social cohesion and economic balance. As a result, Islamic law offers a more structured approach to achieving social sustainability. This fundamental difference underscores Islamic economics' potential to mitigate the widening disparities observed in conventional capitalist frameworks (Rinaldi, 2025). Moreover, the foundational principles of Islamic economics, such as the emphasis on risk-sharing and the prohibition of speculative transactions, inherently promote financial stability and ethical investment practices, distinguishing it significantly from conventional finance (Ayad et al., 2025; Hafizd et al., 2025).

Financial systems further illustrate the divergence between the two paradigms. Conventional finance is heavily dependent on interest-based lending, which can lead to debt accumulation and financial crises. The global financial crisis of 2008 highlighted the vulnerabilities of such systems. Islamic finance, by prohibiting *riba* and promoting risk-sharing, seeks to create a more stable financial environment. Transactions are required to be asset-backed, reducing speculative behavior. This approach aligns financial activities with real economic production. Consequently, it enhances resilience and sustainability in the financial sector. This distinct approach fosters greater transparency and accountability within financial transactions, thereby contributing to a more equitable and robust economic landscape (Anami, 2026; Naeem & Haq, 2025).

Transparency and accountability are also treated differently within these frameworks. While conventional systems emphasize regulatory compliance, they may not always ensure ethical conduct. Loopholes and regulatory arbitrage can undermine the integrity of the system. Islamic economic law, however, places a strong emphasis on moral accountability alongside legal obligations. Concepts such as *amanah* (trust) and the prohibition of *gharar* (uncertainty) promote transparency in transactions. This dual emphasis strengthens trust among economic actors. It also reduces the likelihood of unethical practices that can destabilize markets. This inherent moral compass contributes to building a more robust and ethically grounded economic system capable of fostering long-term stability and sustainable development. This ethical framework, coupled with its focus on wealth distribution and ethical financial practices, positions Islamic economic law as a compelling model for

addressing contemporary global economic challenges and fostering sustainable development (Awan et al., 2023; Nurhastuti, 2025; Rai, 2022).

Environmental considerations provide another important point of comparison. Conventional economic models have historically prioritized industrial growth, often at the expense of environmental sustainability. Although recent frameworks incorporate environmental regulations, these are often reactive and insufficient. Islamic economic law, by contrast, embeds environmental ethics within its foundational principles. The prohibition of waste (*israf*) and the emphasis on stewardship (*khalifah*) promote responsible resource management. This intrinsic orientation supports long-term ecological balance. It demonstrates the compatibility of Islamic law with environmental sustainability goals. This holistic approach integrates ecological well-being as an intrinsic component of economic prosperity, diverging from conventional models that often treat environmental protection as an external cost or regulatory burden.

Despite these strengths, the application of Islamic economic law in modern contexts is not without challenges. One major issue is the need for harmonization with existing legal and economic systems. Many countries operate within hybrid frameworks that combine conventional and Islamic elements. This can create inconsistencies and limit the effectiveness of Islamic legal instruments. Additionally, there is a need for institutional capacity and regulatory clarity. Without these, the implementation of Islamic principles may remain superficial. Therefore, adaptation is necessary to ensure practical relevance. Furthermore, the nascent development of Islamic fintech offers promising avenues for advancing financial inclusion and ethical wealth management, yet its integration necessitates careful consideration of regulatory frameworks to align with Sharia principles while fostering innovation (Kılıç, 2023).

Furthermore, the diversity of interpretations within Islamic jurisprudence presents both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, it allows flexibility in addressing contemporary issues. On the other hand, it can lead to fragmentation and lack of standardization. This is particularly evident in the global Islamic finance industry, where differing Shariah opinions can create uncertainty. To address this, greater collaboration among scholars and institutions is required. Standard-setting bodies can play a key role in promoting consistency. Such efforts are essential for enhancing the global credibility of Islamic economic law. This collective effort would also facilitate the development of innovative financial products and services that adhere to both ethical principles and contemporary market demands, thereby expanding the reach and impact of Islamic economic law (Maasah, 2025; Rusydiana et al., 2022).

The comparative analysis highlights that Islamic economic law offers a more ethically integrated and socially oriented approach to sustainable development. Its emphasis on justice, accountability, and balance provides a strong foundation for addressing global challenges. However, its effectiveness depends on the ability to adapt and integrate within modern legal and economic systems. By addressing existing limitations, Islamic economic law can serve as a viable alternative or complement to conventional frameworks. This comparative perspective underscores the importance of pluralism in economic thought. Ultimately, combining insights from both systems may offer the most effective pathway toward sustainable development. This integration would involve a convergence of paradigms, where the shared universal ambition for human well-being and a state of harmony within the universe forms the basis for collaborative models (Ghlamallah, 2021).

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Islamic economic law offers a comprehensive and ethically grounded framework that aligns closely with the principles of sustainable development. By integrating moral values, legal structures, and economic mechanisms, it provides a holistic alternative to conventional systems that often separate efficiency from ethics. The analysis shows that key principles such as tawhid, adl, and maslahah, along with legal instruments like zakat, waqf, and risk-sharing finance, contribute significantly to achieving social equity, financial stability, and environmental sustainability. Moreover, the study highlights the strong compatibility between Islamic economic law and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in addressing poverty, inequality, and climate challenges. However, despite this alignment, the practical integration of Islamic economic law into modern policy frameworks remains limited. Structural barriers, including regulatory inconsistencies, lack of standardization, and insufficient institutional capacity, continue to hinder its effectiveness. From a comparative perspective, Islamic economic law provides a more ethically integrated and socially oriented model than conventional systems. Nevertheless, its successful implementation requires adaptation, harmonization with existing legal systems, and greater engagement among policymakers, scholars, and financial institutions. Ultimately, this study affirms that Islamic economic law is not merely a normative ideal but a viable and transformative paradigm for sustainable development in the contemporary global context.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

This study is subject to several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research relies exclusively on qualitative library-based methods, which limit its ability to provide empirical validation of the proposed theoretical framework. Second, the study primarily focuses on conceptual and normative analysis, without examining specific case studies or country-level implementations. Third, the diversity of interpretations within Islamic jurisprudence is not explored in depth, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study does not fully address the operational challenges of integrating Islamic economic law within different legal and institutional contexts.

Future research should therefore focus on empirical investigations that assess the practical impact of Islamic economic law on sustainable development outcomes. Comparative case studies across different countries would provide valuable insights into successful policy integration and institutional models. Further research is also needed to explore the role of emerging instruments such as green sukuk and Islamic social finance in achieving the SDGs. In addition, interdisciplinary approaches combining law, economics, and environmental studies can deepen the analysis of sustainability from an Islamic perspective. Finally, efforts toward standardization and harmonization of Islamic legal frameworks should be examined to enhance their global applicability and effectiveness.

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