



Contemporary Challenges and the Future of Islamic Law: Toward Ethical and Institutional Renewal

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Abstract

Research Objective: This study examines internal and external challenges in the Islamic world using Islamic constitutional and criminal law perspectives. It focuses on how principles, particularly those rooted in *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, can be applied to address legal fragmentation, underdevelopment, Islamophobia, and marginalization. **Research Methodology:** A qualitative doctrinal approach was used, supported by thematic and comparative analysis. It draws on primary Islamic texts, constitutions, international legal sources, and academic literature. Case studies from Indonesia and the UAE illustrate different applications of Islamic law in governance and justice. **Results:** The findings indicate that challenges stem primarily from structural, rather than theological, issues. Internally, these include stagnant education systems, fragmented financial structures, and inconsistent Sharia application. Externally, they involve widespread Islamophobia and limited global representation. **Findings and Implications:** Islamic legal norms align with democratic values such as equity, participation, and justice. Ethical tenets like *maṣlaḥah* and *shūra* support pluralistic governance. Institutional reform and contextual application of Islamic law can improve both domestic legitimacy and international engagement. **Conclusion:** Islamic legal systems hold the flexibility and strength to meet governance needs. Realizing their potential requires structural reform and aligning jurisprudence with contemporary legal frameworks. **Contribution:** This study contributes to Islamic legal scholarship by presenting a model that connects classical jurisprudence with modern constitutional practice. It adds to interdisciplinary work, promoting Islamic law in global legal discourse. **Limitations and Suggestions:** The non-empirical nature and limited jurisdictional scope of the study constrain broader generalization. Future research should incorporate empirical approaches and explore how digital innovation can support Islamic governance reforms.



Introduction

The Islamic world today confronts a multifaceted array of internal and external challenges, each carrying significant implications for its development and global engagement. These issues encompass a wide range of sectors, including education, finance, legal frameworks, and political representation.¹ Externally, the rise of Islamophobia, cultural exclusion, and the marginalization of Muslim-majority nations in global governance exacerbate these internal pressures, contributing to underdevelopment and sociopolitical fragmentation.²

The importance of tackling these intricate issues is underscored by the ability of Islamic law and constitutional principles to positively influence contemporary governance and legal progress. The principles of justice, consultation, and ethical leadership rooted in Islam can substantially enrich global legal discussions and humanitarian initiatives. Nevertheless, in spite of this potential, the Islamic world is still marginalized in key decision-making entities like the United Nations Security Council and continues to experience systemic economic reliance, indicating a disconnect between its rich civilizational legacy and its current geopolitical standing.³

This disjunction prompts the central research question: Why has the Islamic world, despite having a legal and ethical framework with global applicability, remained susceptible to

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¹ Asif Mohiuddin, "Islam and the Discursive Landscape of Globalisation," *Religion and Theology* 27, no. 1–2 (July 21, 2020): 74–113, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15743012-bja10007>; Zaini Nasohah, "Dynamics of Islamic Family Law in Facing Current Challenges in Southeast Asia," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 8, no. 1 (January 6, 2024): 1, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjkh.v8i1.16553>; Rosnani Hashim, "Rethinking Islamic Education in Facing the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century (2005)*," *American Journal of Islam and Society* 41, no. 1 (February 5, 2024): 246–63, <https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v41i1.3426>.

² Nick Hopkins and Vered Kahani-Hopkins, "Minority Group Members' Theories of Intergroup Contact: A Case Study of British Muslims' Conceptualizations of Islamophobia and Social Change," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 45, no. 2 (June 24, 2006): 245–64, <https://doi.org/10.1348/014466605X48583>; Fabio Perocco, "Anti-Migrant Islamophobia in Europe. Social Roots, Mechanisms and Actors," *REMHU: Revista Interdisciplinar Da Mobilidade Humana* 26, no. 53 (August 2018): 25–40, <https://doi.org/10.1590/1980-85852503880005303>; Goleen Samari, Héctor E. Alcalá, and Mienah Zulfacar Sharif, "Islamophobia, Health, and Public Health: A Systematic Literature Review," *American Journal of Public Health* 108, no. 6 (June 2018): e1–9, <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2018.304402>; Özyay Mehmet, "Islamic Identity and Development after the Ottomans: The Arab Middle East," *Journal of Contemporary Iraq & the Arab World* 15, no. 3 (September 1, 2021): 305–24, https://doi.org/10.1386/jciaw_00056_1.

³ Ema Srimulyani, Siti Nurhanisyyah, and Muhammad Mufti Najmul Umam Assondani, "Islam and Democracy: A Comparative Study Between the Islamic System of Governance and Modern Democracy," *JSPH: Jurnal Sosial Politik Humaniora* 1, no. 1 (January 31, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.59966/jsph.v1i1.1511>; Andrew F. March, "Modern Islamic Constitutional Theory," in *Routledge Handbook of Islamic Law* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2019; Routledge, 2019), 400–414, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315753881-26>; Sayed Abdul Qaium Sajjadi, "Principles of Governance in Islamic Political System," *Quarterly Journal of Political and International Studies* 1, no. 2 (October 1, 2024): 25–46, <https://doi.org/10.62134/srqpis/v1.i2.khatamuni.2>; A. Kumedi Ja'far et al., "The Construction of Islamic State Law in the 5.0 Era from the Perspective of Maqasid Al-Shariah," *KnE Social Sciences*, January 11, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v9i2.14966>.



fragmentation and ineffective performance within global systems? The hypothesis guiding this study suggests that the roots of the stagnation in the Islamic world are primarily structural rather than theological. Theological principles, especially the *maqāṣid al-sharīah* (objectives of Islamic law), are fundamentally aligned with contemporary democratic values and development goals. Therefore, the resolution does not lie in reforming theology, but rather in recalibrating institutional structures to enable Islamic principles to inform policy and governance.

To effectively address this issue, the study highlights the importance of enhancing constitutional integration and criminal justice systems within Muslim-majority states, aligning them with Islamic legal traditions. This approach necessitates a synthesis of traditional jurisprudential tools, such as *ijtihad* (independent reasoning), with modern legal mechanisms that promote human rights and democratic participation. Previous efforts have shown that thoughtfully implemented Islamic constitutionalism can bolster democratic structures and state legitimacy, as evidenced in diverse contexts like Indonesia and the UAE.⁴

These findings also align with broader legal discussions regarding the interaction between Islam and international law. The principles of *Siyar* (Islamic international law), which promote justice and peaceful coexistence, are increasingly recognized as pathways for constructive engagement with global governance norms. However, challenges remain due to discrepancies between secular legal assumptions and the distinctive nature of Islamic jurisprudence, particularly on issues such as child marriage and religious freedom.⁵

Recent literature indicates that Islamophobia is not merely a cultural issue but also a legal and structural barrier to the integration of Muslim communities.⁶ As a form of cultural racism, Islamophobia is reflected in discriminatory legislation, economic marginalization, and the restriction of civil liberties. Its systemic nature demands comprehensive legal reform and intercultural dialogue to protect the constitutional rights of Muslims within pluralistic societies. If this exclusionary dynamic is not addressed, efforts to reconcile Islamic principles with global

⁴ Nadirsyah Hosen, "Checks and Balances Mechanism in Islamic Constitutionalism: A Critical Reflection," *JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC STUDIES AND CULTURE* 7, no. 2 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.15640/jisc.v7n2a4>; Mohammad H. Fadel, "Islam, Constitutionalism and Democratic Self-Government," in *Routledge Handbook of Islamic Law* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2019: Routledge, 2019), 415–27, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315753881-27>; İsmail Mutlu, "Islamic Constitutionalism in Theory and Practice: The Case of Islamic Republic of Iran," *İstanbul Medeniyet Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi Dergisi* 10, no. 1 (March 26, 2025): 171–88, <https://doi.org/10.58733/imhfd.1582222>; Novendri Mohamad Nggilu et al., "Indonesia's Constitutional Identity: A Comparative Study of Islamic Constitutionalism," *De Jure: Jurnal Hukum Dan Syar'iah* 16, no. 2 (December 30, 2024): 480–500, <https://doi.org/10.18860/j-fsh.v16i2.29851>.

⁵ Mohd Hisham Mohd Kamal and Haniff Ahamat, "Modern Application of *Siyar* (Islamic Law of Nations): Some Preliminary Observations," *Arab Law Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (January 1, 2011): 423–39, <https://doi.org/10.1163/157302511X596221>; Anke I Bouzenita, "The Principle of Neutrality and 'Islamic International Law' (*Siyar*)," *Global Jurist* 11, no. 1 (January 25, 2011), <https://doi.org/10.2202/1934-2640.1377>; Mashood A. Baderin, "International Law (*Al-Siyar*)," in *Islamic Law: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press Oxford, 2021), 115–C8.P18, <https://doi.org/10.1093/actrade/9780199665594.003.0008>; Quincy Wright, "The Islamic Law of Nations. Shaybanl's *Siyar*. Translated with an Introduction, Notes, and Appendices by Majid Khadduri. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1966. Pp. Xx, 311. Index. \$8.00 ; 64 S.," *American Journal of International Law* 62, no. 2 (April 28, 1968): 521–23, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2196897>.

⁶ Steve Garner and Saher Selod, "The Racialization of Muslims: Empirical Studies of Islamophobia," *Critical Sociology* 41, no. 1 (January 7, 2015): 9–19, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920514531606>; Simon Dawes, "Islamophobia, Racialisation and the 'Muslim Problem' in France," *French Cultural Studies* 32, no. 3 (August 3, 2021): 179–86, <https://doi.org/10.1177/09571558211028202>.



standards will remain fragmented and superficial.⁷

The objective of this study is to analyze the institutional and legal frameworks that mediate the role of Islamic principles in contemporary governance, with a particular emphasis on constitutional integration and criminal law. This approach is novel in its interdisciplinary examination of both internal reforms and external engagements, as it transcends theological debates to address practical legal and structural mechanisms. By identifying areas where structural reforms can facilitate the realization of *maqāṣid al-sharīah* in statecraft, this research aims to bridge the gap between Islamic legal traditions and the demands of modern governance.

Consequently, this study supports the hypothesis that the underdevelopment of the Islamic world is not rooted in religious doctrine but rather in institutional inertia and structural fragmentation. In this context, the research will explore comparative models of Islamic constitutionalism, the reform of criminal justice in alignment with Sharia, and the repositioning of Islamic values within international legal discourse. Through this examination, it aspires to contribute to both academic and policy-oriented discussions regarding how Muslim-majority societies can reclaim their civilizational agency and engage constructively in global governance.

Method

Research Design: This study utilizes a qualitative research methodology rooted in doctrinal legal analysis, enhanced by socio-legal perspectives. It aims to explore the interpretation, application, and evolution of Islamic legal principles in addressing contemporary political, economic, and social challenges within the Islamic world. The research design is organized to critically evaluate both primary and secondary legal sources, including classical fiqh texts, national constitutions, statutory laws, and scholarly commentaries on Islamic jurisprudence. This approach facilitates a comprehensive understanding of how Islamic legal frameworks can be integrated with, or distinguished from, secular legal systems in tackling modern governance issues.⁸

Data Sources and Materials: The primary sources encompass classical Islamic legal texts, notably works on *uṣūl al-fiqh* (principles of Islamic jurisprudence), as well as contemporary constitutional documents from Muslim-majority countries (e.g., Indonesia, the UAE), and international legal treaties pertinent to human rights, economic cooperation, and criminal justice. Secondary sources consist of peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, policy reports, and literature published in databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and JSTOR.

The inclusion of Islamic legal commentaries facilitates the identification of normative principles, such as *maqāṣid al-sharīah* (objectives of Islamic law), *maṣlaḥah* (public interest), and *istiṣlāḥ* (consideration of welfare), which are central to the study's analytical framework. Contemporary legal developments—like Indonesia's experiment with regional Sharia implementation in Aceh or the hybrid governance models in countries like UEA are included to evaluate real-world applications of Islamic legal theory.

⁷ Nazia Kazi, *Islamophobia, Race, and Global Politics* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.5771/9781538157114>; J.T. Snipes, "Islamophobia in Higher Education: Combating Discrimination and Creating Understanding by Shafiqa Ahmadi & Darnell Cole Sterling," *Journal of College Student Development* 63, no. 3 (May 2022): 347–49, <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2022.0030>.

⁸ Romi Adetio Setiawan, "Impact of Islamic Jurisprudential on Traditional Financial Customs and Legal Integration in Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 13, no. 2 (December 6, 2023): 195–209, <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.132.13>; Nameer Hashim Qasim et al., "Examining Legislation and Enforcement Mechanisms to Combat International Human Trafficking from an Islamic Criminal Law Perspective," *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 10, no. 1 (April 30, 2025): 251–79, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v10i1.12544>.



Analytical Framework: The research employs thematic content analysis as its primary analytical method, facilitating a structured examination of legal texts and discourses in light of emerging themes relevant to governance, human rights, criminal justice, and economic integration. This methodology is particularly adept at assessing how Islamic principles align with, or diverge from, contemporary international legal standards.

The interpretative process is grounded in hermeneutical analysis, which traces both traditional interpretations and modern reinterpretations of key Islamic legal concepts. This includes the contributions of scholars such as Kamali and Quraishi-Landes, who advocate for a reconciliation of Islamic legal theory with democratic constitutionalism through mechanisms such as *shūra* (consultation), *ijma'* (consensus), and *maṣlaḥah* (public interest).

Case Selection and Comparative Legal Analysis: This study references cases from selected Muslim-majority countries that demonstrate various stages of Islamic legal integration. These include Indonesia, notable for its pluralistic legal framework and the decentralization of Sharia in Aceh; the UEA, which represents a theocratic model of Islamic governance; and the UAE, which showcases a hybrid legal system that merges civil law with Sharia. These cases provide valuable comparative insights into the potential and challenges of Islamic constitutionalism and criminal law enforcement. A comparative approach is essential for exploring not only the normative compatibility of Islamic legal traditions with international norms but also their practical adaptability to contemporary legal institutions. Special emphasis is placed on the concept of legal pluralism and the role of *ijtihad* in fostering context-specific legal reforms. Studies on legal pluralism inform the methodological framework for this comparative analysis.

Ethical and Epistemological Considerations: This research maintains a critical distance from ideological biases that either idealize or dismiss Islamic law. Its objective is to foster a balanced understanding that is anchored in both traditional jurisprudential integrity and contemporary legal pragmatism. Ethical considerations involve avoiding essentialism in discussions of Islamic legal traditions and ensuring that interpretations remain faithful to classical sources as well as contextual realities.

From an epistemological perspective, the research adopts a constructivist approach, recognizing that legal meanings are shaped by historical and social contexts. The inquiry places Islamic legal reasoning within the broader socio-political landscapes of the Muslim world, emphasizing that normative prescriptions should be understood in the context of historical contingencies and contemporary challenges.

Limitations of the Study: While this research draws from a diverse range of legal texts and scholarly analyses, it is limited by its non-empirical design. It does not incorporate fieldwork or interviews, which could provide additional insights into the lived experiences of legal practitioners or the communities impacted by the implementation of Islamic law. Furthermore, although comparative, the study does not seek to generalize findings across all Muslim-majority contexts but rather aims to identify illustrative patterns and conceptual innovations.

Despite these limitations, the study makes a meaningful contribution to the burgeoning literature on Islamic constitutionalism and legal reform by providing a grounded, normative, and contextually sensitive analysis of how Islamic law can address contemporary legal and governance challenges.

Results

Disparity in the Application of Islamic Legal Principles

The study further reveals a significant disparity in the interpretation and application of Islamic legal principles across various Muslim-majority jurisdictions. This inconsistency is particularly evident in the realm of criminal justice, where differing legal infrastructures lead to varied implementations of hudud, *ta'zīr*, and qisas punishments. For instance, in Aceh, Indonesia, a region with constitutional autonomy, Sharia-based penal law is enforced under state oversight.



In contrast, other regions may treat such legal frameworks as merely symbolic or absent.⁹

These inconsistencies create uncertainty regarding public perception and legal legitimacy. In certain countries, Islamic criminal law is utilized as a political instrument, which diminishes its credibility as a legitimate system of justice rooted in *maqāṣid al-sharīah*. This divergence highlights the need for renewed *ijtihad* and scholarly consensus to harmonize criminal law reform within Islamic constitutional frameworks, as suggested by Kamali and Quraishi-Landes.¹⁰

Islamophobia and the Legalization of Cultural Exclusion

A significant external challenge facing the Islamic world is the institutionalization of Islamophobia through legal and policy measures.¹¹ This study supports the findings that Islamophobia represents a form of cultural racism manifested through restrictive policies, legal discrimination, and societal marginalization. Such issues are particularly apparent in immigration laws, urban planning policies that affect mosque construction, and the imposition of restrictions on Islamic attire and dietary practices.¹²

This legal manifestation of cultural exclusion undermines the constitutional rights of Muslims in secular states and reinforces narratives of otherness.¹³ The socio-legal impact is considerable, eroding Muslims' trust in national legal institutions and increasing their social

⁹ Muhammad Ishom, "THE CONTINUITY AND CHANGE OF DIYAT AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO ISLAMIC CRIMINAL SANCTIONS IN UNDHANG-UNDHANG BANTĒN DURING THE 17th – 18th CENTURIES," *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 23, no. 1 (February 20, 2023): 38, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v23i1.17643>; Samah Al Agha, "Combating Human Trafficking in Saudi Arabia," *Access to Justice in Eastern Europe* 6, no. 5 (June 15, 2023): 117–29, <https://doi.org/10.33327/AJEE-18-6S010>; Chibli Mallat, "Mapping Saudi Criminal Law," *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 68, no. 4 (December 31, 2020): 836–92, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ajcl/avaa032>.

¹⁰ Mona Omran, "Constitutional Underpinnings of Substantive Criminal Law: A Comparative Analysis of Egypt and Saudi Arabia," *Pakistan Journal of Life and Social Sciences (PJLSS)* 22, no. 2 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.57239/PJLSS-2024-22.2.00644>; Wildani Hefni, Imam Mustofa, and Rizqa Ahmadi, "Looking for Moderate Fiqh: The Thought of Mohammad Hashim Kamali on the Reformation of Rigidity and Inflexibility in Islamic Law," *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 10, no. 1 (April 25, 2025): 30–57, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v10i1.10694>.

¹¹ Snipes, "Islamophobia in Higher Education: Combating Discrimination and Creating Understanding by Shafiqah Ahmadi & Darnell Cole Sterling"; Yuanyuan Liu, "American Islamophobia: Understanding the Roots and Rise of Fear," *Critical Sociology* 47, no. 4–5 (July 10, 2021): 819–21, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920520968273>; Christina Lienen and Samir Sweida-Metwally, "French Islamophobia: How Orthopraxy Is Conceptualized as a Public Peril," *Religions* 16, no. 1 (January 9, 2025): 64, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16010064>.

¹² Naheed Ahmed et al., "From Interpersonal Violence to Institutionalized Discrimination: Documenting and Assessing the Impact of Islamophobia on Muslim American," *Journal of Muslim Mental Health* 15, no. 2 (December 15, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.3998/jmmh.119>; Garner and Selod, "The Racialization of Muslims: Empirical Studies of Islamophobia"; Liu, "American Islamophobia: Understanding the Roots and Rise of Fear"; Todd Green, "Islamophobia and Racism in America," *Social Forces* 100, no. 2 (October 11, 2021): e3–e3, <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soy120>.

¹³ Michael Humphrey, "Culturalising the Abject: Islam, Law and Moral Panic in the West," *Australian Journal of Social Issues* 42, no. 1 (September 22, 2007): 9–25, <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1839-4655.2007.tb00036.x>; Emily Laxer, Jeffrey G. Reitz, and Jessica Stallone, "Challenging the Legitimacy of Exclusion: Muslim Women and Social Boundaries in Different Headscarf Policy Contexts," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 46, no. 5 (April 4, 2023): 987–1009, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2022.2089535>; Elisabeth Becker, "Incivility and Danger: Theorizing a Muslim Undercaste in Europe," *American Journal of Cultural Sociology* 10, no. 3 (September 16, 2022): 398–431, <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41290-021-00136-z>.

vulnerability.¹⁴ These developments present a direct challenge to the integration of Islamic values within pluralistic legal frameworks, underscoring the need for robust legal advocacy grounded in international human rights standards.¹⁵

Fragmented Representation in Global Governance

Despite representing over 20% of the global population, the Islamic world lacks cohesive representation in key international institutions.¹⁶ This study highlights the underrepresentation of Muslim-majority nations in forums such as the UN Security Council, the G7, and other global economic and legal bodies. While organizations like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) exist to provide collective representation, their diplomatic impact is often constrained by political disunity and inconsistent strategic agendas.¹⁷

Efforts to secure a permanent seat for the Islamic world in the UN Security Council, as advocated by Zaqzouq, have yet to come to fruition. This lack of institutional power significantly hinders the Islamic world's capacity to influence international legal norms, particularly those related to security, humanitarian law, and economic justice. Although countries such as Indonesia and Qatar have made attempts to enhance their influence through multilateral diplomacy and peacekeeping, these efforts tend to be fragmented and frequently do not reflect broader Islamic interests.¹⁸

Compatibility of Islamic Law with Democratic Governance

A key finding of this research is the compatibility between Islamic legal principles and modern constitutional governance. The study affirms that fundamental Islamic values such as

¹⁴ Sabah Khan, "Social Exclusion of Muslims in India and Britain," *Journal of Social Inclusion Studies* 6, no. 1 (June 6, 2020): 56–77, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2394481120944770>; Khan; Edin Kozaric, "Are Muslim Experiences Taken Seriously in Theories of Islamophobia? A Literature Review of Muslim Experiences with Social Exclusion in the West," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 47, no. 5 (April 3, 2024): 907–40, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2023.2268179>.

¹⁵ Kozaric, "Are Muslim Experiences Taken Seriously in Theories of Islamophobia? A Literature Review of Muslim Experiences with Social Exclusion in the West"; Damjan Mandelc, "Media Representations and Practices of Discrimination against Immigrants from an Intersectional Perspective," *Treatises and Documents, Journal of Ethnic Studies / Razprave in Gradivo, Revija Za Narodnostna Vprašanja* 92, no. 92 (June 1, 2024): 49–64, <https://doi.org/10.2478/tdjes-2024-0003>.

¹⁶ Douglas C. Nord, "Modern Diasporas in International Politics. Edited by Gabriel Sheffer (New York: St. Martin's, 1986. Viii, 349p. \$32.00).," *American Political Science Review* 82, no. 2 (June 2, 1988): 684–85, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1957468>.

¹⁷ Nord; Saul Jihad Takahashi, "Combating Islamophobia on the International Stage: The Need for Muslim Unity," *Journal of Strategic Studies & International Affairs* 3, no. 1 (July 31, 2023): 25–34, <https://doi.org/10.17576/sinergi.0301.2023.03>; Yusuf Ikbal Oldac, "Global Science and the Muslim World: Overview of Muslim-Majority Country Contributions to Global Science," *Scientometrics* 127, no. 11 (November 28, 2022): 6231–55, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-022-04517-0>.

¹⁸ Marina Okladnaya and Olena Hurenko, "Stages of the Formation of the Islamic Concept of International Law in the Medieval and Modern Time," *Law and Innovative Society*, no. 1 (16) (July 5, 2021), [https://doi.org/10.37772/2309-9275-2021-1\(16\)-13](https://doi.org/10.37772/2309-9275-2021-1(16)-13); Varvara AVDEEVA, "Islamic Law: Role of European Legal Universalism in Destabilizing Muslim World," *Middle & Post-Soviet East* 2, no. 2 (2023): 149–65, <https://doi.org/10.31249/j.2949-2408.2023.02.09>; Mukhtar Imam, "A Reassessment of Diplomatic Interactions and Islamic Laws of Nations in The International System," *Asian Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies* 16, no. 1 (January 2, 2022): 17–26, <https://doi.org/10.1080/25765949.2022.2059640>; Emilia Justyna Powell, "Complexity and Dissonance: Islamic Law States and the International Order," *International Studies Review* 24, no. 1 (March 12, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viac001>.



shūra (consultation), *maṣlaḥah* (public interest), and *'adl* (justice) closely align with democratic ideals, including public participation, legal equity, and the protection of rights. These principles are practically applied in jurisdictions like Indonesia, where Islamic law has been integrated into a pluralistic national framework.¹⁹

Furthermore, empirical examples from the Sharia courts in Aceh and UEA's hybrid legal model illustrate the potential for incorporating Islamic principles without compromising democratic accountability. However, challenges remain in preventing religious authorities from monopolizing legal interpretation, which could threaten civic freedoms. The research conducted on legal pluralism reinforces the idea that a balanced integration of these principles is both essential and attainable.²⁰

Islamic Economic Ethics and Financial Inclusivity

The development of sharia-compliant financial systems illustrates how Islamic principles can address contemporary socio-economic disparities. This study affirms that instruments such as zakat, waqf, and sukuk provide alternative models for wealth redistribution and sustainable financing. The Islamic banking sectors in Indonesia, Malaysia, and various Gulf nations demonstrate that Islamic finance can coexist with, and even complement, conventional financial institutions.²¹

However, these systems require enhanced institutional infrastructure, standardized regulatory practices, and technological innovations to improve efficiency and build consumer trust. The findings support the notion that when Islamic economic ethics are effectively institutionalized, they can promote inclusive growth and social equity, particularly in

¹⁹ Tasnim Abdul Rahman and Ahmad Nabil Amir, "PRINSIP PEMERINTAHAN DALAM ISLAM MENURUT MUHAMMAD ASAD," *Journal of Human Development and Communication (JoHDeC)* 13 (February 17, 2025): 20–28, <https://doi.org/10.58915/johdec.v13.2024.1826>; Abdul Samat Musa, "Constitutional Law: An Overview of the Islamic Approach and Its Contemporary Relevance," *SCIREA Journal of Sociology*, August 12, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.54647/sociology84578>; Srimulyani, Nurhanisyah, and Najmul Umam Assondani, "Islam and Democracy: A Comparative Study Between the Islamic System of Governance and Modern Democracy"; Ahmad Zuhdi et al., "Implementation of Qur'anic Principles in Modern Government Systems: A Case Study of Muslim Countries," *Journal of Noesantara Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (February 27, 2025): 12–22, <https://doi.org/10.70177/jnis.v2i1.1842>.

²⁰ Moamen Gouda and Shimaa Hanafy, "Islamic Constitutions and Democracy," *Political Research Quarterly* 75, no. 4 (December 14, 2022): 994–1005, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912921991241>; Zuhdi et al., "Implementation of Qur'anic Principles in Modern Government Systems: A Case Study of Muslim Countries"; Ahmad Suganda et al., "Community Political Participation in an Islamic Perspective," *Global International Journal of Innovative Research* 2, no. 6 (June 10, 2024): 1201–9, <https://doi.org/10.59613/global.v2i6.196>; Amyna Naphizah P. Masorong, "ISLAMIC ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN GOVERNANCE," *Advanced International Journal of Banking, Accounting and Finance* 7, no. 21 (March 30, 2025): 21–34, <https://doi.org/10.35631/AIJBAF.721002>.

²¹ Muthoifin et al., "Sharia Economic Empowerment of Low-Income Communities and Subsidy Recipients in Boyolali for Sustainable Development Goals," *Journal of Lifestyle and SDGs Review* 5, no. 1 (December 13, 2024): e02983, <https://doi.org/10.47172/2965-730X.SDGsReview.v5.n01.pe02983>; Devina Gunawan, "Sharia and Economic Equity: An Empirical Study of Income Inequality in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation," *Journal International Economic Sharia* 1, no. 2 (October 10, 2024): 60–74, <https://doi.org/10.69725/jies.v1i2.129>; Muhammed Midlaj P, "The Role of Sharia Principles in Promoting Sustainable Economic Development: A Comparative Analysis of Islamic and Non-Islamic Economies," *Al-Fadilah: Islamic Economics Journal* 2, no. 2 (January 1, 2025): 146–68, <https://doi.org/10.61166/fadilah.v2i2.31>.

underdeveloped areas of the Muslim world.²²

Legal Reform and Maqāṣid al-Sharīah as a Normative Foundation

The principle of *maqāṣid al-sharīah* serves as a normative foundation capable of guiding legal reform in diverse contexts. This study demonstrates that when legal systems prioritize the objectives of justice, human dignity, and public welfare, they enhance their legitimacy and adaptability both domestically and internationally. For example, legal reforms aimed at eradicating child marriage, improving environmental protection, and increasing access to education align strongly with maqasid-driven frameworks.²³

Furthermore, the application of *maqāṣid al-sharīah* allows Islamic law to evolve alongside contemporary ethical and legal standards. It promotes a values-based approach to governance that surpasses rigid textualism. This approach is essential for discrediting extremist interpretations and reclaiming the moral authority of Islamic law within global legal discussions.²⁴

Discussion

The findings presented in the preceding chapter illuminate the multilayered and intricately interconnected challenges facing the Islamic world. A central theme of this discussion is the acknowledgment that these challenges, encompassing internal institutional weaknesses, legal inconsistencies, and external marginalization, are not inherent to Islam as a theological framework but rather stem from the failure to effectively operationalize its principles through robust and adaptive legal and governance structures. This distinction is crucial, as it challenges

²² Hana Jaradat and Mohammad Salem Oudat, "Enhancing Clarity and Transparency in Islamic Financial Practices: The Role of Regulatory Influence," *Journal of Financial Reporting and Accounting*, January 27, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFRA-07-2024-0479>; Suaidi Suaidi, "Bridging Institutional and Regulatory Gaps: Enhancing Sharia Compliance in Islamic Financial Institutions in Indonesia," *El-Uqud: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Ekonomi Syariah* 3, no. 1 (April 24, 2025): 23–39, <https://doi.org/10.24090/eluqud.v3i1.13288>; Istianah Zainal Asyiqin, Irvan Mareto, and Manuel Beltrán Genovés, "The Role of Regulation in the Development of Sharia Fintech: A Review of Contemporary Islamic Economic Law," *Sharia Oikonomia Law Journal* 2, no. 4 (December 30, 2024): 255–70, <https://doi.org/10.70177/solj.v2i4.1241>; Faizi Faizi and Mohd Sollehudin Bin Shuib, "SHARIA GOVERNANCE IN ISLAMIC FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: A COMPARATIVE REVIEW OF MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA," *EL DINAR: Jurnal Keuangan Dan Perbankan Syariah* 12, no. 1 (April 30, 2024): 89–107, <https://doi.org/10.18860/ed.v12i1.25135>; Samsidar Samsidar et al., "System Implementation and Governance in Sharia Financial Institutions," *INVOICE : JURNAL ILMU AKUNTANSI* 7, no. 1 (March 31, 2025): 22–28, <https://doi.org/10.26618/inv.v7i1.16244>.

²³ Syaza Shukri and Meor Alif Meor Azalan, "The Application of Maqasid Al-Shariah in Multicultural Malaysia: Developing Strong Institutions for Interethnic Unity," *Contemporary Islam* 17, no. 3 (October 1, 2023): 433–50, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-023-00528-7>; Aji, "Breaking the Glass Ceiling for Indonesian Migrant Workers: Legal-Political and Maqasid Al-Shariah Analysis of Protection Policies," *Al'Adalah* 27, no. 2 (January 14, 2025): 143–65, <https://doi.org/10.35719/aladalah.v27i2.528>; JASSER AUDA, *Maqasid Al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law* (International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2008), <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvkc67tg>; Hefni, Mustofa, and Ahmadi, "Looking for Moderate Fiqh: The Thought of Mohammad Hashim Kamali on the Reformation of Rigidity and Inflexibility in Islamic Law."

²⁴ Shukri and Azalan, "The Application of Maqasid Al-Shariah in Multicultural Malaysia: Developing Strong Institutions for Interethnic Unity"; Aji, "Breaking the Glass Ceiling for Indonesian Migrant Workers: Legal-Political and Maqasid Al-Shariah Analysis of Protection Policies"; AUDA, *Maqasid Al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law*; Hefni, Mustofa, and Ahmadi, "Looking for Moderate Fiqh: The Thought of Mohammad Hashim Kamali on the Reformation of Rigidity and Inflexibility in Islamic Law."



the prevailing stereotypes that equate underdevelopment with religious determinism.²⁵ Instead, this research supports the notion that when structural and systemic issues are appropriately addressed, the Islamic world can reclaim its civilizational dynamism and make constructive contributions to global governance.

One significant implication is the necessity to reassess how Islamic law is integrated into national legal systems. The current variations in the application of Sharia across Muslim-majority nations, highlighted by examples from Indonesia and the UAE, underscore both the potential and the pitfalls of Islamic constitutionalism. While countries like Indonesia have made notable advancements in harmonizing Sharia within a pluralistic democratic framework, others have manipulated religious norms for political advantage, undermining their legitimacy and violating the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharīah*.²⁶ Foundational Islamic principles such as *shūra*, *ijma*, and *maṣlaḥah* are not only compatible with democratic values but are also essential for ensuring legitimacy and responsiveness in Islamic governance. This suggests that the recalibration of Islamic legal integration must transcend mere formalistic implementation and align functionally with justice, equity, and public welfare.²⁷

In the financial sector, the uneven development of Islamic finance poses a significant challenge to achieving socio-economic justice. While sharia-compliant financial instruments such as zakat, waqf, and sukuk provide alternative avenues for wealth distribution and ethical investment, their institutionalization has often been inconsistent across different jurisdictions. Regulatory ambiguities and limited technological integration further hinder their potential to foster financial inclusivity. The success of Indonesian Islamic banks in aligning sharia principles with national standards serves as an exemplary model for others to follow. However, comprehensive reforms are crucial to standardize regulatory practices, enhance governance, and promote cross-sector collaboration, ultimately reinforcing the legitimacy and effectiveness of

²⁵ Saïd Amir Arjomand, "Islam, Political Change and Globalization," *Thesis Eleven* 76, no. 1 (February 1, 2004): 9–28, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0725513604040108>; Munawar Iqbal and Philip Molyneux, "Challenges Facing Islamic Banking," in *Thirty Years of Islamic Banking* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2005), 105–22, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-230-50322-9_7; Murtaza Mahmood et al., "Political Dynamics in Islam: Addressing Contemporary Challenges," *GUMAN* 7, no. 1 (March 30, 2024): 272–81, <https://doi.org/10.63075/guman.v7i1.730>; Imam Sujono, "Implementing and Developing Islamic Law Internationally: Challenges in the Modern Age," *Journal of Modern Islamic Studies and Civilization* 1, no. 02 (May 31, 2023): 112–19, <https://doi.org/10.59653/jmisc.v1i02.1162>.

²⁶ Efa Rodiah Nur, "Transformation of Islamic Values in the Development of the National Legal System," 2020, <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.201113.035>; Sujono, "Implementing and Developing Islamic Law Internationally: Challenges in the Modern Age"; Nur Insani et al., "ISLAMIC LAW AND LOCAL WISDOM: EXPLORING LEGAL SCIENTIFIC POTENTIAL IN INTEGRATING LOCAL CULTURAL VALUES," *Kanun Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 26, no. 1 (April 29, 2024): 101–24, <https://doi.org/10.24815/kanun.v26i1.32930>; Khairuddin Tahmid and Idzan Fautanu, "Institutionalization of Islamic Law in Indonesia," *AL-'ADALAH* 18, no. 1 (June 29, 2021): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.24042/adalah.v18i1.8362>.

²⁷ Tooba Khalid, Dr. Muhammad Sajjad Malik, and Siddiqua Aslam Qureshi, "Islamic and Western Ideology of Democracy: A Comparative and Analytical Study," *GUMAN* 7, no. 2 (May 14, 2024): 88–100, <https://doi.org/10.63075/guman.v7i2.783>; Muhammad Syaqiq Al-Azdi Bin Abd Razak, Sharifah Hayaati Syed Ismail, and Siti Arni Basir Basir, "Harmonizing Faith and Governance: A Comprehensive Study of Islamic Governance Frameworks," *Jurnal Pengajian Islam* 17, no. 2 (December 2, 2024): 87–101, <https://doi.org/10.53840/jpi.v17i2.304>; Irhamdi Nasda, "COMPARISON OF THE CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRATIC AND SHURA SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT," *MILRev: Metro Islamic Law Review* 2, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 52, <https://doi.org/10.32332/milrev.v2i1.6862>.



Islamic finance.²⁸

The persistent challenge of Islamophobia represents a significant threat to the constitutional rights and social inclusion of Muslim communities. Legal entrenchment of cultural exclusion reflected through restrictions on religious expression, surveillance practices, and biased policy narratives creates systemic barriers that marginalize Muslims and hinder interfaith dialogue. Sikka's characterization of Islamophobia as a form of cultural racism (2022) highlights its structural nature and emphasizes the need for legal advocacy and institutional reform to address it. Such interventions should not only safeguard religious freedoms but also foster inclusive legal norms that celebrate diversity while maintaining national cohesion.²⁹

Moreover, the fragmented representation of the Islamic world within global institutions intensifies these challenges. The lack of a unified position on platforms such as the United Nations Security Council hinders the ability of Muslim-majority nations to shape international standards related to justice, security, and development. Achieving this vision, however, requires coordinated reforms in political leadership, legal capacity, and transnational solidarity.³⁰

The compatibility of Islamic legal principles with international human rights and governance standards requires a nuanced approach. Critics often assert that Islamic law is inherently incompatible with secular liberalism; however, the *maqāṣid al-sharīah* framework acts as an ethical bridge, promoting justice, human dignity, and collective welfare. Issues such as child marriage, environmental protection, and educational equity highlight how Islamic jurisprudence can adapt effectively to contemporary challenges. The hermeneutical flexibility inherent in Islamic legal reasoning, grounded in *ijtihad* and guided by public interest, permits context-sensitive interpretations that can align with global legal norms while still maintaining religious authenticity.³¹

²⁸ Salah Alhammadi, "Islamic Finance as a Driver for Enhancing Economic Sustainability and Innovation in the GCC," *Journal of Science and Technology Policy Management*, January 25, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSTPM-11-2023-0206>; Wissal Msellek, "Islamic Finance and Its Impact on Financial Inclusion," 2020, 81–90, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-39935-1_5; Nasda, "COMPARISON OF THE CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRATIC AND SHURA SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT"; Tooba Khalid, Dr. Muhammad Sajjad Malik, and Siddiqua Aslam Qureshi, "Islamic and Western Ideology of Democracy: A Comparative and Analytical Study."

²⁹ Muhammad Ibrar et al., "A Critical Analysis of Islamophobia in Gottschalk and Greenberg's Islamophobia: Making Muslims the Enemy," *The Critical Review of Social Sciences Studies* 3, no. 1 (February 11, 2025): 1848–63, <https://doi.org/10.59075/6fpezv92>; Aurelien Mondon and Aaron Winter, "Articulations of Islamophobia: From the Extreme to the Mainstream?," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 13 (October 21, 2017): 2151–79, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1312008>; Kozaric, "Are Muslim Experiences Taken Seriously in Theories of Islamophobia? A Literature Review of Muslim Experiences with Social Exclusion in the West."

³⁰ David Krogmann, "International Organizations and Education in the Islamic World," 2022, 191–215, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-78885-8_7; Mohammad Talib, "The Idea of the Muslim World: A Global Intellectual History By Cemil Aydin," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 32, no. 1 (January 1, 2021): 127–29, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/etaa048>; Muhammad Riaz Khan, Zuhana Bt Mohamed Zin, and Wan Farah Wani Wan Fakhruddin, "Media Representations of Islam and Muslims in Global Contexts (2002-2022): A Systematic Literature Review," *Studies in Media and Communication* 13, no. 1 (December 28, 2024): 284, <https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v13i1.6520>.

³¹ Fhadli Nur Hudzaifah, "Development Of Renewal In Islamic Law And Human Rights In The Modern World," *Al-Mahkamah: Islamic Law Journal* 1, no. 1 (November 28, 2023): 7–13, <https://doi.org/10.61166/mahkamah.v1i1.2>; Zumiyati Sanu Ibrahim et al., "Islamic Law and Human Rights: Convergence or Conflict?," *Nurani: Jurnal Kajian Syari'ah Dan Masyarakat* 24, no. 2 (November 26, 2024): 431–48, <https://doi.org/10.19109/nurani.v24i2.19595>; Tamyiz Mukharrom and Supriyanto Abdi, "Harmonizing Islam and Human Rights Through the Reconstruction of Classical Islamic Tradition,"



This intersectionality is especially apparent in the discourse on legal pluralism. In societies where Islamic and secular laws coexist, the challenge is to ensure coherence, complementarity, and equitable protection under the law. When effectively managed, legal pluralism enhances civic harmony and institutional legitimacy. However, uncoordinated or politicized applications of Islamic law may lead to legal fragmentation and societal polarization. Hence, legal reform must advance through inclusive dialogues among jurists, lawmakers, and civil society, aimed at developing hybrid legal models that serve diverse constituencies while remaining true to Islamic ethics.³²

The findings presented in this chapter reinforce the idea that the path to reform within the Islamic world does not lie in the rejection of its legal and moral traditions, but rather in their contextual revitalization. Islamic law provides a comprehensive framework for justice, responsibility, and communal welfare values that remain as pertinent today as they were in earlier times. The challenge for policymakers, scholars, and religious leaders is to reinterpret and institutionalize these principles in a manner that addresses the realities of modern statehood, globalization, and pluralism. By undertaking this task, the Islamic world has the potential to convert its inherent resilience into external influence, thus contributing significantly to the establishment of a just and inclusive global order.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the persistent challenges within the Islamic world stem not from religious or theological limitations but rather from institutional and structural inefficiencies. The findings underscore the necessity for legal and financial reforms, highlighting the potential of Islamic legal and ethical principles to align with democratic governance, human rights, and inclusive economic development. The research demonstrates that the values inherent in *maqāṣid al-sharīah* can serve as a normative foundation for legal reform, financial innovation, and social justice. This study contributes to a growing body of interdisciplinary scholarship aimed at repositioning Islamic legal thought within the framework of global governance by proposing a framework that harmonizes Islamic jurisprudence with contemporary legal systems. Future research should investigate empirical models for integrating Islamic law and examine the role of digital technologies in facilitating institutional reform in Muslim-majority contexts.

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³² Muneeb Ahmad, "Human Rights in Islam: Compatible and Incompatible Aspects," *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, September 2020, 133402–12, <https://doi.org/10.61841/V24I8/400248>; Fhadli Nur Hudzaifah, "Development Of Renewal In Islamic Law And Human Rights In The Modern World"; Mukharrom and Abdi, "Harmonizing Islam and Human Rights Through the Reconstruction of Classical Islamic Tradition"; Karimullah, "For True Humanity: Harmonization of Islamic Law and Human Rights Towards Universal Justice"; Arifinsyah, Dalimunthe, and Riza, "Islamic Theological Perspectives on Human Rights: Bridging the Gap between Faith and Universal Principles."



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The authors declare that they have no competing financial interests or personal relationships that could influence the work reported in this paper.

Data Availability

Data will be made available on request.

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