

Reimagining Social Justice through Islamic Ethical Leadership in Global Governance

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Abstract

This paper explains the idea of social justice from the viewpoint of Islamic ethical leadership and studies how these values can reshape global governance. The present world system has made some progress in areas like human rights, international law, and development institutions. But serious issues still exist, such as poverty, economic inequality, political instability, environmental problems, and violations of human dignity. A major reason for these challenges is the lack of true ethical leadership, which makes the current system weak and ineffective. By using the guidance of the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the opinions of classical Islamic scholars, the research shows that the Islamic concept of justice is not only about law or economy. It is a complete framework that balances rights and responsibilities, and it is rooted in the higher objectives of Shariah (Maqasid al-Shariah). The paper also compares these ideas with the theories of Western thinkers like John Rawls and Amartya Sen, to highlight both similarities and differences. In addition, the study looks at the views of Pakistani and international scholars, along with policy papers of institutions like the United Nations and the World Bank. It shows that Islamic ethical leadership can offer a practical alternative, based on principles such as accountability, collective welfare, and moral responsibility. Examples from the Muslim world are used to explain the opportunities and challenges in applying these principles at the global level. Finally, the paper gives suggestions for policymakers, religious scholars, and world leaders to rebuild global justice on stronger and more ethical foundations.

Introduction

Social justice is a basic value for the survival and growth of human societies. In every era, philosophers, thinkers, and religions have discussed what a fair society should look like and how justice can reach all people. In today's world, social justice is usually linked with equality, human rights, fair distribution of economic opportunities, and the protection of weaker groups. Institutions like the United Nations also consider social justice essential for sustainable development and global peace. But in reality, problems like poverty, class differences, environmental injustice, and the dominance of powerful nations still block the way to true justice.

From an Islamic point of view, social justice is not limited only to legal or economic matters. It is a wide-ranging principle that covers the individual, the family, and the whole society. The Qur'an describes justice as a way of getting closer to Allah: "Be just; that is nearer to piety" (Al-Nisa 4:135). The life of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the governance of the Rightly Guided Caliphs are clear examples that in Islam, justice is the foundation of leadership and government. Islamic justice is not only about legal equality but also about spiritual, moral, and social balance.

So, while at the global level social justice is often reduced to legal systems and human rights language, Islam sees it as a complete moral and divine responsibility. This viewpoint forms the background of this research: how Islamic ethical leadership can help reshape today's global governance into a more effective and just system.

Lack of Ethical Leadership in Global Governance

In the modern world, global governance is managed through different institutions, agreements, and policy frameworks. Organizations like the United Nations, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization claim to promote peace, development, and equality. But in reality, despite their presence, the world still faces serious challenges such as poverty, economic injustice, environmental crises, refugee problems, and human rights violations. This situation raises an important question: what is stopping the world from achieving true justice?

The root of these problems is not only weak policies or flawed systems, but mainly the lack of ethical leadership. When leadership is based only on power, interests, and economic control, justice and human values are pushed aside. In today's global politics, powerful nations impose their agendas on weaker states, exploitation takes the place of fair distribution of resources, and human dignity is often ignored in international relations. As a result, global institutions have also lost their neutrality and fairness.

From an Islamic perspective, the core duty of leadership is to uphold trust (Amanah) and justice ('Adl). However, the current system of global governance is far from these principles. This is the central problem that this research highlights: how the absence of ethical leadership is deepening the crisis of global justice, and how Islamic ethical leadership can fill this gap by offering a more balanced and sustainable model for the world.

Review of the Literature

❖ Islamic Sources: The Qur'an, Sunnah, and Classical Scholars on Justice and Leadership

In Islam, the concept of justice and leadership is not only a requirement for social order but also a divine responsibility. The Qur'an repeatedly connects justice with faith and piety. Allah says: "O you who believe! Stand firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even if it is against yourselves, your parents, or your relatives" (Al-Nisa 4:135). This verse shows that Islamic justice rises above personal interests or group loyalties.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also said: "The best form of jihad is to speak a word of truth before a tyrant ruler." This hadith highlights that the true spirit of leadership lies in justice and accountability, and that speaking against oppression is an essential part of Islamic ethics.

Classical scholars also discussed justice and leadership in detail. Imam al-Mawardi (d.1058), in his book *Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya*, described the main goals of the government, placing justice, trust, and the implementation of Shariah at the core of leadership. Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406), in his *Muqaddimah*, wrote that oppression is the biggest cause of the fall of states, while a just ruler brings stability and prosperity to society.

Another key principle in Islamic leadership is Shura (consultation), mentioned in Surah al-Shura (42:38): "And those who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation." This principle makes it clear that Islamic governance is not based on one person's dictatorship, but on collective wisdom and transparency.

Some modern scholars have also emphasized that the Islamic concept of justice can serve as an alternative framework for global social justice. They argue that the Maqasid al-Shariah (the protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property) provides a comprehensive model that guarantees the rights of both individuals and society.

Thus, the Qur'an, Sunnah, and classical scholarly tradition show that the aim of Islamic leadership is not merely power or political control, but justice, moral responsibility, and collective welfare. These principles can offer a strong alternative model for addressing the current crisis of global governance.

Views of Pakistani Scholars and Researchers: Islamic Governance and Justice

Pakistan is a country founded on Islamic principles and the idea of justice. Because of this, Pakistani scholars and researchers have made significant contributions to the study of Islamic governance and justice. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, repeatedly stated that the purpose of Pakistan was not just to create a state structure, but to establish a society based on the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, where justice and equality are practiced (Jinnah 1947).

Among Pakistani Islamic thinkers, Allama Syed Abul A'la Maududi (1903–1979) is especially notable. In his writings, he explained that governance in Islam is based on the principle of “Caliphate according to the Prophetic Model”, where rulers serve the people and are accountable before Allah (Maududi 1960). According to Maududi, the main goal of an Islamic state is to establish justice and protect the objectives of Shariah.

Similarly, Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah, while researching Islamic state structures, argued that Islamic governance is based on the supremacy of law and public consultation (Shura) (Hamidullah, 1973). Researchers like Dr. Fateh Muhammad Malik and Dr. Israr Ahmad also emphasized that Pakistan can achieve real social justice only when leadership is founded on moral principles and the state ensures equality among its citizens (Malik, 1998).

In recent times, scholars like Dr. Khurshid Ahmad and Javed Ahmad Ghamidi have also provided valuable insights on Islamic governance. Dr. Khurshid Ahmad believes that managing economy and politics without moral principles increases injustice (Ahmad, 2001). Javed Ahmad Ghamidi emphasizes that the purpose of an Islamic state is not to impose control over individuals, but to ensure justice, transparency, and public service (Ghamidi, 2010).

The views of Pakistani scholars show that Islamic governance should not be seen merely as a political theory, but as a complete framework for social justice and ethical leadership. This perspective provides an important foundation for this research on how Islamic principles can make governance more just at the global level.

International Research: Islamic Ethical Leadership and Governance

At the international level, many studies on Islamic ethical leadership and governance have shown that Islam is not only a religious or spiritual system, but also offers an alternative framework for global social justice.

Dr. John Esposito and John Voll, in their book *Islam and Democracy*, argued that Islamic principles such as consultation (Shura), accountability, and justice are close to universal standards of democracy and transparency. Yet, in the West, Islam is often seen as non-democratic (Esposito, & Voll, 1996). They believe that if the principles of Islamic ethical leadership are properly understood, they can help address the crisis of global governance.

Similarly, Anwar Ibrahim (former Prime Minister of Malaysia and a well-known thinker) connected Islamic governance with just and transparent leadership. He emphasized that the Muslim world can play an effective role at the global level only if Maqasid al-Shariah (objectives of Islamic law) are included in policymaking (Ibrahim, 2004).

International institutions such as the Institute of Policy Studies (UK) and the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) have also researched Islamic ethical leadership. According to them, leadership in Islam is not about the desire for power, but about service and trust (Amanah)—values that are often missing in modern governance models.

Dr. Tariq Ramadan, in his book *Islam and the Arab Awakening*, also argued that leadership rooted in Islamic ethics can provide an alternative to the current global political order—an alternative based not on power and self-interest, but on morality and justice (Ramadan, 2012).

Moreover, international scholars highlight that there are several common points between Islamic governance and Western theories of justice, such as respect for human dignity, equality, and collective welfare. The difference, however, is that Islam grounds these principles in divine and moral foundations, while the West usually limits them to secular and legal frameworks (Kamali, 2010).

These international studies make it clear that if Islamic ethical leadership is given proper space in global academic and policy debates, current governance systems can be made more balanced and just.

Western Theories of Justice and Comparative Analysis

In Western thought, the idea of justice has been a central topic of philosophy for centuries. John Rawls, in his famous book *A Theory of Justice* (1971), described justice through the principle of “justice as fairness.” According to him, a just society is one where laws and institutions give more protection to the weak and disadvantaged, and where resources are distributed fairly (Rawls, 1971). Rawls introduced concepts like the “Original Position” and the “Veil of Ignorance,” which mean that if people make decisions without knowing their personal benefits, they will naturally choose fair laws (Freeman, 2007).

Amartya Sen, in his book *The Idea of Justice* (2009), presented a different approach, called the Capability Approach. For him, justice is not only about equal distribution of resources, but about making sure every person has the real ability to use their potential and live a fulfilling life (Sen, 2009). This approach has influenced global discussions on human development and shaped tools like the Human Development Index (HDI).

When compared with the Islamic concept of justice, both similarities and differences appear. For example, both Rawls and Sen emphasize equality and basic human rights, and Islam also declares justice and equality as divine commands. However, Western theories are mostly built on secular and social contract foundations, while Islam considers justice as a divine trust and moral duty (Hallaq, 2013). Moreover, through the *Maqasid al-Shariah* (objectives of Shariah), Islam ensures not only individual rights but also collective welfare—something that is often weaker in Western models (Kamali, 2008).

It can therefore be said that both Islamic justice and Western theories play an important role in global debates on justice. But the Islamic perspective is broader and built on moral and spiritual foundations, while Western theories lean more toward legal and social frameworks.

The existing body of research on social justice and leadership shows that both Islamic and Western intellectual traditions have played an important role in this debate. The Qur'an, Sunnah, and classical scholars have outlined comprehensive principles of justice and governance, while Pakistani and international researchers have tried to explain these principles in the modern state and global context. Western thinkers like John Rawls and Amartya Sen have also presented theories of justice from philosophical and practical perspectives. However, despite this wide body of work, some important areas remain underexplored:

- Application of Islamic Ethical Leadership at the global level: Most research discusses Islamic justice at the state level, but very little has focused on how it can be applied in global governance (Kamali, 2010).
- Lack of comparative analysis: While some studies compare Islamic and Western ideas of justice, they have rarely examined these comparisons in the context of institutions like the United Nations or the World Bank (Esposito, & Voll, 1996).
- Absence of case studies: There is research on partial or limited implementation of Islamic principles in countries like Pakistan, Malaysia, and Indonesia, but few studies connect these cases to the global framework of justice (Ibrahim, 2004).

- Shortage of policy recommendations: Much of the work remains theoretical or historical. There are very few practical proposals on how Islamic ethical leadership principles can be integrated into global governance (Ramadan, 2012).

This research gap highlights the need to see Islamic ethical leadership not only as a moral or religious idea but also as a practical model for global justice. This study aims to address these gaps by presenting a comparative framework between Islamic and Western thought that can guide a more just and ethical system of global governance.

Methodology

❖ Research Design: Qualitative and Based on Secondary Sources

This study uses a Qualitative Research Design, because the topic deals more with theoretical, intellectual, and ethical aspects than with numerical data. Subjects like social justice and ethical leadership are better understood through analytical and interpretive methods rather than quantitative measurements. For this reason, the research follows an exploratory and interpretive approach, to deeply explain concepts of justice and leadership from both Islamic and Western perspectives.

In addition, this study is mainly based on Secondary Data. This means it does not involve direct surveys, interviews, or fieldwork. Instead, it relies on existing literature such as authentic books, scholarly articles, and institutional reports. The choice of this method has several reasons:

- Nature of the subject: Since social justice and Islamic ethical leadership are philosophical and moral topics, they require more conceptual and analytical study rather than empirical data collection (Creswell, 2014).
- Availability of authentic sources: Islamic sources (the Qur'an, Hadith, and works of jurists), classical and modern scholarship, as well as reports from international institutions (like the United Nations and the World Bank) already provide rich material for analysis (Kamali, 2008).
- Global perspective: As the research aims to examine Islamic ethical leadership in the context of global governance, it is more useful to study experiences from different countries and international reports rather than limited fieldwork (Esposito, & Voll, 1996).

Under this design, the method is to collect material from various sources, analyze it, and then compare Islamic and Western theories to highlight both similarities and differences. The study also explores how the principles of Islamic ethical leadership can be applied to global policymaking and governance.

Therefore, this research is not based on any specific population or sample, but is a conceptual and theoretical study that aims to represent the Islamic viewpoint in global debates. This approach helps in building a strong theoretical framework while also addressing the practical challenges of the current world system from an Islamic perspective.

❖ Sources

The sources used in this research are of different types to make the study broad and comprehensive. They can be divided into four main categories:

• Islamic Sources

The foundation of this research is the Qur'an and Sunnah. The Qur'an repeatedly highlights principles of justice and leadership, while the Hadith explains the duties of rulers and the importance of fairness. In addition, classical scholars such as Imam al-Mawardi (Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya), Ibn Taymiyyah (Al-Siyasah al-Shar'iyah), and Ibn Khaldun (Al-Muqaddimah) are included as primary references (Al-Mawardi, 1983, Ibn

Khaldun 2005, Ibn Taymiyyah 1998). These sources provide the theoretical framework of Islamic justice and leadership.

- **Policy Documents and Reports**

In today's world, much of the information about governance and social justice comes from policy reports. This study will make use of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Reports, the World Bank's World Development Indicators, and OECD governance reports (United Nations 2020, World Bank. 2021). These materials help to understand the current global structures and their shortcomings.

- **Academic Journals and Research Articles**

International journals and scholarly articles are also key sources for this study. Research published in journals such as Journal of Islamic Studies, Islamic Law and Society, and Global Governance will be used (Journal of Islamic Studies, Global Governance Journal). These works bring forward comparative analysis between Islamic and Western theories and highlight modern academic debates.

- **Modern Scholars and Research Institutions**

International Islamic research institutions such as the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) and the Islamic Research and Training Institute (IRTI) provide valuable studies on Islamic ethical leadership and governance. Similarly, the writings of Western scholars like John Esposito, Amartya Sen, and John Rawls also provide a comparative perspective (IIIT.2008, Esposito, J. 2011).

Analytical Framework: Maqasid al-Shariah and Ethical Leadership Models

To achieve the objectives of this research, a strong analytical framework is required. This framework is based on two main components:

- Maqasid al-Shariah (Objectives of Islamic Law)
- Ethical Leadership Models

Maqasid al-Shariah as a Framework

The aim of Islamic law and governance is not only to enforce legal rules but to establish principles that ensure human welfare and collective justice. Imam al-Shatibi (Al-Muwafaqat) and other jurists outlined five major objectives of Shariah:

- Protection of Faith (Hifz al-Din)
- Protection of Life (Hifz al-Nafs)
- Protection of Intellect (Hifz al-'Aql)
- Protection of Lineage and Honor (Hifz al-Nasl/Ird)
- Protection of Wealth (Hifz al-Mal). (Al-Shatibi, (1997)

These five objectives are the foundation of Islamic justice. Modern scholars such as Mohammad Hashim Kamali have expanded them to include environmental care, human dignity, and collective welfare (Kamali, 2008). In this research, these objectives will be used as a benchmark to analyze where global governance falls short, and how Islamic principles can fill those gaps.

Ethical Leadership Models

In modern management sciences, several leadership models are widely studied, including:

- Transformational Leadership – focuses on a leader's ability to inspire and transform people's vision and character. (Bass, 1990).
- Servant Leadership (Robert Greenleaf) – emphasizes that the true purpose of leadership is service, not power or personal gain.
- Ethical Leadership (Brown et al., 2005) – defined as leadership based on fairness, honesty, and transparency. (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005).

Although these models were developed in modern management studies, they closely connect with Islamic ethical leadership. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "The leader of a people is their servant," which aligns directly with Servant Leadership. Similarly, the governance of the Rightly Guided Caliphs is a strong example of Transformational Leadership, as their leadership reshaped society and people's values.

Integration of Islamic and Modern Models

This research combines both elements to build its analytical framework:

- Maqasid al-Shariah – as the moral and divine foundation.
- Modern Ethical Leadership Models – as practical and administrative strategies.

By bringing these together, the study shows that Islamic ethical leadership is not only a moral responsibility but also a practical method to establish justice in global governance. This framework helps examine how far international institutions (like the UN, World Bank, etc.) align with these principles and where major gaps exist.

Conclusion

Thus, the analytical framework of this research integrates the comprehensive vision of Islamic thought with the practical utility of modern management models. This combination allows us not only to critique the current global governance crisis but also to offer a positive alternative framework—one that is rooted in ethics, justice, and collective welfare.

Findings & Analysis

❖ Failures of Current Global Governance in Ensuring Justice

Global institutions such as the United Nations (UN), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) often claim to promote peace, justice, and development worldwide. However, in practice, their decisions and policies have created serious failures that have prevented the establishment of true justice at the global level.

❖ Economic Inequality

One of the biggest failures of global governance is economic inequality. Although programs have been launched to reduce poverty and promote development, the policies of the World Bank and IMF have often increased the debt burden on developing countries. Harsh economic conditions under Structural Adjustment Programs weakened poor nations' economies and deepened class divisions (Stiglitz, 2002).

❖ Dominance of Powerful Nations

The decisions of the UN are heavily influenced by powerful states, especially the permanent members of the Security Council. The use of veto power often reduces global justice to the interests of strong nations. As a result, the voices of smaller and poorer countries are silenced, and justice becomes only a slogan (Weiss, 2013).

❖ Human Rights Violations

Although the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is widely celebrated, global institutions have shown silence or bias in crises such as Palestine, Kashmir, Syria, and Yemen. This double standard has badly damaged public trust in the global justice system (Falk, R. 2000).

❖ Environmental Injustice

On climate change and environmental justice, many agreements have been made (such as the Paris Agreement), but implementation has been weak. Developed nations—responsible for most of the pollution—avoid taking full responsibility, while developing countries suffer the worst consequences (Sachs, 2015).

❖ Lack of Transparency and Accountability

Decisions in global institutions are often influenced by bureaucracy and interest groups. The lack of transparency in policymaking and weak accountability have made these institutions ineffective. As a result, politics of power and capital dominate instead of justice (Woods, N. 2006).

Summary

These failures show that the current system of global governance lacks moral foundations. Global institutions fail to deliver justice because they are driven by power and interests rather than fairness and ethical values. This is the gap that Islamic ethical leadership can fill by offering an alternative framework based on justice and morality.

Principles of Islamic Ethical Leadership as an Alternative Framework

In Islam, leadership is not about power or authority alone—it is a trust (amanah) and a service. The Qur'an commands: "Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due, and when you judge between people, judge with justice" (Al-Nisa 4:58).¹ This verse makes it clear that the purpose of governance is not the continuation of power, but the fulfillment of justice and trust.

❖ Accountability & Trust (Amanah)

In the Islamic view, leadership is an amanah (trust) for which rulers are accountable before Allah and the people. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "Every one of you is a shepherd, and every one of you will be asked about his flock." (Sahih Bukhari, Kitab al-Ahkam, Hadith: 893) This means rulers must prioritize collective welfare over personal interest.

❖ Shura & Transparency

Consultation (shura) is a key pillar of Islamic governance. The Qur'an (42:38) describes believers as those "who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation." (Al-Qur'an, Al-Shura:38). This principle shows that governance must be based on collective wisdom and transparency. In modern terms, this is close to the idea of participatory governance.

❖ Justice & Equality

Justice is the most central principle in Islamic leadership. The Qur'an repeatedly commands establishing justice, describing it as closest to piety. In the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, justice and equality were practiced so strongly that even rulers and common citizens were equal before the law (Maududi, 1960). This principle is consistent with today's universal standards of human rights.

❖ **Service & Public Welfare**

In Islam, rulers are described as servants of the people, not their masters. Caliph Umar (RA) famously said: “If even a dog were to die thirsty by the banks of the Euphrates, Umar would be held responsible.” (Ibn Kathir. *Al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah*, Vol. 7) This highlights that leadership is about service, not privilege—an idea strongly aligned with modern models like Servant Leadership and Ethical Leadership.

❖ **Maqasid-oriented Policy**

The strongest feature of Islamic ethical leadership is that it is based on the Maqasid al-Shariah (objectives of Islamic law). These include protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and wealth (Kamali, 2008). These objectives provide a holistic ethical foundation for policymaking and global governance.

Summary

These principles show that Islamic ethical leadership provides an alternative framework to address the crisis of justice in today’s global governance. While the current world system is built on power and interests, Islam emphasizes trust, transparency, equality, and service. If these principles are applied in global institutions, a more balanced, transparent, and just system can emerge.

Case Studies: Pakistan, Malaysia, and Indonesia (Role in OIC and Global Forums)

❖ **Pakistan**

Pakistan was founded on the principles of Islam and social justice. The Objectives Resolution (1949) clearly stated that sovereignty belongs only to Allah, and it is the duty of the state to establish a system based on justice and fairness (Government of Pakistan,

1949). On the global stage, Pakistan has repeatedly raised its voice at the OIC and the United Nations, especially on issues like Palestine, Kashmir, and human rights, in line with Islamic principles. However, at the domestic level, political instability and corruption have prevented full implementation of these values. Even so, Pakistan continues to put forward the case for “Islamic ethical governance” at the international level (Weiss, 2015).

❖ **Malaysia**

Malaysia is often seen as a successful example of a Muslim state where Islamic principles are combined with modern development to create a balanced model. Former Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad’s “Vision 2020” emphasized not only economic progress, education, and technology but also justice and transparency (Mahathir Mohamad, 1991). On the OIC platform, Malaysia actively promoted economic cooperation among Muslim countries and supported the growth of Islamic finance. Because of its practical experience in Islamic banking and ethical leadership, Malaysia is viewed as a role model for other Muslim nations (Hassan, 2011).

❖ **Indonesia**

Indonesia, the world’s largest Muslim-majority country, has tried to combine democratic values with Islamic principles to create a balanced governance system. It has played an active role in the OIC and raised its voice for justice on global issues such as Palestine (Anwar, 2010). Indonesia has also promoted religious harmony and justice through initiatives like Interfaith Dialogue. Within the country, Islamic organizations have worked to make governance more transparent and service-oriented, reflecting the essence of Islamic ethical leadership (Hefner, 2000).

These three case studies show that, despite internal challenges and global pressures, Muslim countries have demonstrated that Islamic principles of ethical leadership can play a positive role on the world stage. The

experiences of Pakistan, Malaysia, and Indonesia highlight the potential of applying Islamic governance values in institutions like the OIC and the UN.

Implications for Global Justice Architecture

If the principles of Islamic ethical leadership are integrated into the framework of global governance, they can bring several important impacts. These effects are not only theoretical but also practical, making international institutions more transparent, fair, and grounded in human values.

❖ Greater Transparency and Accountability in Global Institutions

In Islam, leadership is a trust (amanah). If this principle is applied to global institutions such as the UN, IMF, and World Bank, it would increase transparency in decision-making and reduce the dominance of powerful nations. This would build greater trust at the global level (Weiss, 2013).

❖ Fair Distribution of Resources

The Maqasid al-Shariah emphasize the protection of wealth and collective welfare. If this principle is incorporated into global economic policies, resources would be distributed more fairly. For example, loans and aid programs could be based on real human needs rather than the political interests of powerful states (Stiglitz, 2002).

❖ Protection of Human Dignity

Islamic ethical leadership considers human dignity as a core principle. If integrated into the global human rights system, it could help reduce double standards. This would allow more fair treatment of issues such as Palestine, Kashmir, and refugee crises (Falk, 2000).

Promotion of Global Peace and Harmony

In Islamic teachings, justice is the foundation of peace. If this principle is included in the global justice system, conflicts could be resolved through fairness and dialogue instead of military force. This would significantly increase the chances of lasting world peace (An-Na'im, 2008).

Sustainable Development and Environmental Justice

Islamic principles also stress the protection of the earth and environment. If this perspective is applied to global environmental agreements, developed countries would take greater responsibility, and climate change could be addressed as part of a broader framework of global justice (Sachs, 2015).

These implications show that Islamic ethical leadership can make the global justice framework more comprehensive, transparent, and sustainable. It can reduce the imbalance in the current world system and create a global order based not only on power but also on human values and justice.

Discussion

❖ Comparative Analysis with Western Theories of Justice

Both Islamic and Western intellectual traditions have presented deep discussions on the idea of justice. In Western thought, John Rawls and Amartya Sen are considered two of the most important modern thinkers on justice.

❖ John Rawls' Theory

In his famous book *A Theory of Justice* (1971), Rawls presented the concept of "Justice as Fairness." According to him, a just society is one where social and economic inequalities are acceptable only if they benefit the

weaker sections of society. His idea of the “Veil of Ignorance” explains that if people create laws without knowing their personal status or interests, they will naturally choose fair and just principles (Rawls, 1971).

❖ **Amartya Sen’s Theory**

Amartya Sen, in *The Idea of Justice* (2009), introduced a different view called the Capability Approach. He argued that justice means ensuring that every individual has the opportunity to improve their life and use their capabilities (Sen, 2009). This approach has greatly influenced global development measures such as the Human Development Index (HDI).

Comparison with the Islamic Concept

From an Islamic perspective, justice is not only a legal or economic framework but also a moral and divine responsibility. The Qur’an says: “Be just; that is nearer to piety” (Al Qur’an Al-Nisa 4:135). According to Islam, humans are not only part of a social contract but also accountable before the Creator.

There are similarities and differences between the two approaches:

- Similarities: Both Islamic and Western theories stress equality and human dignity.
- Differences: The Western model is built on secular and social contract foundations, while the Islamic model is based on divine and moral responsibility. It includes not only worldly welfare but also success in the Hereafter (Kamali, 2008).

Thus, both Islam and Western thought promote justice, but Islam presents it as a more comprehensive and holistic framework.

Challenges in Implementing Islamic Models at the Global Level

The principles of Islamic ethical leadership and justice provide a strong alternative for global governance because of their comprehensive and divine foundation. However, putting these principles into practice on a global scale is not easy. There are several barriers and challenges in the way:

❖ **Internal Divisions in the Muslim World**

Muslim countries are divided politically, ideologically, and economically. For example, Gulf states follow one political-economic model, while South Asian and Middle Eastern countries face different sets of challenges. Because of this division, presenting a united Islamic framework at the global level becomes difficult (Esposito, & Voll, 1996).

❖ **Western Influence on Global Institutions**

Most global institutions (UN, IMF, World Bank, WTO) are built on Western political and economic philosophies. Integrating Islamic models into these institutions is difficult since their structures are largely based on secular, capitalist, or liberal principles (Weiss, 2013).

Global Power Balance

Powerful nations dominate global institutions through military, economic, and political influence. Policies based on Islamic principles often fail to take shape because of veto powers or external pressure. As a result, the system of power continues to outweigh justice (Falk, 2000).

❖ **Islamophobia and Misconceptions**

Western media and some governments frequently associate Islamic principles with extremism or authoritarianism. Because of this, presenting Islamic ethical leadership as a positive and practical model for global governance becomes a major challenge (Said, 1997).

❖ **Internal Weaknesses of Muslim Countries**

Corruption, lack of transparency, and human rights violations are problems within many Muslim countries themselves. When the Muslim world struggles to fully implement the Islamic model domestically, it becomes even harder to represent it at the global stage (Hefner, 2000).

❖ **Lack of Intellectual and Academic Dialogue**

Meaningful dialogue between Islamic and Western scholars remains limited. Many discussions are defensive or confrontational, rather than constructive. Because of this, the Islamic model faces challenges in gaining acceptance within the global academic and policy community (An-Na'im, 2008).

These challenges show that while Islamic ethical leadership offers a strong solution to the crisis of global justice, practical implementation requires internal reforms, constructive dialogue, and transparent cooperation with global institutions. Otherwise, Islamic models will remain at a theoretical level without significant real-world impact.

Policy Implications for Muslim Societies and Global Governance

If the principles of Islamic ethical leadership are included in policymaking, their effects will be seen on two levels: (1) within Muslim societies and (2) in global governance institutions.

❖ **Policy Implications for Muslim Societies**

Transparent Governance:

Muslim countries must adopt shura (consultation), accountability, and transparency as basic principles in their internal governance. Without tackling corruption and lack of transparency, the model of Islamic leadership cannot work effectively (Weiss, 2015).

Islamic Economy and Welfare Institutions:

Institutions like zakat, sadaqat, and waqf should be modernized and made more effective to reduce economic inequality. Strengthening interest-free financial systems and Islamic banking is also necessary (Hassan, 2011).

Leadership Development and Education:

Educational programs should be introduced at the policy level to teach younger generations Islamic ethics and leadership principles. This would not only prepare future leaders but also increase social awareness (Kamali, 2008).

Justice-Based Legal Framework:

States should create laws that ensure equality and justice for all citizens. The legal system should go beyond punishment and focus on protecting fundamental rights.

❖ **Policy Implications for Global Governance**

Integrating Islamic Principles into Global Policies:

The Maqasid al-Shariah can be aligned with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For example, protection of life can be linked to health and environmental policies, while protection of wealth can support economic justice (Sachs, 2015).

Fair Representation in Global Institutions:

Decision-making in the UN and other organizations should not be dominated by powerful countries but based on equal representation. From an Islamic perspective, every nation and individual has value, regardless of size or power (Esposito, & Voll, 1996).

Dialogue between the Islamic World and the West:

There should be policy-level dialogue to bring Islamic and Western theories of justice closer together. This can help build a shared policy framework acceptable to all sides.

Environmental and Economic Justice:

Islamic principles give special importance to protecting the earth and the environment. If adopted globally, they would push developed nations to take greater responsibility and help reduce economic injustice (An-Na'im, 2008).

The policy implications show that the principles of Islamic ethical leadership are not only religious or theoretical but also practical. They can improve governance within Muslim societies and make global institutions more transparent and fair. However, this requires internal reform in the Muslim world and the promotion of constructive dialogue at the global level.

Conclusion & Recommendations

❖ Summary of Findings

This research shows that the current system of global governance has failed to establish true justice. Institutions such as the UN, IMF, and World Bank claim to promote fairness and equality, but their policies largely serve the interests of powerful nations. Economic inequality, human rights violations, environmental injustice, and lack of transparency are clear examples of these failures.

Islamic ethical leadership provides an alternative framework based on justice, equality, trust, and service. The Qur'an, Sunnah, and classical scholars emphasize that leadership is not about power but about amanah (trust), where rulers are accountable both to the people and to Allah.

The case studies of Pakistan, Malaysia, and Indonesia show that although practical challenges remain, better governance models can be shaped through Islamic principles. Western theories—such as Rawls' Justice as Fairness and Sen's Capability Approach—share some similarities with Islam, but Islam offers a more comprehensive and morally grounded framework.

Recommendations for Policymakers, Scholars, and Global Leaders For Policymakers

Transparent Governance: Ensure consultation (shura) and accountability are core principles in policymaking.

Islamic Economy: Strengthen institutions such as zakat, waqf, and Islamic banking to reduce poverty and inequality.²

Justice-Based Laws: Pass laws that guarantee equality and protect the basic rights of all citizens.

❖ For Scholars

Ijtihad for Modern Challenges: Scholars should reinterpret Islamic principles to address today's global issues.

Interfaith Dialogue: Present Islam's perspective in peaceful and constructive ways to counter Islamophobia.

Training in Social Leadership: Introduce leadership courses in madrasas and universities to prepare the next generation of ethical leaders.

❖ **For Global Leaders**

End Double Standards: Apply human rights and international law equally to all, not only in favor of powerful states.

Include Islamic Principles: Align the Maqasid al-Shariah with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Environmental Justice: Hold developed countries more responsible so that the burden of climate change does not fall on weaker nations.

Suggestions for Future Research

Expand Case Studies: Future studies should include more Muslim countries (e.g., Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Qatar) to provide a wider comparative analysis.

Empirical Research: Fieldwork, surveys, and interviews can assess how people perceive and expect Islamic leadership and justice in their daily lives.

Study of Global Institutions: Explore in greater detail how organizations such as the UN, IMF, and World Bank could incorporate Islamic models at the policy level.

Interdisciplinary Research: Link Islamic justice with economics, environment, and international relations to develop new frameworks.

Digital Governance and Islam: Examine how Islamic principles can be applied in the modern age of Artificial Intelligence and e-governance.

Conclusion

This research concludes that Islamic ethical leadership provides a strong alternative to address the crisis of global justice. However, its implementation requires internal reform, intellectual dialogue, and constructive cooperation with global institutions. If the Muslim world overcomes its internal challenges and plays a positive role internationally, a more just and balanced world order can become possible.

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