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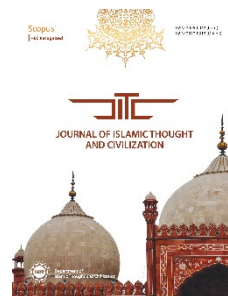
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Altruism and Social Cohesion: An Islamic Perspective of Charitable Acts for Sustainable Development

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the role of altruism in Islam and its impact on achieving sustainable development goals. It highlights altruism as a catalyst for fostering positive Islamic social relationships and its significant role in promoting societal peace. The current research explores the topic from two key perspectives: Islam's comprehensive framework for social harmony, which serves as the foundation for social charity, and its encouraging charitable actions through socioeconomic and educational means. Thus, by using a historical method to review previous studies, the research focuses on faith, legislation, and diversity in Islam. The emphasis is on promoting social peace through conflict resolution, positive communication, advocacy for justice, and recognizing diversity as a social asset. The study also examines the role of Islam in combating poverty, emphasizing aid to needy people as a required act of worship. Additionally, it analyzes the Islamic economic system's balance between individual property rights and wealth distribution. The paper outlines educational strategies within families, mosques, and schools to foster charitable attitudes and behaviours among students. The study further underscores a series of Islamic principles that place charity at the core of social relationships, spanning familial, social, economic, and educational dimensions, which are crucial in meeting sustainable development goals. The results show Islam's approach towards human behaviour, centralizing altruism in its teachings. Through its intellectual, moral, and legal systems, Islam promotes social harmony, peace, and cooperation, urging preventive measures against conflict while emphasizing education in fostering charitable values in families, mosques, and schools.

Keywords: altruism, Islamic Perspective, Islamic Education, sustainable development, social relationships, social harmony

Introduction

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) aims to enhance educational institutions' contribution to addressing global development challenges.¹ Researchers have argued that UNESCO's seventeen goals for sustainable development are not isolated; instead, they form a complex web of interconnected responsibilities and concerns. Shaped by its intellectual, legislative, and ethical system, Islamic education significantly shapes our understanding of these goals. This system places the principle of 'altruism' as a central factor in motivating individuals and institutions towards attaining SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals). The study aimed to clarify the role of altruism, one of the Islamic principles, in accomplishing critical sustainable development goals at the social level, such as eradicating poverty, ensuring food security, and promoting social peace.

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¹Marco Rieckmann, *Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives* (UNESCO publishing, 2017), 18.

It can be asserted that Islam, with its intellectual, devotional, legislative, and moral system, has created a comprehensive human framework for various aspects of life. Islam has embedded the concept of altruism as a fundamental element of its ethical system, representing its spirit and essence; consequently, influencing all facets of life.²

Therefore, as Al-Jayyousi highlights,³ Islam's philosophy of social relationships is rooted in its foundations of faith and devotion. These form an integrated system that strives ultimately to achieve the goal of attaining what the Holy Qur'an refers to as "the good life." As envisioned in Islam, a 'good life' constitutes a harmonious system of positive social relationships, a specific level of social well-being, and the emergence of manifestations, such as cooperation, love, productive work, tranquility, and satisfaction. This stands in contrast to manifestations of discontent, conflict, hatred, and selfishness. Islam's perspective on the concept of a 'good life', which is seen as the advanced stage of sustainable development, transcends physical indicators, such as per capita income levels, health services, and forms of education. It encompasses the psychological aspects of society and encourages a general atmosphere of cooperation, love, and tranquility.⁴

Contemporary philosophies and ideologies, led by capitalism and socialism, have endeavoured to bring human societies to a state of well-being and progress. This aims to alleviate longstanding concerns, particularly poverty and conflict. These efforts may yield significant gains within a certain period.⁵

The researcher deduced from global statistics on poverty, unemployment, crime, suicide, diseases, victims of conflicts, illiteracy rates, and the decline in services at the level of a single country or globally that a significant imbalance exists in the functioning of political, economic, and social systems. The promises made by capitalist globalization have proven insufficient in solving the problem, and such promises have exacerbated various global issues. Approximately 1.1 billion people across 110 countries live below the poverty line. However, after the worldwide pandemic, millions lack employment opportunities to fulfil their basic needs.⁶

The world is still struggling with an increase in the number of crimes, such as theft, drug trafficking, human trafficking, and murder. Ongoing international disagreements, conflicts, and wars, including the most recent Russian-Ukrainian war, has made global problems, especially those related to economics and security, have worsened the scenario.⁷

The expansion and dissemination of capitalist ideology during and after the Cold War seems to have made it the principal tool, which states employed to shape their intellectual, social, and economic policies. It proved that capitalism is an unfit philosophy to achieve satisfaction according

²Mohd Zuhdi Marsuki, "Religious Agendas towards Sustainable Development: An Islamic Perspective," *Malaysian Journal of Science and Technology Studies* 7 (January 2009): 22.

³Odeh Rashed Al-Jayyousi, *Islam and Sustainable Development* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 165-168, <https://doi.org/10.35648/20.500.12413/11781/ii028>.

⁴Zubair Hasan, "Sustainable Development from an Islamic Perspective: Meaning, Implications, and Policy Concerns," *Journal of King Abdulaziz University: Islamic Economics* 19, no. 1 (November 2006): 18.

⁵Philip Brown, and Hugh Lauder, *Capitalism and Social Progress: The Future of Society in a Global Economy* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 6.

⁶Sabina Alkire, Adriana Conconi, and Suman Seth, "Multidimensional Poverty Index 2014: Brief Methodological note and Results," *OPHI Briefing* 19 (2014): 1-18, <https://doi.org/10.35648/20.500.12413/11781/ii028>.

⁷Yangyang Chen et al., "Impact Assessment of Energy Sanctions in Geo-Conflict: Russian-Ukrainian War," *Energy Reports* 9 (December 2023): 3082, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.egyr.2023.01.124>.

to sustainable development indicators, whether at the country level or the global level. Currently, the comprehensive view on the distribution of wealth is either the accumulation of wealth among a group of members of society or it is at the expense of other members or that major countries exploit wealth at the expense of poor countries, particularly in Africa and Asia. This scenario demonstrates a shortcoming of the moral aspect of society whereby some societies have excessively luxurious life standards while others live below the poverty line.⁸ In principle, Islam has considered and legitimized this worldwide imbalance. Therefore, there is a need for holy and moral legislation to overcome it.

The indicators of development and decline encompass a complex set of ethical, social, political, and economic factors. Alongside social elements, economic factors play a pivotal role in determining the development status of countries worldwide. Based on the principle of altruism, ethical solutions offer a pathway to overcome financial challenges and help individuals and societies to address poverty as a concerning problem. If adopted by political authorities and integrated into government policies, this principle should positively affect sustainable development indicators.⁹ It represents a holistic effort to elevate all facets of development indicators.

Several international institutions have played a crucial role in offering diverse assistance domestically and internationally. Some of these institutions trace their origins to religious foundations that, when they were established, incorporated doctrinal elements. With its theoretical foundations and historical experiences, Islamic legislation has demonstrated that initiatives, such as zakat, endowments, altruism, charitable work, and altruistic behaviour in society play a significant role in alleviating deficiencies and needs. These initiatives transform societies into entities that can attain a satisfactory level of well-being.

The inclination of individuals and groups to exhibit behaviours across social and economic domains results from a comprehensive education that commences within the family and culminates in the mosque, school, and various enriching cultural institutions. Consequently, it becomes imperative to guarantee the educators' role in imparting charitable values to children appropriately. Moreover, it is essential to ensure the mosque's cultural role in promoting these values and the school's role in incorporating them into their educational curricula and various associated activities.

Scholars have studied the relationship between Islam and sustainable development in the past. Still, less attention has been paid to how Islamic teachings emphasize altruism as a critical component in achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Prior studies have focused on Islam's customs in a broader sense, without scrutinizing altruism to advance Islamic ideals that might reduce poverty, promote social harmony, and encourage social peace. Furthermore, researchers have not fully explored the usefulness of altruism in families and schools as a way to instill altruistic behaviors, particularly in cooperation and conflict avoidance. Figure 1 illustrates the theoretical framework of the study through these dimensions. The current study examines Islam's special place on selflessness and how it serves as a basis for accomplishing several important SDGs, including social peace, poverty alleviation, and equitable income distribution. Additionally, this study seeks to fill the current existing gaps by:

1. Demonstrating how Islamic values strongly focus on societal harmony by promoting fairness, positive communication, and conflict resolution.

⁸Richard W Miller, *Globalizing Justice: The Ethics of Poverty and Power* (New York: Oxford Press, 2010), 54.

⁹Abul Hassan, "Islamic Ethical Responsibilities for Business and Sustainable Development," *Humanomics* 32, no. 1 (February 2016): 94, <https://doi.org/10.1108/H-07-2015-0047>.

2. Highlight how Islamic socioeconomic and educational institutions, founded on charitable endeavours motivated by altruism, aid in the growth of strong, harmonious, and inclusive societies.
3. Exploring the educational strategies within families, mosques, and schools that can instill charitable attitudes in young generations, aligning with SDG objectives on education, gender equality, and partnerships.

Altruism Towards Sustainable Development from the Islamic Perspective

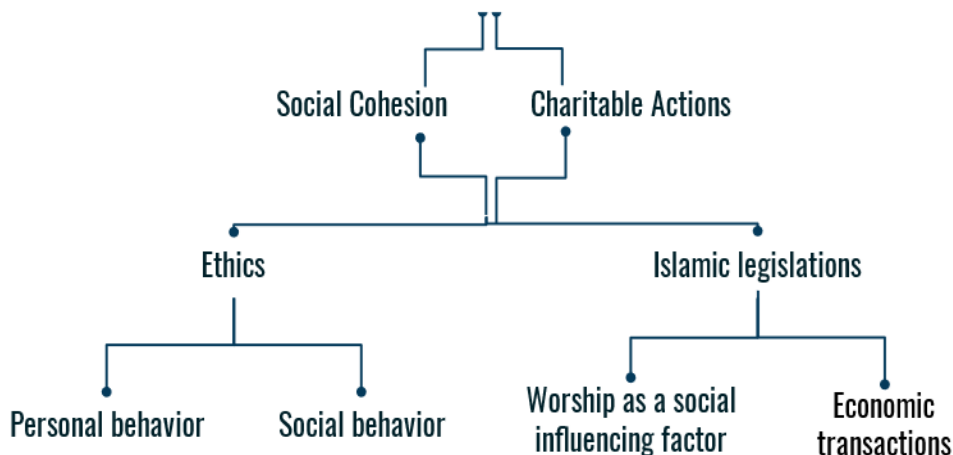


Figure 1. The Theoretical Framework of the Study

By focusing on the multifaceted applications of altruism in Islamic thought—spanning familial, social, economic, and educational dimensions—this study aims to illustrate how Islam offers an integrated, holistic approach to human behaviour that supports the achievement of SDGs while addressing the existing gaps in the literature.

2. Research Methodology

The current study deploys a historical approach to investigate how Islam views compassion and how it relates to sustainable development objectives. To track the development of Islamic teachings on social peace, almsgiving, and conflict resolution, it starts with a thorough literature analysis of Islamic texts like the Qur’ān and Hadith, together with academic interpretations.

The study then explores Islamic legal doctrine, diversity, and faith, examining how these ideas advance social justice, altruism, and compassion. It also looks at the Islamic economic system, stressing the need to balance wealth distribution, property rights, and initiatives to fight poverty through almsgiving. The study also examines how educational practices have historically encouraged philanthropic behaviour, especially in homes, mosques, and schools. It delves deeper into the socio-religious background of altruism, examining historical occurrences to demonstrate how Islamic almsgiving has promoted harmony and peace. The study uses thematic analysis to pinpoint essential Islamic precepts that uphold social justice and benevolence and offers insights into how these ideals might complement contemporary sustainable development objectives.

3. Literature Review

Numerous investigations have enriched our understanding of the charitable dimensions within Islam. All have aimed to realize sustainable development, and its abiding connection with Islam's dimension. By delving into the distinctive Islamic vision with unique ¹⁰Al-Jayyousi's findings, comprehensively explain Islam's stance on sustainable development. Bensaïd and Machouche's findings further elucidated how Islam effectively leverages individual and collective ethics to engineer sustainable community relationships. ¹¹Mokhtar, Arifain, Isa, Jailani, and Othman's conclusions from their investigation of faculty members' altruistic activities emphasize the endowment institution's historical role in charitable work and the accomplishment of sustainable development. ¹²By conducting several interviews, Rakhmawati (2020), examined the schools' role in instilling altruistic values among students. ¹³Romeiro's (2000), findings presented an altruistic behaviour as an alternative solution when addressing global issues associated with sustainable development. ¹⁴Raquib, Javaid, and Anjum's (2020), findings showcased that positive Islamic values associated with consumption can influence young Muslim people to adopt sustainable patterns that can reduce unjustifiable pressure on the ecosystem. ¹⁵Aström Nuryitmawan's (2020), findings demonstrated that individuals with higher religious devotion have more excellent intentions to participate in charitable endowments. ¹⁶In state management, Saleh and Saleh's (2023), findings emphasize the need for effective and transparent governance systems rooted in Islamic values to address challenges and ensure sustainable development. ¹⁷

Moving to the realm of instilling charitable values through curricula, Moorthy et al.'s (2021), findings showed that integrating ethical principles of biology and values-based education enables learners to grasp the values of social cohesion and tolerance and to reflect these values in their educational experiences. ¹⁸Karim et al.'s (2021), findings revealed optimal practices and current

¹⁰Al-Jayyousi, *Islam and Sustainable Development*, 166-168.

¹¹Salah Machouche, Benouda Bensaïd and Zuraida Ahmed, "Crossroads between Islamic Spirituality and the Instruction of Science," *Kemanusiaan* 26, no. 1 (August 2019), 45, <https://doi.org/10.21315/kajh2019.26.s1.2>.

¹²Muhammad Yasin Omar Mokhtar et al., "The Concept of Altruism and Ihsan as an Approach towards Achieving Psychological Well-Being at The Workplace: An Observation at The Islamic University College of Melaka," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Science*, 10, no. 10 (August 2020): 637, <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v10-i10/7997>.

¹³Yuliana Rakhmawati, "Islamic Character Camp: Establishing Students Altruism Intelligence with Da'wa Communication," *Inferensi: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 14, no. 1 (June 2020): 25.

¹⁴Ademar Ribeiro, Romeiro, "Sustainable Development and Institutional Change: The Role of Altruistic Behavior," *Texto para discussão* 97 (June 2000): 17.

¹⁵Amana Raquib, Omar Javaid and Gulnaz Anjum., "Creation of the Islamic Self for Sustainability: Can Muslim Entrepreneurship Positively Contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals through Tazkiya (Self-Restraint) and Tarbiya (Self-Discipline) of the Muslim Youth," *Journal of Islamic Business and Management* 10, no. 2 (December 2020): 323, <https://doi.org/10.26501/jibm/2020.1002-003>.

¹⁶Tegar Rismanuar Nuryitmawan, "Determinants of the Intention to Participate in Waqf: Altruism, Trust, and Religiosity," *Airlangga Journal of Innovation Management* 3, no. 2 (October 2022): 199-211.

¹⁷Hezouma Shaker Rashid Saleh, and Ammar Bassem Saleh., "The Islamic Worldview Posits that Enlightened Leadership Plays a Crucial Role in the Attainment of Sustainable Development," *Migration Letters* 20, no. 3 (August 2023): 612, <https://doi.org/10.59670/ml.v20iS3.3808>.

¹⁸Ravichandran Moorthy et al., "Sustainable Societal Peace through the Integration of Bioethics Principles and Value-Based Education," *Sustainability* 13 no, 6 (March 2021): 3266.

knowledge for ethical business leadership, religion, and anti-corruption behaviours in Islamic boarding schools.¹⁹ Salaheldeen, Battour, and Nazri's (2019), findings elucidated the role that halal trade can play in achieving sustainable development in the economic domain.²⁰ Usman and Tasmin (2016), theoretically explicated the importance of Islamic microfinance in achieving sustainable development goals.²¹

Kalkavan, Dinçer, and Yüksel's (2021), findings underscored the role of Islamic ethical values in economic activities through seeking fair income distribution, prohibiting interest on loans, and ensuring business partnerships. All these factors have a positive impact on societal well-being. Kalkavan's (2021), findings emphasized the importance of activating waqf administrations in the Islamic world to achieve sustainable development.²² As a vital tool for wealth redistribution, Iqbal and Shafiq's, findings show the significance of benevolent loans (*Qard al-Hasan*) in enhancing social cohesion and contributing to sustainable development by improving economic conditions. Suzuki and Miah (2022), highlight that Islamic values-based solutions, referred to as spiritual capital, can reduce the risks of economic transactions because Muslim financiers are divinely committed to risk-sharing in projects through profit and loss-sharing arrangements. Sayuti and Amin's (2022), findings confirm the relationship between altruistic attitudes and price fairness for Muslim bank customers.²³

Dembele and Bulut's (2022), findings show that Islamic social finance, especially Zakat and Waqf, is fundamental in achieving sustainable development goals.²⁴ Gülistan and Arif's (2022), findings further confirmed the interplay of Islamic principles and sustainable development by addressing the same research idea from a values perspective.²⁵

4. Role of Altruism for Positive Islamic Social Relationships

Islamic law advocates the concept of positive relationships with others through its comprehensive evidence, jurisprudential details, and moral values to prevail in society. These two complementary manifestations foster an atmosphere of security and positive cooperation. These are stated as follows:

¹⁹Abdul Karim et al., "Altruistic Works, Religion, and Corruption: Kiai's Leadership to Shape Anti-Corruption Values in Pesantren," *Cogent Social Sciences* 9, no. 1 (July 2023): 2238968, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2238968>.

²⁰Salaheldeen, et al., "Halal Entrepreneurship and its Role in Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (SDGs)," *Présentation Faite à la International Conference on Dakwah and Islamic Management (IC-DAIM 2019)* (Malaysia: 2019): 8, <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202112408001>.

²¹A. S. Usman, and R Tasmin, "The Relevance of Islamic Micro-Finance in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals," *International Journal of Finance, Insurance and Risk Management* 6 no, 2 (June 2016): 1115.

²²Hakan Kalkavan et al., "Analysis of Islamic Moral Principles for Sustainable Economic Development in Developing Society," *International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management* 14, no, 5 (November 2021): 982.

²³Khadijah M Sayuti, and Hanudin Amin, "Islamic Mortgage Adoption: Examining the Moderating Effects of Islamic Altruism," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 13, no. 8 (September 2022): 1750, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-11-2018-0219>.

²⁴Adama Dembele, and Mehmet Bulut, "The Role of Islamic Social Finance in Achieving the Objectives of Sustainable Development Goals," *Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education (TURCOMAT)* 12, no. 14 (December 2021): 1750.

²⁵Gülistan Eryolu, and Arif Özyaydn, "Examining the Role of Islamic Economics in Achieving Sustainable Development Goals," *American Interdisciplinary Journal of Business and Economics (AIJBE)* 9, no. 4 (December 2022): 7.

- A. Security appearance: This aspect encompasses preserving everything related to the individual's religious life through ensuring the security of their life and property, safeguarding their knowledge and intellectual and scientific rights, and maintaining their family life.²⁶
- B. The scholars of the fundamentals have articulated these as the 'five necessities' that constitute the fundamental purposes of Shari'a, without this human life cannot sustain itself properly.²⁷ Therefore, the first aspect of a positive relationship with others focuses on safeguarding individuals' fundamental rights and preventing their infringement by any element of society, be it individuals, groups, or institutions.
- C. Interactive appearance: This facet addresses positive relationships among society's members, groups, and institutions. It encompasses an environment characterized by love, cooperation, solidarity, compassion, tolerance, and other expressions of positive interaction.²⁸ Notably, this aspect extends beyond the security concept, which mandates preserving individual rights. It calls for positive engagement among individuals to paint a complete picture of a society where peace permeates among all its elements.

Given that a fundamental objective of Islamic law is the fostering of positive relationships with others, the verses of the Holy Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet emphasize the importance of achieving this goal. Islamic law encourages Muslims to embrace factors conducive to peace and warns them to avoid thoughts and behaviours that disrupt social harmony. Based on its primary sources, the following explains Islam's methodology in mitigating various conflicts.

4.1. Navigating Social Conflicts Arising from Social Ties

Conflicts stemming from tensions in social relationships represent a significant challenge, by promoting Islamic laws to provide guidance on various causes and preventive measures. Based on Islamic principles, the following outlines vital aspects of preventing conflicts in social relationships.

In social relationships, conflicts often arise because of tensions between individuals. In recognition of the intricacies of human interactions, Islam has laid down several principles to maintain social cohesion. One fundamental aspect is cultivating positive feelings instead of negative sentiments by encouraging individuals to foster goodwill and understanding. The importance of positive interpretation rather than misunderstanding is emphasized by urging followers to interpret others' actions in a positive light to prevent unnecessary conflicts. Also, by outlining principles that safeguard the rights of individuals within a society, Islamic teachings address the prevention of human rights disputes. In addition, by advocating respectful and constructive dialogue to foster mutual understanding and mitigate conflicts, the religion strongly emphasizes positive communication language. Collectively, these principles form a comprehensive framework of Islamic rules to prevent and manage sources of conflict in social interactions.

4.2. Positive Feelings Versus Negative Feelings

The tolerant Sharia forbids any emotion that may lead to conflict or disagreement between members of society and its groups. They are as follows:

²⁶Abdullahi Abubakar Lamido, "Maqasid al-Shari'ah as a Framework for Economic Development Theorization," *International Journal of Islamic Economics and Finance Studies* 2, no. 1 (March 2016): 49.

²⁷Abdul Hameed Badmas Yusuf, "A Study of Evolution of Maqâshid As-Syari'ah as A Legal Theory," *Madania: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 19, no. 1 (June 2014): 15.

²⁸Amitabh Pal, *Islam Means Peace: Understanding the Muslim Principle of Nonviolence Today* (USA: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2011), 13-17.

- A. Prohibition of Anger Islam encourages individuals to refrain from letting anger and take control of their behaviours and reactions. This is because responses driven by anger are a primary cause of violence.²⁹ Psychologists affirm that individuals' states of anger lead them to irrational behaviours that can be detrimental to both the individual and society.³⁰
- B. Prohibition of emotions of tribal or sectarian affiliation: Such emotions result in acts of aggression. As mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, it is Satan's work to cause strife among people. Islam calls for unity, and by emphasizing the overarching principle of fostering positive relationships between all members of society, discourages actions and sentiments that promote division and hostility.³¹
- C. Prohibition of Envy: It is recognized that envy is the main reason for *Satan's* refusal to prostrate himself to Adam, which leads to hostility towards Adam's children of Adam. Envy played a pivotal role in the commission of the first murder on Earth.³² The same feeling of envy was evident in Joseph's brothers' scheming against him. This is highlighted in the Qur'an, Surah Yusuf (Joseph).³³ The Prophet emphasized the prohibition of envy in multiple hadiths since it leads to social problems and mutual hatred.³⁴
- D. Feeling of Arrogance and Contempt for people: The reason for hatred can result in conflict between individuals or groups is the belief that they have an advantage over others.³⁵ Arrogance and paranoia are what led the Pharaoh to oppress people, infringe on their freedom and dignity, and commit crimes against humanity.³⁶

4.3. Positive Interpretation Versus Misunderstanding

Misunderstanding or relying on incorrect information can lead to negative relationships. Islam emphasizes the importance of avoiding baseless assumptions and conjecture.³⁷ Therefore, understanding individuals' cultural backgrounds and cognitive levels can help them comprehend and address their negative behaviours without conflict.

Despite, potential challenges,³⁸ Islam encourages Muslims to engage actively within their society. Indeed, within the Islamic framework, a system of rules outlined explicitly in the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah actively encourages the adoption of a positive interpretation versus misunderstanding. The Qur'anic verses and the Prophet's teachings emphasize the importance of interpreting individuals' actions positively. This approach nurtures goodwill and harmony and creates understanding among individuals. The emphasis on positive interpretation is a preventive measure against misunderstandings that can lead to conflicts. As a comprehensive guide to life, Islam provides believers with

²⁹Imam Hafiz Abu 'Elsa Mohammad Ibn 'Eisa At-Tirmidhi, *English Translation of Jami' At-Tirmidhi*, trans. Abu Khaliyl, vol. 4 (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2007), 2020.

³⁰Jessie N. Doyle et al., "Occupational Stress and Anger: Mediating Effects of Resiliency in First Responders," *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology* 36, (September 2021): 1-10, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11896-021-09429-y>.

³¹al-Qasas 28:15.

³²al-Mā'idah 5:27.

³³Yūsuf 12:8.

³⁴Imam Muslim Abul Husain bin Al-Hajjaj, *English Translation of Sahih Muslim*, trans. Nasiruddin Al-Kattab, vol. 6 (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2007), 2561.

³⁵at-Tirmidhi, *English Translation of Jami' At-Tirmidhi*, vol.4, 1989.

³⁶al-Qasas 28:4.

³⁷al-Hujurat 49:12.

³⁸At-Tirmidhi, *English Translation of Jami' At-Tirmidhi*, vol.4, 2507.

ethical and moral principles that contributes to creating a society marked by positive interactions and mutual respect.

4.4. The Avoidance of Harm

Islam strongly discourages all forms of behaviour that can harm or offend others, regardless of whether it is moral or material abuse. In moral abuse, Islam prohibits actions, such as spying and backbiting.³⁹ The Prophet's hadith strongly prohibits the material and moral abuse of individuals.⁴⁰

4.5. Prevention of Human Rights Disputes

One of the notable features of Islamic legislation is its comprehensive and detailed approach to the system of human rights relationships among members of society. Islam prohibits a Muslim from infringing on the rights of others. These infringements encompass various aspects, such as family rights, financial transactions, and other social and political relationships.

By promoting the idea that different people and tribes exist to understand one another, the Holy Qur'an emphasizes diversity among human societies, and various religions share this principle of peace and harmony. The natural obstacles to understanding arise when religion and culture are misused for personal gain. Issues occur when individuals consider their own culture to be superior, and consequently, this leads to discrimination and conflicts. Often, conflicts result from a lack of tolerance, cooperation, and love. Intercultural dialogue is a solution that allows individuals with different ideologies to bridge gaps and manage differences. The key is engaging in a cultural dialogue that addresses disparities between different civilizations or within the same culture. Silence is not a solution, since it may lead to communication gaps and potential conflicts.⁴¹

The difference in ideas between individuals can be a rich phenomenon for social life if these ideas are based on correct experiences and knowledge. However, this thought can be rejected if it deviates from its course and turns into radical thought characterized by exaggeration or departing from basic constants. The fundamental relationship between Muslims and people of other religions is of peace. Islamic civilization has provided practical models for Muslims' harmonious coexistence with others. Instances of conflict between Muslims and others arise because of violations of agreements, opposition to Islamic beliefs, or hostile orientation towards Muslims. For those who do not engage in hostility against Muslims, Islam does not prohibit kindness.⁴²

4.6. Prevention of Conflicts Caused by Social Imbalance

Social imbalance manifests itself in rich and poor class systems, monopolizing wealth, power, and privileges, and the non-application of the principle of justice.⁴³ Islam prohibits the monopoly of wealth for a particular class through the implementation of zakāt, almsgiving, and the prohibition of usury. Islam emphasizes that wealth in society should not be confined to a specific class and that

³⁹al-Ĥujurāt 49:12.

⁴⁰At-Tirmidhi, *English Translation of Jami' At-Tirmidhi*, vol.4, 1927.

⁴¹Hilal Wani et al., "An Islamic Perspective in Managing Religious Diversity," *Religions* 6, no. 2 (May 2015): 656, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel6020642>.

⁴²Al-Mumtaḥanah 60:8.

⁴³Miller, *Globalizing Justice*, 63.

there should be mechanisms for its fair distribution.⁴⁴ Islam also prohibits the monopoly of power by emphasizing Shura (consultation) among Muslims in their affairs.⁴⁵

Islam addresses feelings of injustice and inequality by ensuring equality for everyone. May God be pleased with her, Aisha narrated those members of the noble Quraysh, such as the Makhzoumi woman who stole and faced the same legal consequences. The Prophet's love does not exempt anyone from the law. Indeed, he highlights that if his daughter Fatima were to sin, she would be held accountable for it.⁴⁶

4.7. Prevention of Conflicts of Interest

Individuals often display manifestations of competition for specific interests, whether material or moral. Islam addresses the sources of conflicts related to competition through social life. Islamic texts emphasize that people's resources and livelihoods are predetermined, and competition should be confined to rewarded areas. This ensures that individuals strive for success in ways that lead to eternal happiness.⁴⁷

The Qur'ānic verses predetermine people's livelihoods and ensure their management. The verses indicate that while the universe sources of sustenance and livelihood are predetermined and sufficient; they require fair distribution.⁴⁸ Therefore, the causes of individual or collective conflict over wealth disappear when these resources are not accessed due to monopoly, extravagance, or laziness.

Islam promotes a high degree of positive feelings among society's members. It emphasizes the interconnectivity of members' interests, and discourages selfishness from monopolizing gains and interests. Instead, individuals are encouraged to love that they and all members of their society attain the good that they seek.⁴⁹ This promotes an environment where selfishness, envy, rivalry, and conflict have no room to thrive.

4.8. Positive Communication Language

From an Islamic perspective, language is a divine inspiration and an inherent capability Allah bestows on human creation.⁵⁰ It serves as a conduit for transmitting knowledge, primarily through writing; the Sunnah emphasizes the influential role of words through various narrations. As expressed in the hadiths' texts, this influence is likened to a magical role.⁵¹

In advocacy, several Qur'ānic and Hadīth texts emphasize using positive language as an essential aspect of the advocacy style. These stress that either the method or the manner of speech should be gentle and inviting. The guidance emphasizes using gentle, soft words in communication even when dealing with individuals who may not be considered good or are in opposition positions, such as Pharaoh. The Qur'ānic instruction to Moses and Aaron to address Pharaoh with soft words reflects the principle of maintaining a calm and respectful approach that aims for remembrance and a sense of tranquillity that may lead to positive change.⁵² The Qur'ān encourages a gracious and

⁴⁴al-Ĥashr 59:7.

⁴⁵ash-Shūrah 42:38.

⁴⁶Muhammad Ibn Ismael Al-Bukhāri, *Sahih Al-Bukhāri*, Trans. by Muhammad Muhsin Khan, vol. 4 (Riyadh: Darussalam, 1997), 3288.

⁴⁷al-Muṭaffifin 84:6.

⁴⁸Fuṣṣilat 21:12.

⁴⁹Al-Bukhāri, *Sahih Al-Bukhāri*, vol. 1, 13.

⁵⁰ar-Raḥmān 55:4.

⁵¹al-Bukhāri, *Sahih Al-Bukhāri*, vol. 7, 1820.

⁵²Ṭāhā 20:44.

peaceful response, even in ignorance or negativity. Additionally, the verse highlights the exemplary behaviour of the Most Merciful servants, who respond with words of peace, even when addressed by the ignorant people. This underscores the importance of maintaining a calm and positive demeanour in interactions, promoting a peaceful atmosphere, and potentially leading to positive transformation. It reflects the Islamic ethos of responding to negativity with patience, kindness, and a commitment to promote goodness.⁵³

By using a superior and more effective manner of communication, the Qur'ān encourages Muslims to engage in dialogue and debate with people of other faiths, especially the People of the Book (Ahl al-Kitab: Jews and Christians). There is an emphasis on avoiding contentious arguments and adopting the best possible approach. The Qur'ānic verses promote understanding and finding common ground by highlighting the shared monotheistic foundation of the messages revealed to Muslims and non-Muslims.⁵⁴

5. Role of Altruism in Combating poverty

Islamic principles strike a balance between individual interests and societal interests. These prevent individual interests from overshadowing the common good while affirming the individuals' rights. The issue of freedom of action and ownership of wealth is central to understanding contemporary economic philosophies. Unlike capitalism, which has led to imbalances in social classes and concentrated wealth in the hands of a few, and socialism, which has struggled to ensure the welfare of all members of society, Islamic economics allows individual ownership, while, at the same time, prohibiting usury. In Islamic economics, investment in trade and human resources is a legitimate means of profit, and financial loans are meant to be purely charitable without entailing any profit, according to *Shari'a*.⁵⁵ The rich must pay zakat, which is an economic right and a form of charity.⁵⁶

Islam promotes altruism as a pathway to charitable work and encourages the establishment of Waqf Foundations as sustainable social institutions. The endowment institution has a rich history in Islam, dating back to its inception, and it has played a crucial role in providing financial support to various sectors of society.⁵⁷ These endowment institutions were established across different service sectors, including education and multiple forms of care. In contemporary times, endowment institutions exist with variations in other Islamic countries worldwide. *Waqf* funds contribute significantly to social development in Islamic towns and cities as a form of endowment. These funds are utilized for diverse purposes, such as accommodating and caring for orphans and the endowment founder's children. There are also waqf funds dedicated to caring for disabled individuals, blind, and older adults. Some endowments focus on supplying basic help for those in need, while others support the marriage expenses of young men and women whose financial resources have been usurped by circumstances. Moreover, specific facilities, such as houses, have been established in certain cities to provide shelter for poor people and to support their marriages. In addition, there are houses and facilities designed to protect and serve older adults and parents. Habitats and khans have been created for travelers to offer them a place to stay during their journeys. Overall, endowment institutions play

⁵³al-Furqān, 25:63.

⁵⁴al-'Ankabūt 29:46.

⁵⁵Mohammad Malkawi, *Fall of Capitalism and Rise of Islam* (USA: Xlibris Corporation, 2010), 23-25.

⁵⁶Md Nazim Uddin et al. "Role of Islamic Microfinance Institutions for Sustainable Development Goals in Bangladesh," *Journal of International Business and Management* 3, no. 1 (September 2020): 12, <https://doi.org/10.37227/jibm-2020-64>.

⁵⁷Surita Hartini Mat Hassana et al. "Sustainable Development of Endowment (Waqf) Properties," *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change* 13, no. 4 (2020): 1150.

a vital role in addressing various societal needs and significantly contribute to social welfare in Islamic communities.⁵⁸

6. Education on Philanthropy towards the Achievement of Sustainable Development

Positive indicators for sustainable development are derived from the society's social aspect of positive and educational relationships. Social institutions are crucial in promoting benevolent ideas and supporting sustainable development by enhancing positive relationships among individuals. These institutions bear the responsibility of education, encouraging positive relationships that contributes to raising awareness of benevolence and charitable work values. In this context, social institutions play a significant role in activating charitable initiatives, where these initiatives can be a direct and logical result of the positive relationships promoted by these institutions. Positive relationships are an essential aspect of building a healthy and sustainable community. Education on philanthropy is crucial to achieving sustainable development, mainly when it is introduced during the early stages of a child's life.⁵⁹ Since a child's moral development takes place in the early years of life, this underscores the importance of prioritizing moral education within the primary educational institutions tasked with nurturing children.

With altruism being one of its founding principles, Islam has woven this value into its beliefs, devotional practices, and legislative aspects. The practical application of altruism in social life is evident in various manifestations that result in positive outcomes in the mutual relationships among members of society. Thus, to advance sustainable development, it is imperative to incorporate the principles of philanthropy, compassion, and social responsibility into the educational curriculum. By integrating these values into early education, children can cultivate a robust moral foundation, by fostering empathy and social awareness that can demonstrate a commitment to positively contributing to their communities. These values significantly contribute to society's overall well-being and sustainable development.

6.1. Family Behavior and Sustainable Development

Islam urges that marital relationships should be positive, harmonious, and affectionate in family relationships.⁶⁰ By highlighting tranquillity, affection, and mercy as fundamental components of a successful and fulfilling marital relationship, the Qur'anic verses emphasize the divine wisdom in creating the institution of marriage. The Qur'an encourages thoughtful reflection and guides individuals to recognize the profound signs within the harmonious bonds between spouses. The emphasis on love, understanding, and compassion is a guiding principle for nurturing positive family dynamics within the framework of happy family rules. Even in situations where a husband may not feel romantic love for his wife or vice versa, Islam instructs the maintenance of respect and dignity within the marital relationship. Recognizing that one's spouse can be a source of goodness and encourages the partner to uphold the principles of mutual respect and consideration that develop a positive atmosphere within the family.⁶¹ The Holy Qur'an's verses indicate that Islam fosters dialogue and consultation within the family to reach mutual decisions. An example is provided in the context of the couple's

⁵⁸Yuli Yasin et al., "Waqf and Sustainable Development Law: Models of Waqf Institutions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Indonesia," *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan* 23, no. 1 (2023): 114, <https://doi.10.18326/ijtihad.v23i1.93-114>.

⁵⁹Alexander Cappelen et al, "The Effect of Early-Childhood Education on Social Preferences," *Journal of Political Economy* 128, no. 7 (July 2020): 2758.

⁶⁰an-Nisā' 4:19.

⁶¹an-Nisā' 4:19.

consultation regarding the issue of weaning an infant before the completion of the usual nursing period.⁶²

Islam advocates a gentle and respectful approach to children's relationships with their fathers. The teachings encourage children to interact with their parents in a manner characterized by love and appreciation. Within the framework of Islamic values, the emphasis is on cultivating a positive and respectful bond between children and their fathers.⁶³ Children's moral education is a significant challenge in Islamic society, especially with the growing impact of technology and other communication tools that creates a negative influence on cultural dynamics. The Qur'anic narratives, featuring the stories of prophets such as Ibrahim, Yusuf, Nuh, and Lokman, provide a rich source of various and comprehensive moral education principles for children.⁶⁴

6.2. Promoting Charitable Behaviors Through Cultural and Educational Institutions

The concept of charity and its behavioural aspects must be promoted in social life, so that charitable behaviour becomes part of the individual's self-nature. Cultural institutions, led by mosques and schools, play a fundamental role in instilling charitable behaviours among Muslims by building mental awareness of the importance of philanthropic behaviours. This is achieved through these institutions like school and mosques' daily, weekly, or through their seasonal activities. In creating positive atmosphere in relationships between individuals, Islam emphasizes the importance of cooperation and love within the mosque environment. Islamic educational thought outlines responsibilities for teachers, students, and administrators in academic institutions to ensure an atmosphere of friendship and respect. The activities are presented in Figure 2.

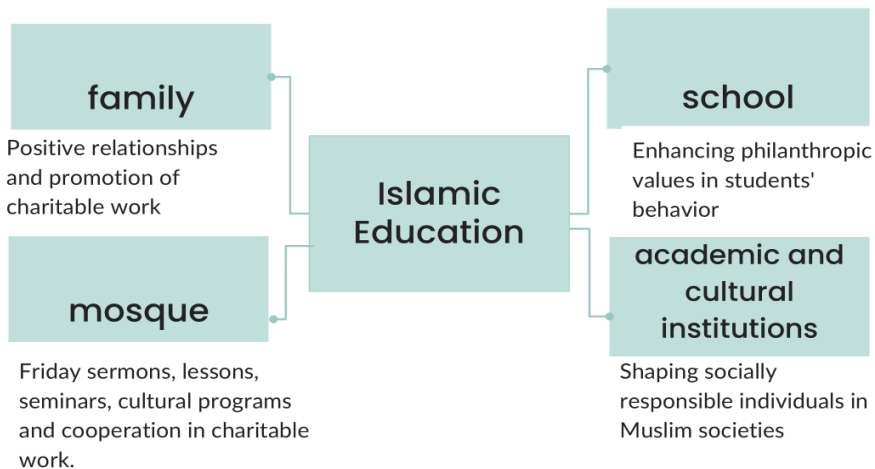


Figure 2. Charitable Behaviors Through Islamic Education

⁶²al-Baqarah 2:233.

⁶³al-'Isrā' 17:23.

⁶⁴Mohammad Jaber Thalgi, "Principles in the Moral Education of Children in the light of Qur'anic Stories," *Darulfunun Ilahiyat* 30, no. 1 (December 2019): 230, <https://doi.org/10.26650/di.2019.30.1.0007>.

The mosque plays a primary role in promoting the principles of altruism by demonstrating its organizational powers through Friday sermons, lessons, seminars, and cultural programs. As a social institution, the mosque allows individuals to meet, consult, cooperate, and engage in charitable work. This is evident from donation campaigns organized within the mosque, whether for the maintenance of the mosque itself or other charitable purposes. Mosques serve as significant hubs for fundraising initiatives to assist the needy in the community.⁶⁵ Since social experience is a behaviour, students' knowledge of personal and professional affairs must be manifested in their social lives. Therefore, a compassionate family toward charity will likely produce individuals favourably inclined toward charity and assistance.⁶⁶

Educational institutions, particularly schools, wield considerable influence in shaping charitable behaviours within Muslim societies. Thus, teachers play a pivotal role by enriching the curriculum with lessons on empathy, social responsibility, and moral values. Encouraging collaboration among students through joint activities may develop a sense of cooperation and community service.⁶⁷ The inclusion of democratic principles, electoral work, and consultations provides students with platforms to express their opinions and to nurture mutual respect for others. School counselling further contributes to healthy relationships and conflict resolution. Actively involving students in charitable activities within and beyond the school instils a sense of social responsibility. Collaboration with local charities and community organizations and integrating Islamic teachings on charity enrich the educational experience of students. Hence, recognizing and appreciating the school's charitable efforts cultivates a culture of giving that ultimately produces socially responsible individuals in Muslim societies.

7. Practical Implications of Islamic Altruism for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals

Altruism aligns closely with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which outlines 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to foster peace, prosperity, and environmental sustainability. Islam's complete ethical system, based on the primary principle of altruism is drawn from the Holy Qur'an, the hadiths of the Prophet, and the writings of Muslim scholars, which greatly aids several of these objectives. It especially helps to solve issues of poverty, inequality, and societal harmony.⁶⁸

The Islamic principles of altruism, charity, and cooperation offer a robust framework for reducing poverty (SDG 1) and promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16). Helpful practices like *sadaqah* (voluntary charity) and *zakat* (obligatory almsgiving) can help people; thus, eradicating poverty. People and institutions are urged to act selflessly and solve social imbalances, creating economic stability and eliminating poverty, which are examples of altruistic behaviour. By giving individuals in need the support they require and guaranteeing improved food security and health outcomes for marginalized communities, these activities also contribute to

⁶⁵Anisah Bagasra, "Socially Engaged Islam: Applying Social Psychological Principles to Social Justice, Faith-Based Activism and Altruism in Muslim Communities," *Toward a Positive Psychology of Islam and Muslims: Spirituality, Struggle, and Social Justice* (July 2021): 49.

⁶⁶Hagit Sabato and Tehila Kogut, "The Association between Religiousness and Children's Altruism: The Role of The Recipient's Neediness," *Developmental Psychology* 54, no. 7 (March 2018): 1371, <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0000526>.

⁶⁷Umut Birkan Özkan, "Religiosity/Spirituality, Affective Moral Reasoning and Generative Altruism: A Study on Students in Muslim Societies," *Inferensi: Psycho-Educational Research Reviews* 10, no. 2 (August 2021): 175.

⁶⁸Hasan, "Sustainable Development from an Islamic Perspective: Meaning, Implications, and Policy Concerns," 18.

achieving SDGs 2 and 3, which target zero hunger and excellent health and well-being.⁶⁹ Furthermore, the teachings of Islam, which are based on benevolence, strongly emphasize the value of education and social harmony, which are closely related to SDGs 4 and 10 (reduced inequality and high-quality education). Raising kids with morals based on generosity, selflessness, and family unity—values bolstered by places of worship like mosques and schools—guarantees the incorporation of these moral precepts into daily existence.⁷⁰

This charitable foundation promotes peaceful social relationships and prevents conflicts within communities to support gender equality (SDG 5) by promoting cooperation and equality within the family structure. It places it within the Islamic vision of justice between males and females, not necessarily within the Western vision of the relationship between men and women. By guaranteeing social harmony and minimizing strife, Islam's preventive approach to dispute resolution and promoting peaceful coexistence directly addresses essential components of sustainable development.

When viewed within the larger framework of the SDGs, Islam's altruistic framework addresses pressing societal concerns, such as poverty and conflict. It promotes a cooperative, charitable society that supports sustainable community development. Encouragement of philanthropic endeavours that bolster economic growth and fair resource distribution is how this approach complies with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 8 and 9. To guarantee the well-being of every member of society, it also supports cooperation between families, schools, mosques, and charitable organizations, which aligns with the partnership's goals of (SDG 17).⁷¹

Altruism is a fundamental component of Islamic values and practices. It reinforces the global mission of sustainable development while directly assisting in accomplishing many SDGs, especially social peace, charitable work, education, poverty reduction, and environmental sustainability.

8. Conclusion

Today's societies need to strengthen the elements of sustainable development in their various fields. The problems of poverty and conflict are the most critical obstacles to sustainable development. In this respect, through an integrated view, Islam has contributed to reducing these problems by making altruism an Asian engine for the behaviour of individuals and groups. It can be said that with its intellectual, devotional, legislative, and moral system, Islam has established a comprehensive human system for various aspects of life. Islam has established the idea of altruism as an essential element of the ethical system. It expresses its spirit and essence that is reflected in nearly all aspects of life.

⁶⁹Abdul Azis Ibrahim and Abdulrahman Alenizi, "Leveraging Qardh al-Hasan within Islamic Finance: A Conceptual Framework for Advancing Sustainable Development among Early-stage Enterprises," *Tazkia Islamic Finance and Business Review* 18, no. 1 (2024): 18-54, <https://doi.org/10.30993/tifbr.v18i1.368>.

⁷⁰Sulaeman Sulaeman, and Raditya Sukmana, "Economic Growth, Income Inequality, Government Integrity, and Spending towards SDG 1 on Poverty Eradication: An Empirical Study from Twenty Muslim-Majority Countries," *Muslim Business and Economics Review* 2, no. 1 (2023): 27-47, <https://doi.org/10.56529/mber.v2i1.157>.

⁷¹Siti Maziah Binti AB Rahman et al., "Applying the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Zakah Management at Kelantan," *J Eco Res & Rev* 2, no.1 (2023): 349-354.

It can be clearly understood from the Holy Qur'ān's verses, the Prophet's hadīths, and the analyses of Muslim scholars that the consensual processes in the fabric of individuals' and groups' social relationships fall under the concepts of: "peace" and "reconciliation," "security," "consensus," "cooperation," "coexistence" and others, which form the primary goals and demands of Islamic law. To shed light on the texts' methodology, legitimacy in building consensual social relationships prevents and addresses the causes of conflict and conflicts that exists between the members of society and the manifestations of negative social relationships. The moral and legal values and provisions contained in the Holy Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet encourage consensual and cooperative behaviours between individuals and prevent manifestations of conflict and disharmony between them; thus, maintaining a social harmony.

Islam emphasizes fostering peaceful social relationships through a proactive approach that prevents conflict within society. It advocates a "reinforcement methodology" that employs effective tools and strategies to promote social harmony. This process begins with integrated education within the family and extends to mosques, schools, and cultural institutions, ensuring a holistic development of values. Educators play a critical role in instilling charitable and philanthropic values in children, making it essential for families, mosques, and schools to align their efforts. Mosques should embrace their cultural role in nurturing these values, while schools should embed them into curricula and extracurricular activities.

Islamic teachings also address two significant barriers to sustainable development—poverty and conflict—by emphasizing compassion, collaboration, nonviolence, and altruism. These principles can be enshrined in laws that foster societal harmony, equitable income distribution, and conflict resolution. The education of children, particularly through schools and mosques, is pivotal in embedding these ideals into the fabric of society.

8.1. Research Limitations

Future research should look at cross-cultural comparisons of altruism and how it affects conflict resolution, education, poverty alleviation, and internet/social media platforms' role in encouraging altruistic behaviour. Policies that support social cohesion and sustainable development can be designed using the findings of this study. The two main barriers to sustainable development—poverty and conflict—are addressed by Islamic compassion, as this study makes clear. Islamic teachings place a strong emphasis on harmony, peace, and altruism.

Conflict of Interest

The author of the manuscript has no financial or non-financial conflict of interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

The datasets generated and analysed during the current study are not publicly available due to anonymity concerns but are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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