

ISLAMIC ETHICS AS A MORAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMBATTING CORRUPTION AND PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE

Dr. Sumera Irfan

ISTAC, International Islamic University Malaysia

sumera.irfan@live.iium.edu.my

Mehwish Riaz

PhD Scholar ISTAC, International Islamic University Malaysia

mehwishriaz9697@gmail.com

Abstract

Corruption remains a persistent global challenge that undermines governance, weakens institutional credibility, and exacerbates socio-economic inequality. While contemporary anti-corruption strategies predominantly rely on legal enforcement and regulatory mechanisms, their effectiveness is often constrained by insufficient attention to the ethical and moral dimensions of human behaviour. This study examines Islamic ethics (akhlaq) as a comprehensive moral framework for combating corruption and promoting social justice. Grounded in the principles of tawhīd (divine unity), amānah (trust), and ʿadl (justice), Islamic ethics conceptualises corruption (fasād) not merely as a legal violation but as a moral and social disorder that disrupts the divinely ordained balance of society.

Employing a qualitative, interpretive methodology, the study utilises textual analysis of primary sources, including the Qurʾan and Hadith, alongside classical and contemporary scholarly literature. The analysis is guided by the framework of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah (objectives of Islamic law) and focuses on key ethical constructs such as taqwā (God-consciousness), accountability (ḥisāb), and public interest (maṣlaḥah). Comparative insights from contemporary case studies further contextualise the application of these principles within modern governance systems. The findings demonstrate that Islamic ethics offers a dual-layered approach to corruption control by integrating internal moral regulation with external institutional accountability. This integrated model addresses both the behavioural causes and structural manifestations of corruption, thereby contributing to the realisation of social justice. The study further argues that the operationalisation of Islamic ethical principles within modern governance frameworks requires institutional adaptation, political commitment, and societal internalisation of ethical values. This research contributes to the growing discourse on ethics-based governance by providing a normatively grounded yet analytically rigorous framework that bridges classical Islamic thought with contemporary anti-corruption strategies.

Keywords: Islamic ethics (*akhlaq*); corruption (*fasād*); social justice (*ʿadl*); governance; accountability (*ḥisāb*); trust (*amānah*); *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*; anti-corruption frameworks; ethical governance

Introduction

Corruption remains one of the most persistent challenges confronting contemporary governance systems, undermining economic development, weakening institutional credibility, and exacerbating social inequality. It distorts public resource allocation, erodes trust in state institutions, and contributes to systemic injustice across both developed and developing societies.¹ While modern anti-corruption strategies have largely focused on legal enforcement, regulatory frameworks, and institutional reforms, their effectiveness has often been limited by insufficient attention to the ethical and moral dimensions of human behaviour.² This limitation has prompted increasing scholarly interest in value-based frameworks that integrate internal moral accountability with external governance mechanisms.

Within this context, Islamic ethics (*akhlaq*) offers a comprehensive normative framework that conceptualises corruption not merely as a legal or administrative violation but as a profound

¹ Rose-Ackerman, Susan, and Bonnie J. Palifka. *Corruption and government: Causes, consequences, and reform*. Cambridge University Press, 2016.

² Hussein Alatas. "Corruption and the Destiny of Asia." (1999).

moral and social disorder. In Islamic thought, corruption (*fasād*) represents a disruption of the divinely ordained balance between individuals, society, and the broader moral order.¹ The Qur'anic injunction explicitly condemns such behaviour:

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا

Wa lā tufsidū fī al-arḍi ba'da iṣlāḥihā

“Do not cause corruption on the earth after its reformation” (Qur'an 7:56)

This framing situates corruption within a broader ethical and theological paradigm, emphasising its consequences not only for governance but also for social justice and moral accountability.

A central distinguishing feature of Islamic ethical theory lies in its grounding in the concept of *Tawhīd* (the oneness of God), which establishes a unified moral order in which all human actions are subject to divine accountability. Within this framework, the concept of *Amānah* (trust) serves as a foundational principle governing leadership and public responsibility. Authority is understood not as a privilege but as a moral obligation entrusted to individuals acting as *khalīfah* (stewards) on earth.² The Qur'an articulates this responsibility as follows:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا

Inna Allāha ya'murukum an tu'addū al-amānāti ilā ahlihā

“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due” (Qur'an 4:58)

This ethical orientation is further reinforced by the concept of *Taqwā* (God-consciousness), which functions as an internal regulatory mechanism that deters individuals from engaging in corrupt practices even in the absence of external surveillance.³ In contrast to secular governance models that rely primarily on formal institutions and enforcement mechanisms, Islamic ethics integrates internal moral discipline with external accountability structures, thereby addressing both the causes and manifestations of corruption. The Islamic tradition also provides a precise ethical and legal vocabulary to categorise different forms of corruption, ensuring comprehensive moral scrutiny. Terms such as *rishwah* (bribery), *ghulūl* (misappropriation of public wealth), and *sariqah* (theft) reflect a nuanced understanding of unethical practices and their societal implications.⁴ The Qur'an explicitly warns against the unjust appropriation of wealth through the manipulation of authority:

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُم بَيْنَكُم بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا بِهَا إِلَىٰ الْحُكَّامِ

Wa lā ta'kulū amwālakum baynakum bil-bāṭil wa tudlū bihā ilā al-ḥukkām

“Do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it [in bribery] to the rulers...”

(Qur'an 2:188)

Prophetic traditions further reinforce this prohibition by explicitly condemning bribery and abuse of authority, thereby eliminating ambiguity in ethical interpretation.⁵ Such textual clarity underscores the centrality of integrity, accountability, and justice in Islamic governance. The principle of social justice (*ʿadl*) constitutes another foundational pillar of Islamic ethics. Justice in Islam extends beyond legal equality to encompass distributive fairness, protection of rights, and the preservation of human dignity.⁶ The Qur'an emphasises impartial justice as a moral obligation:

¹ Muhammad Umer Chapra. "The Islamic vision of development in the light of Maqāsid al-sharī'ah." *Islamic Research and Training Institute, Islamic Development Bank, Jeddah, DOI 10* (2008).

² Mohammad Hashim Kamali. "Environmental care in Islamic teaching." (2012).

³ Abbas J Ali, and David Weir. "Islamic perspectives on management and organisation." (2005): 410-415.

⁴ Rafik Issa Beekun. *Islamic business ethics*. No. 2. International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 2006.

⁵ Muhammad Nejatullah Siddiqi. *Riba, bank interest and the rationale of its prohibition*. Jeddah: Islamic Research and Training Institute, 2004.

⁶ Ibn Khaldūn. *The Muqaddimah: an introduction to history-abridged edition*. Princeton University Press, 2015.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ

Yā ayyuhā alladhīna āmanū kūnū qawwāmīna bil-qist

“O you who believe, stand firmly for justice...” (Qur’an 4:135)

Historically, these principles were reflected in early Islamic governance practices, particularly during the leadership of Umar ibn al-Khattab, whose administrative reforms emphasised accountability, transparency, and welfare provision. While such examples are often cited as normative models, their contemporary applicability requires critical examination in the light of modern institutional complexities and governance structures.

In the contemporary context, the framework of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah* (higher objectives of Islamic law) provides a teleological basis for aligning Islamic ethics with modern governance challenges. By prioritising the protection of wealth (*hiḏ al-māl*), life, and human dignity, this framework offers a normative foundation for addressing issues such as corruption, inequality, and institutional inefficiency.¹ Recent scholarly discussions have also explored the integration of Islamic ethical principles with technological innovations, including the use of digital transparency tools in financial governance, although such applications remain underdeveloped in empirical research.

Despite the richness of Islamic ethical teachings, a significant gap persists between normative principles and their practical implementation in contemporary governance systems. Existing literature has largely examined Islamic ethics in theoretical or historical terms, with limited attention to their systematic application in modern anti-corruption frameworks.² This gap raises important questions regarding the operationalisation of Islamic ethical concepts in addressing contemporary governance challenges.

This study seeks to address this gap by critically examining Islamic ethical principles as a framework for combating corruption and promoting social justice. Specifically, it aims to analyse the conceptual foundations of *akhlaq*, evaluate their relevance to contemporary governance, and explore mechanisms for integrating these principles into modern institutional structures. Employing a qualitative, interpretive methodology based on textual analysis of primary Islamic sources and secondary academic literature, the study contributes to the growing discourse on ethics-based governance by offering a normatively grounded yet analytically rigorous perspective on corruption and social justice.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, exploratory, and interpretive design, which is particularly suitable for analysing the complex moral, spiritual, and ethical dimensions of religious texts. The design utilises a library research approach to facilitate a philosophical-conceptual inquiry into the foundations of Islamic integrity. This exploratory model is designed to deepen understanding of how traditional Islamic ethics can be integrated into modern organisational management to prevent corruption.³ The study draws from a diverse range of primary sources, including the Qur’an and Hadith, and secondary sources include classical Islamic scholarship, modern academic articles, books, policy reports, and historical accounts of the Rashidun Caliphate’s administrative reforms.⁴ Data collection is conducted through a systematic documentation technique, and a wide range of academic and religious documents are analysed to identify patterns of ethical governance. Besides textual Extraction wis conducted to identify and gather literature that discusses anti-corruption measures and the *maudhu’i* (thematic)

¹ Ahmad Mustafa Al-Maraghiy. "Ulum al-Balaghat. Beirut, Lubnan: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyat." (1993).

² Mervyn K Lewis. "Accountability and Islam." PhD diss., University of South Australia, 2006.

³ Ali Musa Harahap. "Public Duties in Islam: The Institution of the Hisba." *วารสาร วารสาร การเมือง และ สังคม* 3, no. 2 (2024): 88-93.

⁴ Barbara D Metcalf. *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900*. Princeton University Press, 2014.

interpretation of scriptural terms. This approach defines the meaning of corruption through specific Qur'anic concepts like *fasād* (mischief), *ghulul* (embezzlement), and *rishwah* (bribery).¹

Thematic Coding is employed to identify and interpret patterns within the data, centring on five foundational pillars: *Adl* (justice), *Amanah* (trust), *Shura* (consultation), *Hisab* (accountability), and *Maslahah* (public interest).² Interpretive Analysis is carried out utilising the Maqasid al-Shariah (Higher Objectives of Islamic Law) as a normative framework to evaluate the ethical dimensions of governance practices. This involves assessing how the protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and wealth informs anti-corruption efforts.³ Comparative Analysis examining the divergence and convergence between Islamic ethical paradigms and modern governance systems or capitalist economic logic.⁴

A qualitative methodology is essential for this study because it allows for a profound exploration of moral frameworks that cannot be effectively quantified. Unlike secular "rational choice" methodologies that focus primarily on legal sanctions, this qualitative interpretive approach addresses the ontological reality of Islamic ethics, integrating internal God-consciousness (Taqwa) with external regulatory mechanisms. This design provides the flexibility to reconcile 1,400-year-old ethical principles with contemporary 21st-century governance challenges.⁵

Conceptual Framework

This study adopts an ethical–religious conceptual framework grounded in Islamic normative principles to analyse the relationship between corruption and social justice. Unlike conventional governance models that primarily emphasise external regulatory controls, the Islamic framework conceptualises corruption (*fasād*) as both a structural and moral phenomenon requiring the integration of internal ethical discipline and institutional accountability mechanisms.⁶

At the core of this framework is the concept of *amānah* (trust), which redefines public authority as a form of moral responsibility rather than a source of privilege. In Islamic thought, human beings are regarded as *khalīfah* (stewards) entrusted with the management of societal resources and the establishment of justice. This stewardship model introduces a dual accountability structure in which individuals are answerable both to society and to divine authority, thereby reinforcing ethical behaviour beyond formal legal enforcement.⁷

Within this conceptualisation, social justice (*‘adl*) represents the primary normative objective. Justice is understood not only in legal terms but also in distributive and procedural dimensions, ensuring equitable allocation of resources and fairness in decision-making processes. The framework, therefore, posits that corruption undermines social justice by distorting resource distribution, weakening institutional trust, and exacerbating socio-economic inequality.⁸

¹ Lambsdorff, Johann Graf. "Transparency international 2001 corruption perception index." *Global Corruption Report (Transparency International, Berlin)* (2001): 232-236.

² Mohammad Hashim Kamali. "Ethics And Finance: Perspectives Of The Sharīcah And Its Higher Objectives (Maqāsid)." (2011).

³ Muhammad Umer Chapra. "The Islamic vision of development." *Thoughts on Economics, The Quarterly Journal of Islamic Economics Research Bureau (Bangladesh)* 18, no. 3 (2008): 7-38.

⁴ Sami Al-Daghistani. "Handbook of Ethics of Islamic Economics and Finance, Edited by Abbas Mirakhor, Zamir Iqbal and Seyed Kazem Sadr." *Journal of Islamic Ethics* 6, no. 2 (2022): 329-334.

⁵ Susan Rose-Ackerman and Bonnie J. Palifka. *Corruption and government: Causes, consequences, and reform.* Cambridge University Press, 2016.

⁶ Zubair Hasan. *Leading issues in Islamic economics and finance.* Springer Singapore, 2020.

⁷ Khurshid Ahmad. "The challenge of global capitalism: an Islamic perspective." *Policy Perspectives* 1, no. 1 (2004): 1-29.

⁸ Syed Nawab Haider Naqvi. "Ethics and economics: An Islamic synthesis." (*No Title*) (1981).

Importantly, the model establishes a relational structure between key variables. Internal ethical consciousness, operationalised through *taqwā* (God-consciousness), functions as a preventive mechanism that reduces the likelihood of corrupt behaviour at the individual level. Simultaneously, institutional accountability mechanisms—such as oversight systems and transparent governance practices—serve as external controls that limit opportunities for corruption. The interaction between these internal and external dimensions forms the central analytical lens of this study.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is grounded in four interrelated pillars derived from Islamic ethical and legal thought: *akhlaq* (ethical conduct), *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah* (objectives of Islamic law), justice (*‘adl*), and accountability. These pillars collectively provide a normative and analytical basis for understanding corruption and its mitigation.

1. Akhlaq (Islamic Ethics)

Islamic ethics (*akhlaq*) constitutes a comprehensive system of moral values that governs individual and collective behaviour. A central component of this system is *taqwā* (God-consciousness), which operates as an internal regulatory mechanism influencing ethical decision-making. Unlike external enforcement, which relies on surveillance and punishment, *taqwā* promotes self-regulation by linking human actions to divine accountability.¹ This ethical orientation is further reinforced by the concept of *ihsān* (moral excellence), which encourages individuals to act with integrity and benevolence beyond minimum legal requirements. Through processes of moral development and self-discipline, often conceptualised as *tazkiyah* (self-purification), individuals cultivate resistance to unethical practices, including subtle forms of corruption such as favouritism or informal exchanges.²

2. Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah (Objectives of Islamic Law)

The *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah* framework provides a higher-order normative structure for evaluating governance and public policy. It emphasises the protection of essential human interests, including life (*hifẓ al-nafs*), wealth (*hifẓ al-māl*), intellect (*hifẓ al-‘aql*), lineage (*hifẓ al-nasl*), and religion (*hifẓ al-dīn*).³ Within the context of corruption, this framework highlights the detrimental impact of unethical practices on societal welfare. For example, corruption in public finance undermines the protection of wealth by enabling embezzlement and misallocation of resources, while also affecting the provision of essential services linked to the protection of life and dignity. Thus, the *maqāṣid* framework provides a systematic basis for linking ethical principles to governance outcomes.

3. Justice (‘Adl)

Justice (*‘adl*) occupies a central position in Islamic political and ethical thought. The Qur’an explicitly emphasises its importance:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ

Inna Allāha ya ‘murū bil-‘adli wal-ihsān

“Indeed, Allah commands justice and excellence” (Qur’an 16:90)

In this framework, justice encompasses both distributive and procedural dimensions. Distributive justice ensures equitable allocation of resources, while procedural justice requires

¹Muhammad Umer Chapra. "The Islamic vision of development." *Thoughts on Economics, The Quarterly Journal of Islamic Economics Research Bureau (Bangladesh)* 18, no. 3 (2008): 7-38.

²Frank E Vogel and Samuel L. Hayes. *Islamic law and finance: Religion, risk, and return*. Vol. 16. Brill, 1998.

³Fazlur Rahman. *Islam & modernity: Transformation of an intellectual tradition*. Vol. 15. University of Chicago Press, 2017.

transparency and impartiality in governance processes. Corruption is therefore conceptualised as a direct violation of justice, as it privileges private interests over public welfare.¹

4. Accountability

Islamic theory emphasises a dual-layer accountability structure of internal and external dimensions. Internal accountability is rooted in the belief in divine judgment, which shapes ethical behaviour through moral consciousness. External accountability, often institutionalised through governance mechanisms, ensures compliance with legal and ethical standards.²

Historical examples, such as the administrative practices of Umar ibn al-Khattab, illustrate early forms of accountability mechanisms, including financial oversight and public grievance systems. While these models provide valuable insights, their application in contemporary governance requires adaptation to modern institutional contexts.

2. Ethical Foundations of Islam

2.1 Conceptualising Corruption and Social Injustice

Corruption is commonly defined in governance literature as the misuse of public office or entrusted authority for private gain, encompassing practices such as bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and abuse of power.³ Within the Islamic ethical framework, corruption is conceptualised more broadly under the term *fasād*, which denotes moral and social disorder that disrupts the balance of justice and collective welfare.⁴

Islamic jurisprudence provides a nuanced classification of corrupt practices through specific legal and ethical terminology. For instance, *rishwah* refers to bribery involving illicit exchanges to secure favourable decisions, while *ghulūl* denotes the misappropriation of public resources or breach of entrusted responsibilities. Similarly, *sariqah* (theft) addresses unlawful appropriation of property, and *suht* refers to wealth acquired through illegitimate or exploitative means.⁵ These distinctions reflect a comprehensive ethical framework that captures both overt and subtle forms of corruption.

In parallel, social injustice is conceptualised in Islam as *ẓulm* (oppression), which encompasses the denial of rights, inequitable distribution of resources, and abuse of authority. Such conditions undermine social cohesion and violate the principle of justice (*‘adl*), which is central to Islamic governance.⁶ Thus, corruption and social injustice are interrelated phenomena, as corrupt practices often result in systemic inequality and marginalisation.

2.2 Sources and Foundations of Islamic Ethics

Islamic ethics (*akhlaq*) is derived primarily from the Qur’an and the Sunnah, and further elaborated through jurisprudential reasoning (*fiqh*) and ethical philosophy (*‘ilm al-akhlaq*).⁷ This ethical system is underpinned by several foundational principles that shape both individual behaviour and institutional governance.

¹ Yūsuf Qardāwī. "The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam." (1995).

² Ingrid Mattson. "Al-Ahkam Al-Sultaniyyah: The Laws of Islamic Governance. Translated by Asadullah Yate. London: Ta-Ha Publishers, 1996. Pp. 381. Price not available. ISBN: 1-897-794041-6. Also translated as The Ordinances of Government: A Translation of Al-Ahkam Al-Sultaniyya A’Al-Wilayat Al-Diniyya. Translated by Wafaa H. Wahba. Reading: Centre for Muslim Contribution to Civilisation; London: Garnet Publishing Ltd. 1996. Pp. xvii, 301. Price not available. ISBN: 1-873-93817-9." *Journal of Law and Religion* 15 (2001): 399-403.

³ Hussein Alatas. "Corruption and the Destiny of Asia." (*No Title*) (1999).

⁴ Muhammad Bilal Zafar, Abbas J. Ali, and Mohd Fauzi Abu-Hussin. "Exploring Islamic work ethic in the workplace: a systematic literature review." *Personnel Review* (2026): 1-31.

⁵ M. Umer Chapra. *Islam and the economic challenge*. No. 17. International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 1992. Muhammad Hashim Kamali, *Ethics and Governance in Islam* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2011

⁶ Muhammad Hashim Kamali, *Ethics and Governance in Islam* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2011

⁷ Abbas J. Ali, *Islamic Perspectives on Management and Organisation* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2005).

The principle of *tawhīd* (the oneness of God) establishes a unified moral order in which all human actions are subject to divine accountability. This theological foundation links ethical conduct to spiritual responsibility, thereby extending accountability beyond temporal legal systems.¹ Closely related is the concept of *amānah* (trust), which frames authority as a moral responsibility entrusted to individuals acting as *khalīfah* (stewards) on earth. In this sense, leadership is not merely administrative but inherently ethical, requiring integrity, fairness, and accountability.²

Justice (*‘adl*) functions as a central organising principle within this framework. The Qur’an explicitly commands:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ

Inna Allāha ya ‘murū bil- ‘adli wal-ihsān

“Indeed, Allah commands justice and excellence” (Qur’an 16:90)

This principle extends to both distributive justice ensuring equitable allocation of resources, and procedural justice, requiring fairness and transparency in decision-making processes.³

Another key element is *taqwā* (God-consciousness), which operates as an internal regulatory mechanism influencing ethical behaviour. Unlike external enforcement systems, *taqwā* promotes self-regulation by fostering awareness of divine accountability, thereby reducing the likelihood of unethical conduct even in the absence of monitoring.⁴

Finally, the framework of *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah* (objectives of Islamic law) provides a higher-order normative structure for evaluating governance decisions. By prioritising the protection of essential human interests—such as life, wealth, intellect, lineage, and religion—this framework establishes a direct link between ethical principles and societal welfare.⁵

3. Islamic Ethical Teachings on Corruption

3.1 Scriptural Condemnation of Corruption

The prohibition of corruption in Islam is firmly rooted in both the Qur’an and the Sunnah, where it is treated as a major ethical violation with significant social consequences. The Qur’an explicitly condemns unjust enrichment and the manipulation of authority:

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ

Wa lā ta ‘kulū amwālakum baynakum bil-bāṭil wa tudlū bihā ilā al-ḥukkām

“Do not consume one another’s wealth unjustly or use it to influence authorities...” (Qur’an 2:188)

Similarly, the Qur’an warns against the broader phenomenon of corruption:

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا

Wa lā tufsidū fī al-arḍi ba ‘da iṣlāḥihā

“Do not cause corruption on the earth after its reformation” (Qur’an 7:56)

These verses establish corruption as both a moral and social violation that undermines justice and collective welfare.⁶ Prophetic traditions reinforce this prohibition by explicitly condemning bribery and abuse of authority. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated that both the giver and receiver of bribes are subject to condemnation, thereby

¹Mohammad Umar Chapra *The Islamic Vision of Development*.

²Zamir Iqba and Abbas Mirakhor. *An introduction to Islamic finance: Theory and practice*. John Wiley & Sons, 2011.

³Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *Ethics and Governance in Islam* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2011)

⁴Mohammad Umar Chapra, *The Islamic Vision of Development*.

⁵Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *Ethics and Governance in Islam* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2011)

⁶M. Umer Chapra, *The Islamic Vision of Development in the Light of Maqasid al-Shariah* (London: Islamic Foundation, 2008).

eliminating ambiguity regarding the ethical status of such practices.¹ This clarity reflects a comprehensive approach that addresses both the act and its enabling conditions.

3.2 Ethical Leadership and Governance

Leadership in Islamic thought is conceptualised as a form of moral responsibility grounded in accountability. The Prophet Muhammad emphasised this principle by stating that every individual in a position of authority is responsible for those under their care.² This concept establishes leadership as an ethical function rather than a position of privilege.³

A key dimension of ethical leadership is the rejection of favouritism and selective enforcement of the law. Prophetic teachings emphasise equality before the law, highlighting that the failure to apply justice impartially leads to the decline of societies.⁴ This principle underscores the importance of institutional integrity and the rule of law in preventing corruption.

Furthermore, Islamic teachings emphasise collective responsibility in maintaining ethical standards. The well-known “parable of the ship” illustrates that societal harm occurs when individuals fail to prevent wrongdoing, thereby framing anti-corruption efforts as a shared obligation rather than solely a state responsibility.⁵

3.3 Institutional and Preventive Mechanisms

Islamic governance integrates individual ethical development with institutional mechanisms designed to prevent corruption. At the individual level, concepts such as *tazkiyah* (self-purification) and *ihsān* (moral excellence) encourage the cultivation of integrity and ethical awareness. These internal mechanisms complement external controls by reducing the propensity for corrupt behaviour.⁶

At the institutional level, early Islamic governance practices provide examples of accountability mechanisms aimed at preventing abuse of power. During the leadership of Umar ibn al-Khattab, administrative measures such as monitoring the financial conduct of public officials and establishing channels for public complaints were implemented to enhance transparency and accountability.⁷ While these historical practices differ from contemporary governance systems, they illustrate the importance of institutional oversight in mitigating corruption.

In addition, economic institutions such as the public treasury (*Bayt al-Māl*) and redistributive mechanisms like zakat and waqf were designed to ensure equitable resource distribution and reduce socio-economic disparities. By addressing structural inequalities, these mechanisms contribute to the prevention of corruption by limiting incentives for exploitative behaviour.⁸

4. Islamic Perspective on Social Justice

The concept of social justice in Islam extends beyond material redistribution or formal legal equality to encompass moral, economic, and institutional dimensions of human welfare. It is grounded in a normative framework that integrates the principles of justice (*‘adl*), benevolence (*ihsān*), and public interest (*maṣlaḥah*), thereby linking ethical conduct with social

¹Abbas J. Ali, *Islamic Perspectives on Management and Organisation* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2005).

² Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, “Kitāb al-Aḥkām,” Hadīth no. 7138.

³ Mohammad Umar Chapra, *The Islamic Vision of Development*.

⁴ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *Ethics and Governance in Islam* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2011).

⁵ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, “Kitāb al-Sharīkah,” Hadīth no. 2493.

⁶ S. M Hasanuzzaman. *Economic Functions of an Islamic State (The Early Experience)*. The Islamic Foundation. 2003.

⁷ Asad Zaman. "An Islamic critique of neoclassical economics." *Pakistan Business Review* 14, no. 1 (2012): 9-62.

⁸ Monzer Kahf. "The performance of the institution of zakah in theory and practice." In *International Conference on Islamic Economics Towards the 21st Century*, Kuala Lumpur, pp. 9-12. 1999.

organisation.¹ Within this framework, social justice is not treated as a secondary outcome of governance but as a central objective that shapes both individual behaviour and public policy.

4.1 Justice as a Foundational Principle

Justice (*‘adl*) occupies a central position in Islamic ethical and political thought, serving as a guiding principle for both individual conduct and institutional governance. The Qur’an explicitly commands:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ

Yā ayyuhā alladhīna āmanū kūnū qawwāmīna bil-qisṭ

“O you who believe, stand firmly for justice...” (Qur’an 4:135)

This directive establishes justice as a moral obligation that transcends personal interest, requiring impartiality even in situations involving self or family. In Islamic thought, justice encompasses both distributive and procedural dimensions. Distributive justice refers to the equitable allocation of resources, while procedural justice emphasises fairness, transparency, and accountability in decision-making processes.²

Importantly, justice is closely linked to the concept of *mīzān* (balance), which reflects the idea that social order depends on maintaining equilibrium in economic and moral relations. Corruption, in this context, is understood as a disruption of this balance, as it privileges private interests over collective welfare and undermines institutional integrity.³

4.2 Socio-Economic Equity and Redistribution

Islamic teachings place significant emphasis on reducing socio-economic disparities and preventing the concentration of wealth. Economic justice is pursued through a combination of obligatory and voluntary mechanisms designed to ensure the circulation of resources within society.⁴

One of the primary instruments is *zakāt* (obligatory almsgiving), which requires eligible individuals to contribute a fixed proportion of their wealth for redistribution among specified categories, including the poor and those in financial distress. Beyond its redistributive function, *zakāt* also serves as a mechanism for promoting social cohesion and reducing structural inequality.⁵

In addition, the institution of *waqf* (endowment) historically played a significant role in financing public goods such as education, healthcare, and social services. By creating sustainable funding mechanisms for social infrastructure, *waqf* contributed to long-term socio-economic stability and reduced dependence on centralised state resources.⁶

These mechanisms are complemented by broader ethical teachings that emphasise social responsibility and mutual care. Such principles encourage individuals to consider the welfare of others, thereby reinforcing a collective approach to addressing poverty and inequality.

4.3 Protection of Vulnerable Groups

¹ Muhammad Umer Chapra. "The Islamic vision of development." *Thoughts on Economics, The Quarterly Journal of Islamic Economics Research Bureau (Bangladesh)* 18, no. 3 (2008): 7-38.

² Mohammad Hashim Kamali. "Islam and sustainable development." *Islam and Civilisation Renewal* 1, no. 7 (2016).

³ Muhammad Umer Chapra. "The Islamic vision of development in the light of Maqāsid al-sharī‘ah." *Islamic Research and Training Institute, Islamic Development Bank, Jeddah, DOI 10* (2008).

⁴ M. Umer Chapra. *Islam and the economic challenge*. No. 17. International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 1992.

⁵ Monzer Kahf. "The role of waqf in improving the ummah welfare." In *International Seminar on Waqf as a Private Legal Body*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 1-26. 2003.

⁶ Rodney Wilson. "The Concept of Economy in Islam." *The Concept of Economy in Judaism, Christianity and Islam* 9, no. 2 (2022): 71.

A key dimension of social justice in Islam is the protection of vulnerable and marginalised groups. Islamic teachings emphasise equality before the law and the inherent dignity of all individuals, regardless of social or economic status.¹ This principle is reflected in the Prophet Muhammad's emphasis on fairness and non-discrimination, which challenged prevailing social hierarchies and promoted a more inclusive social order.

Historical governance practices further illustrate this commitment. During Umar ibn al-Khattab's leadership, policies were implemented to provide financial support to disadvantaged groups, including widows, orphans, and individuals unable to work.² While such examples must be understood within their historical context, they demonstrate an early emphasis on state responsibility in ensuring social welfare and preventing marginalisation.

The protection of minority communities was also addressed through legal frameworks that guaranteed the security of property and religious practice. These measures highlight the broader objective of maintaining social cohesion and preventing injustice across different segments of society.

4.4 Institutional Mechanisms for Social Justice

Islamic social justice is operationalised through institutional arrangements that aim to ensure accountability, fairness, and equitable resource distribution. Among these, the public treasury (*Bayt al-Māl*) functioned as a central mechanism for managing state revenues and funding social welfare initiatives. By redistributing resources to those in need, it contributed to reducing economic disparities and limiting conditions that often give rise to corruption.³

The judicial system, administered through *qāḍī* courts, played a crucial role in upholding the rule of law. Judges were expected to demonstrate high levels of integrity and independence, ensuring that disputes were resolved impartially and without undue influence. This institutional independence is particularly significant in the context of corruption prevention, as it strengthens accountability and public trust in governance structures.⁴

Another important mechanism was the institution of *ḥisbah*, which functioned as a form of public oversight aimed at regulating market practices and promoting ethical conduct in economic transactions. By monitoring commercial activities and addressing unfair practices, *ḥisbah* contributed to maintaining transparency and preventing exploitation.⁵

These institutional mechanisms collectively illustrate an integrated approach in which ethical principles are translated into governance structures. By combining moral accountability with formal oversight, the Islamic framework seeks to address both the behavioural and structural dimensions of corruption and social injustice.

5. Islamic Conception of a Balanced Social Order

Islamic thought presents a normative framework for a balanced social order that integrates ethical, economic, legal, and political dimensions within a unified moral vision. Rather than separating religion from governance, this framework conceptualises ethical values as foundational to institutional design and social organisation.⁶ The objective is not merely the

¹ Mohammad Hashim Kamali. "Islam and sustainable development." *Islam and Civilisation Renewal* 1, no. 7 (2016).

² Mohammad Hashim Kamali, and Islamic Texts Society. *Freedom, equality, and justice in Islam*. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2002.

³ A. M As-Sallabi. "Umar Ibn al-Khattab: His life and time.(Translated Nasiruddin Khattab). Riyadh: International Islamic Publishing House." (2007).

⁴ Mohammad Hashim Kamali. "Islam and sustainable development." *Islam and Civilisation Renewal* 1, no. 7 (2016).

⁵ Muhammad Umer Chapra. "The Islamic vision of development in the light of Maqāsid al-sharī 'ah." *Islamic Research and Training Institute, Islamic Development Bank, Jeddah, DOI 10* (2008).

⁶ Mohammad Hashim Kamali. *Crime and punishment in Islamic law: A fresh interpretation*. Oxford University

regulation of behaviour through external mechanisms, but the establishment of a system in which individual conduct and public institutions are aligned with principles of justice, accountability, and collective welfare.

5.1 Qur'anic Foundations of Social Balance

The concept of balance in Islamic thought is rooted in the Qur'anic notion of *mīzān* (equilibrium), which reflects both a cosmological and ethical principle. The Qur'an states:

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ ﴿١﴾ أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ ﴿٢﴾ وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ

Wa al-samā'a rafa'ahā wa wada'a al-mīzān. Allā taṭṭhaw fī al-mīzān. Wa aqīmū al-wazna bil-qist

“And He raised the heaven and established the balance, so that you do not transgress within the balance; and establish weight in justice” (Qur'an 55:7–9)

This concept extends beyond physical order to encompass social and economic relations, emphasising moderation, fairness, and proportionality. Within this framework, corruption is understood as a disruption of balance, as it distorts resource distribution and undermines institutional integrity.¹

5.2 Integration of Rights and Responsibilities

A defining feature of the Islamic social model is the integration of rights with corresponding responsibilities. Individuals are granted rights to life and property, accompanied by obligations toward society and adherence to ethical norms. The concept of *amānah* (trust) reinforces this relationship by framing authority and social participation as forms of responsibility rather than entitlement.²

This framework is further supported by the principle of collective moral responsibility, often expressed through the duty to promote ethical conduct and discourage wrongdoing. In governance terms, this principle contributes to the development of social accountability, where both citizens and institutions play a role in maintaining ethical standards. Such a structure has implications for corruption control, as it expands responsibility beyond formal enforcement agencies to society at large.

5.3 Socio-Economic Regulation and Equity

Economic balance constitutes a central component of the Islamic social order, with particular emphasis on preventing the concentration of wealth and ensuring equitable distribution of resources. Instruments such as *zakāt* function as formal redistributive mechanisms, transferring wealth from surplus holders to vulnerable groups and thereby reducing structural inequality.³

In addition, the prohibition of exploitative financial practices, including *ribā* (usury) and excessive uncertainty in transactions, is intended to promote fairness and stability in economic exchanges. These prohibitions contribute to limiting opportunities for unjust enrichment and financial manipulation, which are often associated with systemic corruption.⁴

Market regulation is also emphasised through ethical guidelines requiring honesty, transparency, and fairness in trade. Such principles are reinforced through institutional oversight mechanisms, historically associated with market supervision, which aimed to prevent

Press, 2019.

¹ Muhammad Umer Chapra. "The Islamic vision of development in the light of Maqāsid al-sharī 'ah." *Islamic Research and Training Institute Islamic Development Bank, Jeddah*, DOI 10 (2008).

² Mohammad Hashim Kamali. "Between Separation and Unity: The Interplay of Law and Morality in Islamic Jurisprudence." In *Sharia Law In The Twenty-First Century*, pp. 21-46. 2022..

³ Rodney Wilson. "The Concept of Economy in Islam." *The Concept of Economy in Judaism, Christianity and Islam* 9, no. 2 (2022): 71.

⁴ Chapra, M. Umer. *Islam and the economic challenge*. No. 17. International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 1992.

fraud and protect consumers. Together, these measures reflect an integrated approach in which ethical norms and regulatory practices jointly support economic justice.

5.4 Governance, Accountability, and Justice

The Islamic conception of governance is grounded in principles of justice (*'adl*), accountability, and consultation (*shūrā*). Authority is viewed as a trust that must be exercised in accordance with ethical and legal standards, with decision-making processes ideally reflecting collective input rather than unilateral control.¹

Historical governance practices provide illustrative examples of accountability mechanisms. During the leadership of Umar ibn al-Khattab, administrative measures were introduced to monitor public officials and address grievances, including systems for financial oversight and public complaint resolution.² While these practices were context-specific, they demonstrate early recognition of the importance of transparency and institutional accountability in preventing abuse of power.

Judicial independence also played a significant role in maintaining justice, as courts were expected to operate without undue political influence. This separation of authority contributes to strengthening the rule of law, which is essential for reducing corruption and ensuring public trust in governance systems.

5.5 Role of Ethical Consciousness in Social Cohesion

A distinctive feature of the Islamic framework is the integration of ethical consciousness into social organisation. Concepts such as *taqwā* (God-consciousness) and *ihsān* (moral excellence) function as internal regulatory mechanisms that influence behaviour beyond formal legal constraints.³ These values encourage individuals to act with integrity and responsibility, thereby complementing institutional efforts to prevent corruption.

From a sociological perspective, this internalisation of ethical norms contributes to social cohesion by fostering trust, cooperation, and shared moral standards. Acts of worship and charitable practices reinforce these values by promoting empathy and social responsibility. Consequently, the Islamic model seeks to create a system in which ethical behaviour is sustained not only through enforcement but also through deeply embedded moral commitments.

Contemporary Applications and Case Studies

The application of Islamic ethical principles in contemporary governance varies significantly across Muslim-majority societies, reflecting differences in political structures, institutional capacity, and socio-economic conditions. While foundational values such as justice (*'adl*), accountability, and public interest (*maṣlahah*) are widely recognised, their operationalisation within modern governance systems remains uneven. Examining selected national contexts provides insight into the conditions under which Islamic ethical frameworks can contribute to reducing corruption and promoting social justice.⁴

6.1 Malaysia: Institutional Integration of Ethical Governance

Malaysia offers an illustrative case of partial integration between Islamic ethical principles and modern governance frameworks. Over the past two decades, various policy initiatives have sought to embed ethical considerations within economic and administrative systems. Concepts associated with Islamic governance, including justice and accountability, have been

¹ Mohammad Hashim Kamali. "Between Separation and Unity: The Interplay of Law and Morality in Islamic Jurisprudence." In *Sharia Law In The Twenty-First Century*, pp. 21-46. 2022.

² A. M. As-Sallabi. "Umar Ibn al-Khattab: His life and time. (Translated Nasiruddin Khattab). Riyadh: International Islamic Publishing House." (2007).

³ A. M. As-Sallabi. "Umar Ibn al-Khattab: His life and time. (Translated Nasiruddin Khattab). Riyadh: International Islamic Publishing House." (2007).

⁴ M. Umer Chapra, *Islam and the Economic Challenge* (Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 1992).

incorporated into regulatory and financial structures, particularly within the Islamic finance sector.¹

Institutional mechanisms such as corporate governance reforms and value-based financial frameworks have emphasised transparency, risk management, and social responsibility. These initiatives reflect an attempt to align economic practices with broader ethical objectives, including equitable wealth distribution and responsible investment. In addition, anti-corruption efforts have been supported by public sector reforms and institutional oversight bodies, which aim to enhance accountability and reduce opportunities for misuse of authority.²

However, Malaysia's experience also highlights the limitations of institutional approaches in the absence of consistent enforcement and political accountability. Periodic corruption scandals indicate that while ethical frameworks may be formally embedded, their effectiveness depends on sustained commitment at both institutional and leadership levels.³ This suggests that the integration of Islamic ethics into governance requires not only regulatory structures but also a supportive political and organisational culture.

6.2 Tunisia: Ethical Pluralism in a Transitional Context

Tunisia's post-2011 political transition provides a contrasting case in which Islamic ethical principles have been incorporated within a pluralistic and democratic framework. Following the revolution, political actors, including Rached Ghannouchi and the Ennahda Movement, advocated for a governance model that balanced Islamic values with democratic norms and civil rights.⁴

This approach emphasised consultation (*shūrā*) and public interest (*maṣlahah*) as guiding principles for policymaking. In theory, such a model aligns with Islamic ethical teachings that promote inclusivity and collective decision-making. However, the implementation of these principles has faced significant challenges, including economic instability, institutional fragility, and competing ideological pressures.⁵

The Tunisian case illustrates that the incorporation of ethical frameworks into governance is contingent upon broader structural conditions. Ethical principles alone are insufficient without the institutional capacity required to translate them into effective policies and enforcement mechanisms. This highlights the importance of aligning normative frameworks with practical governance realities.

6.3 Pakistan: Normative Commitment and Institutional Constraints

Pakistan represents a case where Islamic principles are formally embedded within the constitutional and legal framework, yet their practical application remains limited. Institutions such as the Council of Islamic Ideology are tasked with aligning legislation with Islamic principles. Despite this normative commitment, governance challenges persist, particularly in relation to corruption, administrative inefficiency, and political patronage.⁶

The gap between formal principles and actual practice can be attributed to weaknesses in institutional enforcement, limited accountability mechanisms, and insufficient internalisation of ethical values within public administration.⁷ This case underscores a critical insight: the

¹ Mohammad Hashim Kamali and Islamic Texts Society. *Freedom, equality, and justice in Islam*. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2002.

² M. Kabir Hassan, Mustafa Raza Rabbani, and Mahmood Asad Mohd Ali. "Challenges for the Islamic Finance and Banking in the post-COVID era and the role of Fintech." *Journal of Economic Cooperation & Development* 41, no. 3 (2020): 93-116.

³ Transparency, International. "Corruption Perceptions Index. 2020." (2010).

⁴ Hussein Alatas. "Corruption and the Destiny of Asia." (*No Title*) (1999).

⁵ Rached Ghannouchi. *Public freedoms in the Islamic state*. Yale University Press, 2022.

⁶ Anne Wolf. *Political Islam in Tunisia: the history of Ennahda*. Oxford University Press, 2017.

⁷ Mohammad Hashim Kamali. "Ethics And Finance: Perspectives Of The Sharī'ah And Its Higher Objectives

mere incorporation of Islamic legal or ethical provisions into formal structures does not automatically lead to improved governance outcomes.

Instead, effective implementation requires a combination of institutional strength, political will, and societal commitment to ethical norms. Without these supporting conditions, ethical frameworks risk remaining symbolic rather than transformative.

6.4 Comparative Analysis and Lessons

A comparative analysis of these cases reveals several key patterns. First, the effectiveness of Islamic ethical principles in governance depends on their integration into both formal institutions and informal norms. Malaysia demonstrates the potential of institutional integration, while Tunisia highlights the challenges of applying ethical frameworks in transitional contexts. Pakistan, by contrast, illustrates the limitations of normative commitment in the absence of effective enforcement mechanisms.

Second, the relationship between ethics and governance is mediated by institutional capacity. Where regulatory systems are robust and transparent, ethical principles are more likely to influence outcomes. Conversely, weak institutions limit the practical impact of such frameworks.

Third, the internalisation of ethical values plays a crucial role. Concepts such as *taqwā* (moral consciousness) and accountability must be reflected not only in legal structures but also in organisational culture and individual behaviour. This aligns with the broader theoretical framework of this study, which emphasises the interaction between internal and external mechanisms in addressing corruption.

6.5 Role of Hisbah and Civil Society in Contemporary Contexts

The concept of *hisbah*, historically associated with market regulation and moral oversight, offers a useful lens for understanding the role of civil society in promoting accountability. Traditionally, the institution of *muhtasib* functioned as a mechanism for ensuring fairness in economic transactions and public conduct. In contemporary settings, similar functions can be observed in independent regulatory bodies, non-governmental organisations, and media institutions.¹

Modern adaptations of *hisbah* can also include digital transparency initiatives and citizen-led monitoring systems, which enhance public oversight and reduce opportunities for corruption. By extending accountability beyond state institutions, these mechanisms contribute to a more participatory model of governance.

This perspective reinforces the idea that combating corruption requires a multi-level approach involving both institutional structures and societal engagement. Ethical governance, therefore, is not solely the responsibility of the state but a collective endeavour supported by active civic participation.

7. Relevance of Islamic Ethics in Modern Governance

In an era marked by political instability, widespread corruption, and institutional erosion, the relevance of Islamic ethics in shaping a just and transparent governance framework is increasingly evident. Rooted in divine revelation and a centuries-old tradition of jurisprudence and moral philosophy, Islamic ethics provide a foundational paradigm that addresses not only personal conduct but also public responsibilities and institutional behaviour.² This ethical

(Maqāsid)," (2011).

¹ Muhammad Umer Chapra. "The Islamic vision of development in the light of Maqāsid al-sharī 'ah." *Islamic Research and Training Institute Islamic Development Bank, Jeddah, DOI 10* (2008).

² Zamir Iqbal and Abbas Mirakhor. *An introduction to Islamic finance: Theory and practice*. John Wiley & Sons, 2011.

tradition, if properly understood and adapted, offers potent tools for reforming governance in Muslim-majority and even secular pluralistic contexts.

7.1 Ethical Revival as a Catalyst for Reform

Contemporary governance crises often stem from a breakdown in moral leadership and public trust. Islamic ethics emphasise accountability (*mas'uliyah*), trust (*amanah*), justice (*'adl*), and consultation (*shura*) as core values of political and administrative conduct. Unlike secular models that rely heavily on external regulatory enforcement, the Islamic model prioritises internalised accountability through God-consciousness (*Taqwa*). *Taqwa* functions as an internal psychological deterrent against unethical conduct, especially in "grey areas" where external legal oversight may be absent or easily subverted.¹ Reforming governance through an ethical revival requires a cultural shift in leadership training and public administration, aligning modern systems with a metaphysical worldview that upholds the primacy of collective welfare over individual gain.

7.2 Bridging Tradition and Modern Administration

A key challenge lies in translating classical values into actionable policies within contemporary institutional structures. Traditional Islamic concepts offer precedents that can be adapted into modern oversight bodies:

- Hisbah (Moral Oversight): The classical role of the *muhtasib* in overseeing market ethics has modern analogues in ombudsman institutions, consumer protection agencies, or ethics commissions.
- Bayt al-Mal (Public Treasury): Historical models of the public treasury provide frameworks for centralised social welfare systems and transparent wealth redistribution.
- Maslahah (Public Interest): This principle provides a framework for policy-making that integrates ethical considerations with socio-economic realities, ensuring that governance decisions aim toward the preservation of life, wealth, and intellect.

Furthermore, modern technological innovations like blockchain serve the *Maqasid al-Shariah* objective of protecting wealth (*hifz al-mal*) by providing a decentralised, immutable ledger that minimises the risk of abuse of power and embezzlement.²

7.3 Opportunities in Pluralistic and Secular Contexts

The revival of Islamic ethics is not limited to theocratic states. Principles such as **social responsibility** (*maslahah*) and equity (*qist*) align closely with contemporary Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) standards and global anti-corruption frameworks like the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).³ In secular contexts, Islamic ethical teachings can inform public sector ethics codes, civic education, and judicial reforms, enhancing public trust and ensuring that policy implementation is morally grounded.

8. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Islamic ethics offer a comprehensive "Science of Morals" that redefines the purpose of power and wealth. The research findings indicate that corruption and social injustice are viewed in Islam as profound ontological crises that require a dual-layer solution: individual spiritual purification (*tazkiyah*) and robust institutional accountability (*hisab*).⁴

¹ M. Kabir Hassan and Sirajo Aliyu. "A contemporary survey of Islamic banking literature." *Journal of Financial Stability* 34 (2018): 12-43.

² Abbas J Ali and David Weir. "Islamic perspectives on management and organisation." (2005): 410-415.

³ UNCAC, Second Cycle, and Stefanie Holling. "United nations convention against corruption." (2004).

⁴ World Bank Group. "Enhancing government effectiveness and transparency: The fight against corruption." (2020).

The historical benchmarks set by Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab and Umar ibn Abdul Aziz prove that these principles are not merely utopian ideals but can lead to stable, prosperous, and inclusive societies where poverty is eliminated and justice prevails.¹ In the contemporary era, countries like Malaysia have shown that integrating faith-based ethics with modern regulatory tools—such as Shariah-compliant audits and value-based intermediation—can significantly reduce corruption risks.² Ultimately, the fight against corruption requires a move beyond "rational choice" methodologies toward a value-driven approach that internalises moral integrity as a spiritual requirement.

9. Policy Implications and Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following policies are recommended to integrate Islamic ethics into modern anti-corruption frameworks:

1. Institutionalise the Asset Registry: Modern governments should adopt the precedent set by Caliph Umar by requiring public officials to declare assets before and after their tenure, subject to performance audits to identify disproportionate wealth accumulation.³
2. Integrate *Akhlaq* into Civil Service Training: Leadership and public service programs should incorporate moral training based on Islamic ethical principles like Amanah (trust) and Ihsan (excellence) to foster a culture of integrity from within organisations.⁴
3. Adopt Shariah-Based Technologies: Utilise blockchain and smart contracts for the management of public funds, Zakat distribution, and Waqf assets to ensure absolute transparency and eliminate "leakage" or administrative corruption.⁵
4. Strengthen Independent Ombudsman Systems: Revive the spirit of the Office of Complaints by establishing independent ethics commissions with the power to investigate grievances against high-ranking officials regardless of their social or political status.⁶
5. Promote Islamic Social Finance for SDGs: Leverage productive Sukuk and stock Waqf to fund sustainable development projects, ensuring that capital circulates productively to benefit the marginalised rather than being concentrated among the elite

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¹ Muel Kaptein. "Developing and testing a measure for the ethical culture of organisations: The corporate ethical virtues model." *Journal of Organisational Behaviour: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organisational Psychology and Behaviour* 29, no. 7 (2008): 923-947.

² Muhammad Nooraiman Zailani, Nurul Huda Mohd Satar, and Roza Hazli Zakaria. "Maqasid Al-Shariah based index of socio-economic development: A literature review." *The Journal of Muamalat and Islamic Finance Research* (2022): 47-62.

³ Mohammad Hashim Kamali. "Between Separation and Unity: The Interplay of Law and Morality in Islamic Jurisprudence." In *Sharia Law In The Twenty-First Century*, pp. 21-46. 2022.

⁴ Hissu Hyvärinen, Marten Risius ja Gustav Friis. "A blockchain-based approach towards overcoming financial fraud in public sector services." *Business & Information Systems Engineering* 59, no. 6 (2017): 441-456.

⁵ Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki and Nurdianawati Irwani Abdullah. "Maqasid al-Shariah, Maslahah, and Corporate Social Responsibility (2007)." *American Journal of Islam and Society* 41, no. 1 (2024): 10-35.

⁶ Manisha Nayyar. "Asian Development Bank, Asian Economic Integration Report 2022: Advancing Digital Services Trade in Asia and the Pacific, Asian Development Bank, 2022, 300 pp., \$51 (Paperback). ISBN: 978-92-9269-361-9 (print), ISBN: 978-92-9269-362-6 (electronic), 978-92-9269-363-3 (eBook)." (2022): 211-213.

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