**T.R.**
**ISTANBUL SABAHATTIN ZAIM UNIVERSITY**
**GRADUATE EDUCATION INSTITUTE**
**DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC ECONOMICS AND FINANCE**

# THE ROLE OF ETHICS IN DEVELOPMENT: AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

**Ph.D. DISSERTATION**

**Suheyib ELDERŞEVİ**

**Istanbul**
**January-2025**

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**Ph.D. DISSERTATION**

**Suheyib ELDERŞEVİ**

**Supervisor**
**Prof. Dr. Monzer KAHF**

**Istanbul**
**January-2025**

This study has been approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Ph.D. Degree in Islamic Economics and Finance.

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## DECLARATION OF SCIENTIFIC ETHICS AND ORIGINALITY

This is to certify that this PhD dissertation titled "**The Role of Ethics in Development: An Islamic Perspective**" is my own work and I have acted according to scientific ethics and academic rules while producing it. I have collected and used all information and data according to scientific ethics and guidelines on thesis writing of Sabahattin Zaim University. I have fully referenced, in both the text and bibliography, all direct and indirect quotations and all sources I have used in this work.

Suheyib ELDERŞEVİ

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**Suheyib ELDERŞEVİ**

# ABSTRACT

## THE ROLE OF ETHICS IN DEVELOPMENT: AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

**Suheyib ELDERŞEVİ**

**Ph.D. Dissertation, Islamic Economics and Finance**

**Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Monzer Kahf**

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This dissertation's is based on the conviction that the current environmental and socioeconomic crises—from the phenomenon of global warming to the extraordinary changes in the climate to poverty are the result of a profound moral crisis. Although religions are concerned about protecting the planet, yet it seems that the majority of those problems stem more from human immorality than from natural forces. The dissertation came in six chapters. It adopts a qualitative approach through document analysis strategies and case studies. A framework for sustainable development grounded in Islamic values was presented in this dissertation. It took into account a number of crucial elements that form the basis of advancement and sustainable life. Among these values are justice, social capital, reducing corruption, and reforming the earth. Each of these three values was elaborated in the dissertation. These values are frequently mentioned in Islamic sources due to their significant impact. The dissertation proves that the situation of sustainable development plans will be far better if these values are appropriately incorporated into the development scheme of any society. Moreover, the dissertation highlighted that shifting the development model from a pattern centered only on the individual to one that stresses the harmonious connection between the Creator, people, community, and nature is necessary to activate sustainable development. The dissertation also sheds light on the Nordic welfare model, which appropriately combines economic efficiency and social equality.



**Keywords:** Sustainable Development - Islamic Values - Justice - Combating Corruption - Nordic welfare model.

# ÖZET

## AHLAKIN KALKINMADAKİ ROLÜ: İSLAMİ BİR BAKIŞ AÇISI

**Suheyib ELDERŞEVİ**

**Doktora Tezi, İslam Ekonomisi ve Finansı**

**Danışman: Prof. Dr. Monzer Kahf**

**Ocak-2025, 172 + XVI Sayfa**

Bu çalışma, mevcut çevresel ve sosyoekonomik krizlerin, küresel ısınma, iklim değişiklikleri, yoksulluk ve eşitsizlik gibi sorunların temelinde derin bir ahlaki kriz olduğunu savunmaktadır. Dinler gezegenin korunması konusunda endişeler taşısa da, çevresel sorunların çoğunun doğal güçlerden değil, insan ahlaksızlığından kaynaklandığı belirtilmektedir. Çalışma, nitel bir yaklaşımı benimseyerek belge analizi ve vaka çalışmaları yöntemlerini kullanmıştır. İslamî değerlere dayalı bir sürdürülebilir kalkınma çerçevesi ortaya konulmuş ve bu çerçeve, iyi bir yaşamın ve ilerlemenin temel unsurlarını kapsamlı şekilde analiz etmiştir. Adalet, sosyal sermaye, yolsuzluğun azaltılması ve yeryüzünün ıslahı gibi temel değerler, İslam kaynaklarında sıkça vurgulanan ve toplumlar üzerindeki olumlu etkileri nedeniyle ön plana çıkan unsurlardır. Çalışma, bu değerlerin toplumların kalkınma planlarına entegre edilmesi durumunda sürdürülebilir kalkınma hedeflerine daha etkili bir şekilde ulaşılabileceğini savunmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, kalkınma modelinin birey merkezli bir yaklaşımdan birey, toplum, doğa ve Yaratıcı arasındaki uyumlu ilişkileri esas alan bir modele kaydırılmasının, sürdürülebilir kalkınmanın etkinleştirilmesi ve insan medeniyetinin ilerlemesi açısından zorunlu olduğu vurgulanmıştır. Çalışma ayrıca, İslam medeniyetinin sürdürülebilir yaşam fikrini nasıl yeniden şekillendirdiğine dair "zühd" kavramına odaklanmıştır. Son olarak, çalışma, ekonomik verimlilik ve sosyal eşitliği başarılı bir şekilde birleştiren İskandinav refah modelini detaylı olarak incelemiştir. Bu model, kalkınma açısından üstün nitelikleri nedeniyle seçilmiş ve incelenmiştir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Sürdürülebilir Kalkınma, İslami Değerler, Adalet, Yolsuzlukla Mücadele, İskandinav Refah Modeli.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

**AIDS:** Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

**COP:** Conference of the Parties

**CSS:** Green, Social and Sustainability

**ESG:** Environmental, Social, and Governance

**GDP:** Gross Domestic Product

**GNP:** Gross National Product

**IMF:** International Monetary Fund

**IPCC:** Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

**IUCN:** International Union for Conservation of Nature

**MDGs:** Millennium Development Goals

**OECD:** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

**OIC:** Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

**OPEC:** Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

**SDGs:** Sustainable Development Goals

**SESRIC:** Statistical, Economic, Social Research and Training Centre of Islamic Countries

**UN:** United Nations

**UN-CSD:** United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development

**UNEP:** United Nations Environment Programme

**UNESCO:** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

**WCED:** World Commission on Environment and Development

**WTO:** World Trade Organization

**WWF:** World Wildlife Fund

# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Dissertation Subject

Issues of environment and sustainability, climate change, poverty, global financial crises, and the fight against AIDS, COVID-19 and other chronic diseases have become hot topics since the beginning of the present century. Overall, the current reality of environment, economy, societal coherence and health is bitter at the expense of the depletion of the earth's resources, excessive consumption, monopolistic enrichment and greed, which in turn have led to an imbalance in both the universe and human lives (Adams & Jeanrenaud, 2008).

Deforestation, habitat devastation, soil issues like salinization, denudation, and loss of fertility, ineffective management of water, hunting and overfishing, the introduction of alien species, overpopulation, and growing individual environmental harm are the eight major factors that Diamond (2005) identifies as contributing to society's collapse. Diamond went on to say that climate change brought on by humans, the accumulation of dangerous chemicals in the environment, and energy deficiency are some of the new variables that could weaken and destroy present and future nations (Diamond, 2005).

A significant event occurred in the third quarter of 2000 when the Millennium Summit held by the UN decided on the development goals known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Those were eight goals, along with sixty indicators and twenty-one targets. "A better world for all" was the United Nations (UN) slogan. The UN's member states agreed that more needed to be done to aid the impoverished. By enhancing the social and economic circumstances in the world's poorest nations, these objectives seek to promote development (UN, 2016).

In the third quarter 2015, the UN member states overwhelmingly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This plan consists of 17 goals, known as Sustainable Development goals (SDGs). Moreover, 169 targets and 231 indicators were also part of

the agreed agenda. This agenda seeks to establish the course for national and international development policies and offer fresh possibilities and chances to close the gap between development and human rights. A broad framework that directs national and global development initiatives is also provided. The plan addresses four primary topics: partnerships, the economy, society, and the environment (Palmer, 2015).

The SDGs were universal goals, whereas the MDGs came to support the countries known as “developing countries” only. Moreover, the SDGs are a truly universal framework that applies to all countries. All countries are supposed to make progress towards sustainable development. Also, the SDGs are comprehensively committed to achieving a broad range of social, economic, and ecological goals and to achieving a society that is more inclusive, tranquil, and free from threats and dread (Sachs, 2012).

However, given the current reality, a Press Release from the UN in July 2023 warned the world of significant losses in terms of the SDGs unless urgent actions are taken; otherwise, the promise of "a better world for all" will be in vain. The same press release emphsized that there are just about seven years left to reach the targeted year and the stakes are pretty high. Over thirty per cent of the targets have either no progress at all or, worse, have declined below the baseline set in 2015. If current trends continue, 575 million people will still be living in extreme poverty by 2030, according to data collected in 119 countries in 2022. Laws prohibiting direct and indirect discrimination against women are absent in 56% of nations. The global temperature is 11°C higher than pre-industrial levels (UN Press Release, 2023).

It is crucial to note that despite the UN setting goals to achieve sustainable growth and development, there is pressure on the planet in all directions and forms, whether from individuals or governments of countries. Today's world faces substantial environmental problems that negatively affect economic and social development. There is a near-general conviction that development goals cannot succeed unless an ethical aspect accompanies them to ensure a fair balance between the requirements of present generations and the rights of future generations. Over the past few years, many countries have realised a gap

in development plans, which is the ethical aspect that cannot be separated from the development strategies (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

For instance, in the middle of the last century, Indonesia invited the prominent German professor Hjalmar Schacht to draw up an economic development plan. Schacht was a well-known economist who specialized in the field of economic development. He performed a significant role in the German economy's recovery after the First World War. Surprisingly, the Schacht plan for Indonesia failed, although Indonesia is a country rich in human and natural resources, including mineral wealth and agricultural products. This failure was due to neglecting Indonesian society's ethical and social aspects. Schacht's plan succeeded in Germany because he originally belonged to the Western social equation, which he was well aware of; however, he could not succeed in Indonesia because he did not consider the cultural equation of Indonesia (Bennabi, 1987). Cases like this were the initial signal concerning the importance of ethics to achieving desired economic development.

Considering Islamic rules and principles, a comprehensive framework has been set to regulate the relationship between individual and individual, as well as between individual and nature. Nature in this context includes all types of natural capital, such as forests, plains, rivers, seas, soil, etc. This is due to the belief that any defect or injustice in the natural capital will negatively affect different aspects of life, such as cultivation, offspring and kinship ties in accordance with Allah almighty's saying: { Now, if you hypocrites turn away, you might sever your familial links and spread corruption across the country} (Muhammad: 22). This verse indicates that turning away from the path of revelation and deviating from Allah's law will lead to the spread of corruption on earth.

Generally, divine religions contain a set of ethics and values that guide human behaviour, including the economic aspect. It is part of the mission of religions. The impact of religion on ethics has been repeatedly discussed in the past. The common opinion is that religiosity plays a positive role in performing ethical actions. The believers in God are more cautious about acting unethically as they believe that God watches them and they will be held accountable (Conroy & Emerson, 2004). Islamic religion, mainly through its sources

(Quran and Sunnah), came with a comprehensive framework that includes values for all aspects of human behaviour. Allah SWT says, {This day I have made your religion perfect for you} (al-Ma'idah:3). Regarding the economic aspect, Allah SWT discusses in Surah al-Mutaffifin, verses 1- 4, the problem of dishonesty in economic dealings, with a special emphasis on people who defraud others by providing less than what is required in measurement or trade. These verses cover a critical ethical-economic practice of justice in measuring by weight or volume in the market, and Allah warns cheaters of their destiny in the Hereafter (Kahf, 1998).

According to Kahf (2002), development in Islam is a comprehensive concept that considers moral, spiritual, and material aspects. Kahf (2002) also stated that a Human being can achieve development by expanding efforts and improving moral, spiritual, social, and economic fate; in simple words, the surroundings of the human being are always an aim of development. Islamic civilization considers both the material and non-material well-being of man. Values and ethics are mingled with all aspects of life, and Muslim communities have witnessed visible economic development progress. The detailed prescriptions revealed in its sources (Quran and Sunnah) for different matters made the Islamic message unequalled. Economically and ethically, it is possible to make the earth flourish and ensure the well-being of humanity if Islamic prescriptions are well applied (Kanbir & Dikkaya, 2021).

Considering contemporary development models, the Scandinavian model appears to be among the most successful in various aspects. Scandinavian countries ranked at the forefront in the overall performance of all 193 UN Member States (Sachs *et al*., 2024). The most distinctive feature of the Scandinavian economic model is the social welfare of an economy that blends elements of capitalism and social democratic systems. The Scandinavian model has successfully combined the market economy with other social components, such as equal income distribution. Therefore, this study will focus on the Nordic model due to its superiority in different developmental elements.

The idea of this study stems from the conviction that the contemporary environmental crisis, from unprecedented climate changes to the phenomenon of "Global Warming" to the imbalance in the climate system of the entire planet earth, began due to a moral crisis. It appears that this imbalance in the climate system of the planet Earth is not natural or normal in most cases and that its causes do not go back to natural phenomena or forces as much as they go back to the activities of humans themselves, although all heavenly religions came to be keen on preserving this earth. It is noticeable that the contemporary development crisis has been capturing the attention of scientists, politicians, civil society organizations, and various media outlets for years. (Zaidi, 1981).

The central focus of this study is to bring values and development together. A handful of studies have been undertaken to understand the role of values in development from the Islamic perspective. Undoubtedly, various factors are needed for development to be achieved; however, this study will consider the area of values and its significant role in achieving the desired development goals. The study will rely on primary Islamic sources (Quran and Sunnah) and the available literature to explore the various aspects of development-related values.

### 1.2 The Purpose of the Dissertation

Diamond (2005) identified several causes of societal collapse, primarily concerning environmental damage. Diamond pointed out that, similar to the fall of the Mayan civilization in Central America, environmental deterioration and climate change caused the Anasazi nation in the southwest United States to experience the collapse of their society. As Diamond (2005) shows, many societies have fallen apart in the past because they could not address problems, including management of water and tackling the issues of deforestation, soil loss, and climate change. However, by overusing the environment for temporary benefits and disregarding the potential long-term effects of these actions, humans helped bring their societies to an end.

Ibn Khaldun's theory has discussed the cyclical succession of civilizations and the reasons for the rise and fall of nations. Ibn Khaldun argues that there is a close connection between

the end of civilizations and societies' neglect of the moral aspect. Ibn Khaldun stated that neglecting ethics in any society will have a negative impact. Khaldun gives an example of Mesopotamia and Egypt, when there was a lack of rainfall, leading to agricultural crops' failure. Although there was water storage and irrigation by officials, environmental problems such as high temperatures and rising water levels caused natural capital's environmental degradation, resulting in failure on all levels. This falls under the umbrella of neglecting the moral aspect of society (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

It is contended that sustainable development is a reaction to creature needs and a necessity. The goal of sustainable development is to counteract unbalanced development patterns brought on by poor resource management and a lack of moral principles. Rethinking how people and nature interact is necessary for sustainable development. To tackle the underlying causes of humanity's issues, a comprehensive strategy based on culture and the environment must be taken. To put it briefly, in order to survive, humans must coexist peacefully with nature. This is a crucial idea in a time of globalization when more significant issues have emerged, such as environmental degradation, a decline in biodiversity and cultural diversity, unemployment, poverty, and the growing divide between the "rich" and the "poor" (Ansari *et al*., 2012).

Given the current situation, it is evident that the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) group of countries is not on pace to accomplish any of the SDGs by 2030. This is said according to a study conducted by the SESRIC study on the achievement of prioritized SDGs in OIC countries in 2023 (SESRIC, 2024). The relevant SDGs targets cannot be met by 2030, even with some progress made on SDGs 1 (poverty alleviation), 3 (guarantee everyone's health), 4 (guarantee that everyone has access to high-quality, inclusive education), 6 (Sanitation and pure water), 7 (proper energy at affordable rate), 9 (industry, innovation, and infrastructure), 14 (life under the seas and oceans), and 16 (justice, peace, and robust institutions).

However, by methodically implementing relevant policies, strategies, and action plans, the Nordic welfare states have long been leaders in sustainable development and have

established a strong basis for carrying out the 2030 Agenda. In 2022, the Nordic nations topped the global Sustainable Development Report (previously known as the SDGs Index and Dashboards), with Finland, Denmark, and Sweden making up the top three (Flick *et al*., 2022).

Considering the Islamic worldview, it provides an integrated and participatory perspective on human civilization and sustainability as a whole. The goals offer a structure for evaluating public policy and striking a balance between the interests of the public and private sectors. Islam stands for harmony and connection between the environment, humans, and nature. Humans are the vicegerents who represent all facets of reform and advancement because of their roles as guardians and witnesses to the planet. Islam also presents comprehensive viewpoints on confronting and explaining the underlying reasons for the current environmental catastrophe, which are reflected in poverty, human security, and climate challenges (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

This dissertation revolves around the intersection of values and sustainable development, mainly from an Islamic perspective. To do that, the following sub-objectives are considered:

Firstly, present the general background of sustainable development. This objective will be achieved by discussing the history of development thought and its evolution, the conception of sustainable development, the overall status of sustainable development, and Sustainable Development in Western thought. Moreover, the three scopes of sustainable development will also be discussed, mainly economic, then social, and finally ecology. The quantitative and qualitative indicators for measuring sustainable development will also be presented.

Secondly, emphasize the Islamic viewpoint on sustainable development. This objective will be achieved by presenting Islamic perspectives on ecosystems and progress, along with environmental dimensions and an Islamic standpoint. Moreover, the three dimensions of sustainable development from the Islamic perspective (Economic, social,

and environmental) will also be discussed. Islamic developmental values will also be highlighted.

Thirdly, promote sustainable development through the framework of Islamic values for sustainable lifestyle. This objective will be achieved by identifying the fundamental notions of justice -from an Islamic viewpoint- and their implications for sustainable development, presenting the significance of social capital and social justice in Islamic teachings, and presenting Islamic views on climate change and the importance of the principles of reforming the earth.

Fourthly, present the welfare model of Nordic countries. This objective will be achieved by discussing the overview of the concept of the social welfare state and the social welfare model of Scandinavian countries, which combines economic efficiency and social equality. Moreover, the impact of values on the manifestations of economic efficiency, social equality, and environmental coherence of the Scandinavian model will also be highlighted.

### 1.3 The Scope and Content of the Dissertation

This dissertation is limited to the following themes: SDGs, Sustainable development from an Islamic viewpoint, Islamic values relevant to Sustainable development, and the welfare model of the Nordic countries. The dissertation will highlight the overall background of the SDGs, which aim to eradicate poverty and hunger, achieve quality education, ensure good health, promote social justice, and protect the environment. The three fundamental aspects of sustainable development—the environment, economics, and society—will also be covered.

Sustainable development from an Islamic Standpoint will also be covered. This will present how Islam deals with environmental, social, and economic issues from a comprehensive perspective that ensures sustainability. Concepts such as balance (environmental and social justice) and preserving natural resources will be discovered. Social and economic justice in Islam through zakat and charity will also be highlighted.

Moreover, balancing between humans and nature from an Islamic perspective to protect the environment and preserve natural resources will also be discussed.

Islamic values related to sustainable development, such as social, economic, and environmental justice, will be discussed. Moreover, moderation and balance from the Islamic point of view in the framework of development will be highlighted. Finally, several essential values, such as Rahma and Ihsan, in the context of sustainable development, will also be presented. The dissertation will also present the welfare model of Nordic countries. The effect of values on the manifestations of economic efficiency, social equality, and environmental coherence of the Scandinavian model will also be highlighted.

### 1.4 The Importance and Originality of the Dissertation

The originality of this study stems mainly from the conviction that the contemporary environmental crisis, from unprecedented climate changes to the phenomenon of "Global Warming" to the imbalance in the climate system of the entire planet earth, began due to a moral crisis. It appears that this imbalance in the climate system of the planet earth is not natural or normal in most cases and that its causes do not go back to natural phenomena or forces as much as they go back to the activities of humans themselves, although all heavenly religions came to be keen on preserving this earth. It is noticeable that the contemporary development crisis has been capturing the consideration of scientists, legislators, organizations, and numerous media outlets for years.

The central focus of this study is to bring values and development together. Multiple factors are needed to achieve development; however, this study will consider the area of values and its significant role in achieving the desired development goals. The study will rely on primary Islamic sources (Quran and Sunnah) and the available literature to explore the various aspects of development-related values. Al-Bukhari narrated in Hadith No. 273 that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, (I was assigned to perfect individual's morality). Also, Abu Dawud narrated in Hadith No.1546 that Prophet Muhammad said, (O Allah, I turn to Thee for protection against polarization, hypocrisy, and wickedness). These

Ahadith implicitly indicate the role of ethics as a factor in leading towards peaceful coexistence in the social environment.

## 1.5 The Research Method of the Dissertation

Research in social science is usually conducted through either qualitative or quantitative methods (Yin Robert, 1994). The approach depends on the nature of the study; the quantitative approach is suitable for studies that contain numbers and statistics, while the qualitative approach is suitable for studies that deal with ideas (Tashakkori, Teddlie, & Teddlie, 1998). This study will adopt a qualitative approach since the research objective requires an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon. A qualitative approach will facilitate a deeper and more complete understanding of the role of values in development from the Islamic perspective.

### 1.5.1 Research Strategy

Yin (1994) listed a number of research techniques that might be used in social science investigations, including surveys, experiments, case studies, historical analysis, and archive material analysis. Each of these tactics has specific benefits and drawbacks. This study found that the most suitable research strategies are document analysis and case studies. Document analysis is ideal due to the fact that the research relies on the primary Islamic sources that are (Quran and Sunnah). Additionally, the study will depend on the available literature to explore and explain the Islamic values and development from the Islamic viewpoint. Moreover, the case study strategy will be adopted to analyze the welfare model of the Nordic countries. This strategy will facilitate understanding the experience of the Nordic countries with regard to values and their model of welfare and development.

### 1.5.2 Data Collection

This study will rely on secondary sources to discuss the intersection of values and sustainability concerning the SDGs, mainly from an Islamic point of view. The first part of the dissertation will depend on the available literature and the Quran and Sunnah to

discuss Islamic values relevant to sustainable development. However, the second part of the dissertation will depend on secondary sources such as reports and statistics to understand the Nordic welfare model.

### 1.6 Literature Review Related to the Dissertation Subject

There is a vast literature on the Islamic moral system. Ibn Miskawayh and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali were among the early Muslim thinkers who discussed ethics and values. Ethics in the theory of Miskawayh and al-Ghazali has a strong relationship with religion. The Islamic religion, according to them, is the basis of ethics. They defined Ethics as a translation of different human behaviour caused by an act of psychological motives latent in the interior of the human soul. Both Ibn Miskawayh and al-Ghazali were acquainted with the contribution of early philosophers such as Aristotle, Zeno of Elea, Galen, and others who contributed significantly to the field of ethics; thus, their contributions were as filtering of ethical theories of other nations according to Islamic teachings (Ibn Miskawayh, 1985; al-Ghazali, 2005).

Considering the contemporary literature on Islamic values and ethics, Muhammad Abdullah Draz was one of the most outstanding modern Muslim scholars who contributed to the field of the Islamic moral system. Draz contributed a doctoral dissertation in French, later translated into English and Arabic, at Sorbonne University. His main objective was to highlight the general framework of ethics as per Quranic verses from theoretical and practical perspectives. The study also compares some Western philosophical theories. Moreover, the study concluded with an integrated overview of practical ethics as mentioned in the verses of the Noble Qur'an (Draz, 2008). Furthermore, Ansari, 1989 Al-Attar, 2010, and Reinhart, 1983, have covered different aspects of the Islamic moral system. The discussions usually revolve around the Islamic ethical system in general and the evidence from the Qur'an and Sunnah that are relevant to the system.

Kanbir and Dikkaya (2021) conducted an interesting study and prepared a Development Index based on Islamic values. The index was prepared over two main categories: material and spiritual development. The study found that Muslim countries could not take first

place in the ranking of the Islamic Development Index. Countries such as Switzerland, New Zealand, Norway, Denmark, and Canada were taking the first positions. The study stated that the issue of the backwardness of Muslims is the reason for not practising Islamic principles. Moreover, Mirakhor, Iqbal, & Sadr 2020; Chapra 2009 and Ibrahim, 2018, also tried to connect ethics with different aspects of Islamic economics and development. Most of their works are revolved around the values that should be shown in development progress.

Moreover, considering the literature relevant to sustainable development and its strategies and goals, it is noted that it was among the topics that received intensive research from Western writers such as Sneddon *et al*. (2006), Pezzey (1992) and Blewitt (2012). This indicates that it is one of the critical topics that the West has extensively researched due to its close connection to human life and attempts to support the reform of the global status.

Muslim writers have also taken the initiative to discuss the concept of development in an Islamic context. In the early literature, Khurshid Ahmad (1979), Muhammad Shawqi al Fanjari (1977), Muhammad al Mubarak (1977), and Monzer Kahf (2002) took the lead. The discussion of the early literature on sustainable development revolved around some ideas, such as the Islamic teachings, which are full of orders requesting people to seek a Rizq (sustenance) in all ways as long as it does not harm the environment. Moreover, Individuals and governments alike bear responsibility for developmental efforts. Also, Islamic sources have encouraged the enhancement of human resources, expanding the availability of food and other necessities, raising living standards, and decreasing generational and regional economic and social imbalances (Kahf, 2002).

Zizi (2022) conducted a study to prove that Islamic economics takes precedence over all other theories and initiatives in applying the notion of sustainable development. The Islamic Shari'a is full of ideas that shape the thoughts and notions related to development generally. The author stated that following the SDGs for Muslims starts from religious motives. Al-jayyousi *et al.* (2022) discussed the concept of sustainable development and

sought to investigate the feasibility of implementing Islamic development paradigms in order to advance human-centered, inclusive, and pro-poor development.

It can be said that the subject of sustainable development in its broad sense, and sustainable development from the perspective of Islamic Shari'ah, has been extensively researched; however, it is noted that there is a research gap in connecting Islamic values to the goals and strategies of sustainable development. This dimension is crucial in this context due to a broad conviction that the contemporary environmental and socio-economic crisis began due to a moral crisis.

### 1.7 Design and Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into Six chapters as follows:

Chapter One gives the reader a brief overview of the research background by outlining the research problem and anticipated research objectives. It will also cover the importance of the research topic, its value, and its limitations. This chapter will explain the methods and techniques that will be used for the study to achieve the proposed objectives. Finally, it will summarise the literature on sustainable development, ethics and values, and development ethics.

Chapter Two will present the Overall Background of Sustainable Development. It will discuss the history and evolution of development thought, the concept of sustainable development, the overall status of sustainable development, and Sustainable Development in Western thought. Moreover, this chapter will cover the three scopes of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental). The chapter will also discuss quantitative and qualitative indicators for measuring sustainable development.

Chapter Three will highlight the development in the Islamic viewpoint and the environmental issues from the Islamic point of view. Additionally, the discussion will revolve around the three scopes of sustainability from the Islamic perspective. These scopes include the economic, social, and environmental aspects. Moreover, part of the discussion will be directed to Islamic developmental values.

Chapter Four will promote sustainable development through Islamic values for a sustainable lifestyle. It will discuss the fundamental notions of justice—from an Islamic viewpoint—and their implications for sustainable development, the significance of social capital and justice in Islamic teachings, Islamic views on climate challenges, and the importance of the principles of reforming the earth.

Chapter Five will present the Welfare Model of Nordic Countries. It will provide an overview of the concept of the social welfare state and the social welfare model of Scandinavian countries, which combines economic efficiency and social equality. Moreover, the impact of values on the manifestations of economic efficiency, social equality, and environmental coherence of the Scandinavian model will also be highlighted. Finally, chapter Six will summarize the study and provide conclusions and recommendations.

# CHAPTER II

# EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: AN OVERVIEW

## 2.1 Introduction

Most of societies suffer from the economic problem represented by the mismatch between unlimited material and non-material human needs, and the natural resources capable of satisfying these needs. Those resources are characterized by relative scarcity and exhaustibility. Issues of environment and sustainability, climate change, poverty, global financial crises, and the fight against AIDS, covid and other cronic deceases have become hot topics since the beginning of the present century. Overall, the current reality of environment, economy, societal coherence and health is bitter now at the expense of the depletion of the earth's resources, excessive consumption, monopolistic enrichment and greed, which in turn have led to imbalance in both the universe and human lives (Adams & Jeanrenaud, 2008).

Deforestation, habitat destruction, soil issues like erosion, salinization, and loss of soil fertility, improper water management, overfishing and hunting, the introduction of alien species, overpopulation, and growing individual environmental harm are the eight major factors that Diamond (2005) identifies as contributing to society's collapse. Diamond went on to say that human-caused climate change, the buildup of hazardous chemicals in the environment, and energy shortages are some of the new variables that could weaken and destroy present and future nations (Diamond, 2005).

It is important to note that despite the UN setting SDGs, there is pressure on the planet in all directions and forms, whether from individuals or governments of countries. Today's world faces substantial environmental problems that negatively affect economic and social development. There is a near-general conviction that development goals cannot succeed unless an ethical aspect accompanies them to ensure a fair balance between the requirements of present generations and the rights of future generations. Over the past few

years, many countries have realised that there is a gap in development plans, which is the ethical aspect that cannot be separated from the development strategies (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

This chapter will address the following topics: the sustainable development concept, its dimensions, and its historical evolution. In short, his chapter aims to achieve the following objectives: A) present the overall background and history of sustainable development. B) discuss the history of development thought and its evolution. C) present the overall status of sustainable development and its significance in Western thought. D) emphasize the three primary facets of sustainable development—economic, social, and environmental—as well as the SDGs. e) discuss the quantitative and qualitative indicators for measuring sustainable development will also be presented.

## 2.2 History of Development thought and its Evolution

The concept of development has revolved around different meanings, which has led to ambiguity in its definition. In fact, due to natural response to the problems suffered by societies and a reflection of international and local efforts, the concept and content of development has continued to develop as a realistic result of the development of economic and social thought. The industrial revolution, the collapse of the feudal system, and the emergence of the capitalist industrial system affected the economic and social thought of various thinkers, as Saint-Simon considered social progress the basis of the reform movement that aims to develop the social system (Cobbinah *et al*., 2011). The Auguste Comte considered that social change is nothing but the result of the growth of human thought, as he explained his theory through the natural transition of thought from religious to practical thought (Etzioni, 2024).

Post-World War II, the mainstream focused on National Income and ignored society's problems, such as poverty, unemployment, and inequality in income distribution. Development became limited to material things such as the gross domestic product, average per capita income, savings, and investment. Subsequently, development plans were distanced from social aspects that focus on human beings. Countries relied on the

industrialization strategy to increase national income and achieve high economic growth rates. Some countries also followed alternative strategies, such as increasing exports and foreign aid, when the industrialization strategy failed to solve economic and social problems (Kuvvet, 2019). The Walt Rostow model (The stages of economic growth) is considered one of the models of that era, which expresses that development accompanies economic growth (Piętak, 2014).

It was noted that the nature of the societies was not considered in most of the experiments and studies dealing with the socio-economic issues. This was one of the main reasons many development experiments failed to achieve the population's aspirations in meeting their basic needs. Therefore, policymakers were required to develop plans that were more concerned with human beings in order to build their capabilities. This plan was prompted by UNESCO to link investment in human beings with development plans. Interestingly, UNESCO regarded investment in human beings as one of the top goals to positively impact development in all fields (Ismail, 2015).

At the end of the sixties, the concept shifted to satisfying basic needs, which prompted governments in developing countries to assess their needs for essential services such as education, health and infrastructure; the world was witnessing an acceptable level of economic and social indicators. However, in the eighties, the world witnessed a noticeable increase in interdependence, and most countries were moving towards an increase in foreign trade compared to the growth rates of the gross domestic product. After that, the debt crisis began, leading to developing countries bearing the most significant burden as they were the weaker party regarding international equality. Subsequently, the state's role diminished, while a more substantial role was given to the market in determining the course of economic and social activity (Ridwan, 1990).

In the early nineties, an essential evolution in development thought emerged that restored humans to their rightful place due to several efforts seeking to identify the dimensions of the development process. This approach was called the Human development model. This concept was considered much broader than traditional growth and economic development

theories since the economic growth models concerned increasing the national product. However, the human development model combined the production and distribution of income and goods and grew people's capabilities and skills (Miscevic, 2021).

This leads to maximizing investment in the human element parallel to material investments. The more investment in education, health, training and productive research, the more it contributes to increasing national income. Moreover, a new trend has emerged, calling for the integration of development plans with the environmental aspects, as development mainly starts with focusing on the relationship between humans and resources (Gechev, 2005). This was called the sustainable development model. This model will be studied in more depth.

### 2.3 The Concept of Sustainable Development

The term sustainable development goes beyond the economic aspect; instead, it considers the overall aspects, which include financial, social, environmental, and cultural development. Most explanations of sustainable development share a standard view that it is a transformation that aims to advance society economically, socially, technologically, and culturally and employ all material, natural, and human resources for all society members.

Since the 1990s, sustainability has become a significant concern of governments and is considered a means to achieve justice in distributing wealth among different generations. Sustainable development is a tool for addressing the various problems of individuals, such as poverty, unemployment, social inequality, environmental pollution, etc. The path to achieving sustainable development is complex and multidimensional; it requires a combination of economic, social, and ecological aspects. Development today is no longer limited to economic figures and indicators, rather, it includes social changes, the participation of individuals in decision-making, an environment free of pollution factors, the dissemination of education, and the adoption of knowledge to keep pace with scientific and technological progress.

In 1980, the world conservation strategy was prepared and published by three primary institutions, i.e., the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN); in 1991 “Caring for the Earth” report has been published by same institutions. The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) also published a report in 1987. Additionally, the idea of sustainability was explored during several UN conferences, firstly in Stockholm in 1972, then in Rio in 1992, and in Johannesburg in 2002 (Adams, 2009).

Sustainability was also used to refer to a balanced economy with vital environmental support systems. The environmental, economic, and social facets comprise the three primary dimensions of sustainable development. As seen in this figure, several models have depicted “the environment” as a generic framework comprising life-support systems that serve as the foundation for social and financial capital (al-Jayyousi, 2013). The Brundtland Commission originally coined the phrase "sustainable development" in 1987, and since then, it has gained widespread usage across various industries, including housing, transportation, water, and tourism. The term was defined as "a development that meets present requirements and needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987). One essential element of this description is the demands of both the current and future generations.

Sustainable development involves enhancing living standards while remaining within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems (IUCN *et al*., 1991). The Brundtland Commission's definition is more restrictive than this one. It is evident that this definition covers crucial topics like raising living standards and sustaining ecosystems' carrying capacity. In this view, “improving the life standards” seems more ambitious than "meeting needs," as defined by the Brundtland Commission.

It is noticeable that the concepts of development and sustainable development are alike in some respects yet differ in others. Both concepts call for transforming quantitative economic growth into integrated economic and social development. Previous definitions

also confuse the components of development and its requirements. Sustainable development is distinguished from development in its traditional concept by the clarity of the environmental dimension of sustainability, and the emphasis on the natural resources that sustainable development addresses constitutes a common element between the economy and the environment.

Accordingly, a comprehensive definition of sustainable development can be formulated as follows: "a continuous dynamic process with economic, social, and environmental aspects, seeking social justice, raising the standard of living, ensuring proper education and health services for all members of society, and protection the natural resources, all in a way that ensures the sustainability of these resources for future generations.

### 2.4 A Glance on the Present Status of Sustainable Development

The existing Western development model is centred around consumption. Compounding the issue is the media's promotion of overconsumption as a pathway to happiness. This phenomenon demonstrates growing patterns in the consumption of foodstuff, natural energy resources, and water. Reports on the "State of the World" environmental effects, and assessments by the WWF evaluate the environmental crisis, with estimates from 2008-2009 (MEA, 2005). Statistics of the latter half of the twentieth century reveal significant growth in global population, urbanization, consumption, international communication, and motor vehicles.

Environmental degradation has significantly hindered progress toward the Millennium Development Goals. Over the past 50 years, only four out of 24 ecosystem services have seen productivity improvements. More than 70% of the 1.1 billion people living on less than $1 daily reside in rural areas and rely directly on agriculture and fishing (UN, 2024).

According to statistics, emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO2) at double the natural rate are the main cause of the sixteen-fold rise in energy consumption over the course of the twentieth century. Additionally, emissions of nitrogen monoxide (NO), carbon dioxide (CO2), and methane (CH4) are also above natural levels, along with the release of synthetic chemicals

like chlorofluorocarbons (Crutzen, 2002). The Fourth Assessment Report (2007) from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) states that eleven of the last twelve years (1996-2006) rank among the ten warmest years since temperature records started in 1850.

The natural extinction rate has increased by 100 to 10,000, and human activity has adversely affected three-quarters of the Earth's livable ground. Around 40 per cent of land suitable for production has been extensively used by humans, with ammonia-based fertilizers accounting for 40 per cent of this usage. Industrial fishing practices, such as trawling and pollution affecting shallow oceans and coral reefs, have profoundly changed marine ecosystems, a phenomenon that scientists are just beginning to grasp fully. Compared to pre-industrial levels, the number of large predacious fish in these seas has decreased by 10%. Additionally, indoor and outdoor air pollution causes the premature deaths of almost two million people annually worldwide, while the global per capita supply of freshwater is decreasing, highlighting water pollution as one of the most critical environmental threats we face (Adams, 2008).

According to the World Bank (2000), low-income countries account for almost less than 10 per cent of the global gross national product (GNP). The Central African Republic, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Republic of Yemen are among the countries with annual per capita incomes below $300. Africa is home to the majority of these poor countries, many of which also deal with the fallout from domestic or international hostilities, as is the case in Liberia, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The poorest nations and their citizens own a small and steadily decreasing portion of the world's wealth (Nielsen, 2011).

It can be argued that the present emphasis on sustainable development should shift towards a more comprehensive focus on the Moral dimension of "sustainability" alongside the principle of "justice and combating corruption." This approach should consider justice for

current generations (particularly for the impoverished) and justice for future generations (for those yet to be born), in addition to advocating for the rights of all other species.

### 2.5 Sustainable Development in Western Thought

The detrimental effects of the Western development model were the subject of intense discussion during the 20th century. Linking the quest of happiness to excessive consumption and turning luxuries into needs was one of the main complaints. The Western growth model was also attacked by environmentalists for its detrimental effects on the depletion of natural resources and the contamination of soil, water, and air (Alden *et al*., 2020).

This may be consistent with Islamic thought, which believes that the Western development approach has transformed natural resources into commodities and threatened natural resources with excessive depletion, corruption of the land, and the destruction of crops and offspring (al-Jayyousi, 2008) In contrast, Islamic thought, as will be explained, sets standards for justice and social responsibility, as well as the consecration of the principle of benevolence, non-excess, protection of natural resources, and kindness to living beings (Taman, 2011).

The beginning of the twenty-first century witnessed some Asian countries, such as China and India, growing rapidly. The growth in China, for example, requires increased consumption and depletion of the planet's resources, such as grains, meat, iron, wood and energy. This process adopted the Western model regarding excessive consumption and using fossil energy (gas, coal, oil). Such practice will negatively affect human health and harm the planet and its global economy (al-Jayyousi, 2008).

The Western development model has to be severely examined because it ignored moral considerations and was unable to successfully address issues affecting the environment, the economy, and the populace. Furthermore, the necessity for a new model that accomplishes social justice, food security, and resource protection is best demonstrated by the global financial crunch that has been going on since 2008.

Perhaps the best evidence of the extent of the failure of the Western model to achieve social justice is that in 2000, the 200 wealthiest people in the world owned wealth equal to what the 2 billion poorest people owned. In addition, about a billion people (i.e. one-sixth of the planet's population) do not have the minimum level of decent living, including food, water, and basic services such as education and health facilities (Sachs, 2012).

The manifestations and consequences of adopting the Western development and thinking system in recent decades have led to the destruction of crops and offspring, corruption of the land, the exacerbation of poverty, disease, financial and economic crises, air and water pollution, and climate change (Schumacher, 2011). All of this requires global collaboration to think about a new system and a more precise and comprehensive vision for development with innovative concepts that ensure the preservation of the causes of life on this planet (Schumacher, 2011).

The concept of sustainable development has been subjected to a wave of criticism, including the opinion that it is broad and complex. This led to inconsistent use of the concept in different fields. For instance, politicians, decision-makers, businessmen, development and economic experts, and civil society all use this concept (sustainable development). However, each of them has different visions regarding the harmony of the economy with the environment. Therefore, you find that the concept of sustainable development may lead to people gathering around the same idea, but it does not necessarily lead to an understanding of the desired goals.

One of the criticisms directed at the concept of sustainable development is that the matter is not limited to the difficulty of defining the concept but also the difficulty of applying the idea of sustainable development within the Western thinking system. It is known that sustainability includes three dimensions: economic, social, and environmental, and the three dimensions cannot be viewed as equivalent for three reasons: First, The economy is an institution arising from society to facilitate the exchange of goods and services, unlike the environment, which is an entity in itself. Second, The environment is the foundation on which both the economy and society depend, and the available resources (from the

Earth and the solar system available to humans have recently become limited. Third, Sustainability is a desired goal, but it lacks the appropriate measuring tools to define what is meant by sustainable development in the fields of transportation, politics, energy, construction and tourism (al-Jayyousi, 2008).

In general, there are three axes of Western economic criticism: the carrying capacity of the earth, the principle of development and growth, and the market, social justice, and efficiency.

### 2.5.1 The Carrying Capacity of the Earth

Undoubtedly, the Western vision and view of the earth are among the reasons for current environmental issues. It has been dominated by the idea that the earth is an inexhaustible resource that can provide the natural resources as much as needed. Since the beginning of the era of scientific discoveries at the beginning of the nineteenth century, there has been a belief that the universe operates within physical laws and that humans can control the universe and make all the necessary materials and supplies (Meadows & Randers, 2012).

The depletion of natural capital due to endless growth and growth for the sake of growth is similar to Syriac growth. It has contributed to the depletion of the earth's resources, led to a state of corruption, and destroyed the crops and offspring. The cost of damages resulting from climate change reached 1% of global income in 2007, equivalent to $650 billion (World Bank, 2021). The entire world should realise the great danger facing Earth. Moreover, with the increasing pace of development and growth in third-world countries such as China, India and Brazil, which imitate the Western consumption pattern that links excessive consumption and the habits associated with it, the depletion of oil resources and various materials is expected to increase (Hussain, 2007).

### 2.5.2 The Principle of Development and Growth

It is essential to clarify the difference between development and growth. While development strives to improve things, growth aims to make things bigger. Despite the increase in global production several times over the past hundred years, this has led to a

deterioration in the ecosystem that humanity has never witnessed in its history, which is a form of destruction and corruption on the earth due to what people's hands have earned. From an economic perspective, when negative and side consequences render expansion economically ineffective, the development model and growth measurement methods that rely on GNP must be reviewed because they do not provide an accurate picture of growth, which includes many harmful industries such as tobacco and armaments, in addition to the waste of these industries that are viewed as positive values. Accordingly, other measures should be adopted, such as the sustainability factor, the human development index, and the national happiness index (al-Jayyousi, 2008).

It is worth noting that the communist system has failed to achieve the concept of social justice, just as the current capitalist system has also failed to preserve the ecosystem because it relies on the rate of national product to measure growth. The cost of damages resulting from the deterioration of the ecosystem in many countries, such as Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon, has been estimated at (2-5%) of the total national income of these countries. Although the national income of Sudan, for example, increased by 23% in the five years (2002-2007), 600,000 people still suffer from famine and poverty. The same is the case for Japan, where the national product increased five-fold in the period (1958-1987), but the degree of satisfaction and level of happiness did not change (Yunus, 2007).

### 2.5.3 Market, Social justice, and Efficiency

The economic theory in the capitalist system is based on the principle that the market is more efficient in distributing resources, based on the theory of supply and demand and the theory of price, but this efficiency of distribution does not necessarily mean justice in distribution; the rich get more than they need, while the poor barely get what they need. In addition, the market ignores the value of natural environmental resources and their great benefits. For example, the United States of America produces $19 billion worth of honey annually, not to mention the effective contribution of the ecosystem in serving humanity by purifying the air, providing energy, water and food sources from the seas and oceans, and wind pollination of plants, in addition to the contribution of nature reserves in

mitigating the effects of immune change by 15% (al-Jayyousi, 2013). It was necessary to activate the texts of legislation and laws enacted by countries and governments to achieve justice and avoid the emergence of the market system (the invisible hand).

### 2.6 Sustainable Development Plan Goals

The primary purpose of the sustainable development approach, which arose as a result of the enormous damage that humans inflict on the environment as a result of production, the increase in the world population and technological innovations after the Industrial Revolution, is to reduce the damage and corruption and create more preventive awareness against the needs of future generations. The 2030 plan covers all three areas of development and aspires to accomplish 169 specific targets in addition to 17 high-level SDGs. These goals are as follows:

The first goal is poverty eradication. This goal means eliminating poverty in all its forms and types everywhere, as poverty is not only the lack or scarcity of financial resources to sustain a decent life but rather, hunger and malnutrition are perhaps the most significant manifestations of poverty, as well as the deprivation of the individual from benefiting from public services, which suffer from this problem are developing and least developed countries. The lack or absence of financial resources has a dual impact on the state and the individual, and to mitigate this impact, financial resources must be mobilized from different sources, including countries with strong economies, to help developing and least developed countries and poor countries to provide the quality of services offered by these countries (UNDP, 2022).

The second goal is zero hunger, providing food needs and adequate nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. Hunger is one of the manifestations of poverty. Globally, one in nine people suffers from malnutrition. Undoubtedly, it leads to a weak individual structure and lack of safety, negatively affecting the human immune system and making it vulnerable to various diseases. Based on the sustainable development plan, hunger and malnutrition should be eliminated by 2030 by improving the quality of land and soil to ensure the doubling of agricultural products and their processing into food

products. This helps improve nutrition for individuals in developing, least developed, and poor countries (UNDP, 2022).

The third goal is a good health and well-being. This goal means that everyone enjoys healthy lifestyles and well-being through achieving adequate health care that provides opportunities to obtain the necessary medical supplies such as medicines, vaccines, periodic check-ups, drug addiction treatment, and other needs, and ensuring a complete diet, clean drinking water, and suitable housing. Moreover, this goal aims to provide preventive protocols for infection with diseases, especially endemic ones such as malaria, AIDS and other infectious diseases, in addition to providing the components of good health for mothers, which ensures the birth of generations that enjoy health in body and mind. The intention is to achieve a healthy society and a healthy individual (Gultekin, 2022).

The fourth goal is quality education; the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda is all-encompassing, universal, and unbreakable. Two of the primary objectives are to guarantee that high-quality education is available and equitable and to promote possibilities for lifelong learning for everyone. Quality education is also essential to creating inclusive, resilient, and sustainable societies. Raising the bar and achieving education as a catalyst for more extensive change in the direction of sustainable development is the fourth goal of the SDGs. One essential component of human dignity is education. The 2030 Agenda is reciprocal with the fourth SDGs, and access to high-quality education facilitates social communication and inequality reduction. Building knowledge to handle pressing issues like climate change requires education. Education is the cornerstone of harmonious societies and efficient institutions, and it will assist youth in preparing for work in the high-skilled occupations of the Industrial Revolution (Mufti, 2020).

The fifth goal is gender equality. One of the most important human rights for achieving social justice and peace in nations is gender equality. Achieving gender equality necessitates taking decisive, long-lasting measures that deal with systemic obstacles and the underlying causes of discrimination. Adopting laws and policies that advance gender

equality, backed by sufficient funding, and enhancing accountability for pledges already made to combat inequality are equally crucial. (UNDP, 2022).

The sixth goal is clean water and sanitation. By 2030, this objective seeks to guarantee that everyone has access to safe, clean drinking water. Although there has been significant progress in expanding access to sanitary facilities and clean drinking water, billions of people still lack these necessities, primarily in rural regions. Over 673 million people still defecate in the open, one in three people lack access to safe drinking water, and two out of five people lack even the most basic handwashing facilities with soap and water (Gultekin, 2022). The approach aims to achieve the following goals with this objective: A) By 2030, make sure that all people have fair access to affordable, safe drinking water. B) Eradicate open defecation and ensure that everyone has fair access to proper sanitation and hygiene, with special attention to the needs of women and girls. C) Improve water quality, reduce pollution, eliminate dumping, limit the release of hazardous chemicals and compounds, cut untreated wastewater in half, and encourage recycling and safe reuse worldwide by 2030. D) Water-use efficiency in all sectors should be greatly raised by 2030, and sustainable freshwater withdrawals and supply should be ensured in order to alleviate the water crisis and considerably reduce the number of people impacted by it.

The seventh goal is a clean and affordable energy. This goal means ensuring everyone can access modern, safe, sustainable energy services at an acceptable cost. With the increase in renewable energy in the world, it aims to correct and safely employ technological and electronic devices, their employment in various areas of life and work, and multiple services, especially education. These electronic methods and applications depend on electrical or dry energy, especially after the current circumstances that the world has witnessed during the pandemic. Without ensuring energy and availability to all, it isn't easy to simultaneously provide reasonable or even appropriate education for the learner (UNDP, 2022).

The eighth goal is decent work and economic growth. In addition to practical steps to end forced labour, slavery, and human trafficking, sustainable development objectives

encourage higher levels of productivity, technological innovation, and sustainable economic growth. To achieve these goals, it is crucial to support entrepreneurship and job creation. By 2030, the desired outcomes are full and productive employment and decent work for all men and women.

The ninth goal is industry, innovation and infrastructure. Economic growth and prosperity are mostly driven by innovation and infrastructure investment. More than half of the world's population lives in cities, making renewable energy and public transportation more crucial than ever. In a similar vein, creating new sectors and information and communication technologies is essential. In order to solve long-term ecological and economic issues, such improving energy efficiency and opening up new opportunities, technological progress is crucial. To support sustainable development, it is essential to support sustainable industries and make investments in scientific research and innovation.

The tenth goal is reducing inequality. The richest 10% of people may earn up to 40% of global income, while the poorest 10% only receive 2% to 7%. This implies that the gap in income is widening. After accounting for population growth, inequality has risen by 11% in developing nations. In recent decades, economic disparity has increased nearly everywhere, albeit at varying rates. The Middle East has the highest, while Europe has the lowest. These growing disparities necessitate sensible policies that support economic inclusion for all, irrespective of gender or race, and empower those with low incomes. Enhancing financial market and institution regulation and oversight, encouraging foreign direct investment, and providing development assistance where it is most needed are all examples of the global solutions required to alleviate income disparity. According to UNESCO (2016), enabling safe migration and human movement is also necessary to close the widening gap.

The eleventh goal is sustainable cities and communities. Over half of the world's population has lived in cities since 2007, and by 2030, that number is predicted to increase to 60%. With cities and metropolitan areas making up around 60% of the world's GDP, they are major drivers of economic growth. Nonetheless, they are responsible for about

60% of resource use and over 70% of global carbon emissions. Slum populations, unrestrained urban sprawl, rising air pollution, and congested and subpar infrastructure and services (such as roads, transit, water and sanitation networks, and waste collection systems) are all consequences of rapid urbanization. To address these issues, 150 countries have created national urban plans, of which around half are already being implemented. More sustainable and fair urban growth is ensured by these tactics. (UNDP, 2022).

The twelfth goal is responsible production and consumption. By altering the way that resources and things are produced and consumed, environmental impacts must be minimized right away in order to achieve sustainable development and economic progress. Around 70% of all freshwater used by humans is utilized for agricultural irrigation, making agriculture the world's largest consumer of water. Achieving this goal requires effective management of common natural resources as well as the removal of pollutants and toxic waste. Promoting recycling and trash reduction among enterprises, industries, and consumers is equally as crucial as encouraging emerging nations to embrace more sustainable consumption habits. By 2030, a sizable portion of the global population will continue to eat insufficient amounts to meet their fundamental needs. At the retailer and consumer level, cutting global food waste per capita by at least half is also essential to improving supply chains and manufacturing efficiency. This can promote the shift to a more resource-efficient economy and increase food security (UN, 2021).

The thirteenth goal is climate action. Addressing climate change and its repercussions immediately is necessary to accomplish this goal. It is closely tied to the other 16 SDGs of the 2030 Agenda that deal with climate change. Climate change is now affecting every country on every continent. It is disrupting national economies and affecting people's livelihoods. It is already having a significant negative impact on individuals, groups, and countries, and the effects will only worsen in the future. With the availability of affordable and scalable technologies, countries may hasten the shift to more resilient and clean economies. The pace of change is accelerating as more people choose renewable energy and a range of other measures to reduce emissions and increase adaption. On the other

hand, climate change is a worldwide issue that transcends national boundaries. People are affected by emissions everywhere. In order to assist developing nations in their transition to a low-carbon economy, this problem necessitates international cooperation and coordinated solutions. It was one of the 13 climate change-related SDGs. On December 12, 2015, at conference of the parties (COP) 21 in Paris, nations ratified the Paris Agreement. Less than a year later, the agreement came into effect. Every nation committed to aiming for a 1.5 degree Celsius increase in global temperatures and working to keep it to less than 2 degrees (Gultekin, 2022).

The fourteenth goal is life below water**.** The global mechanisms that keep the Earth habitable for people are maintained by the oceans' warmth and chemistry. For the benefit of all people and to counteract the effects of climate change, resource management is essential. Despite the fact that over three billion people rely on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods, overexploitation has caused 30% of the world's fish supplies to decline below sustainable levels. Additionally, around 30% of the carbon dioxide that people emit is absorbed by the oceans. Ocean acidification has increased by 26% worldwide since the start of the Industrial Revolution. Dangerous levels of marine contamination have been attained, primarily from land-based sources. Every square kilometer of ocean has 13,000 particles of plastic debris on average. In addition to addressing the effects of ocean acidification, the SDGs seek to manage and safeguard marine and coastal ecosystems from pollution in a sustainable manner. Ocean resources will be enhanced through sustainable use and increased conservation under international law, which may help mitigate some of the issues the world's seas are currently facing (UNDP, 2022).

The fifteenth goal is life on land. Human survival on land depends on food, livelihoods, and oceans. Plants provide 80% of humans' food, and agriculture is a vital economic resource and instrument for human advancement. Making nearly 30% of the earth's surface, forests provide millions of species with habitat and essential clean air and water supplies. They are also a critical response to climate change. The rate at which soil is

deteriorating on a worldwide scale is unprecedented. Thirty to thirty-five times as much arable land is being lost as it once was. Around the world, 12 million hectares are lost yearly due to drought and desertification. They also have an impact on underprivileged areas. 8% of the approximately 8,300 animal species known to exist are extinct, and 22% are in danger of doing so. By 2030, the SDGs seek to preserve and rebuild terrestrial ecosystems, including mountains, wetlands, forests, and drylands. To lessen the effects of climate change, deforestation must also be stopped. Quick action is needed to achieve this goal and alleviate the loss of biodiversity and natural ecosystems that are a part of the global legacy (Gultekin, 2022).

The sixteenth goal is the peace, justice and strong institutions. People live in a divided world, and the division is growing, in the absence of competent administration founded on peace, stability, human rights, and the rule of law. In some places, strife and violence never end, but in others, peace, security, and prosperity are everlasting. A nation's development is severely hampered by severe military conflict and insecurity, which also hinder economic growth and frequently result in generational discontent. Sexual assault, crime, mistreatment, and torture are also prevalent in areas where there is conflict or the rule of law.

To safeguard the most vulnerable, nations must act. In addition to working with communities and governments to develop long-term solutions to conflict and insecurity, this SDGs seeks to drastically reduce violence. A key component of this process is bolstering the rule of law. Preventing the illegal arms trade and increasing developing nations' involvement in global governance organizations are also essential (UNDP, 2022).

The last goal is partnerships for the goals. Establishing partnerships between governments, the commercial sector, and civil society in light of well-informed strategies for sustainable development is the plan's final objective. Various fields must be included in partnerships. Only with a strong commitment to international collaboration and partnerships will the SDGs be accomplished. Expanding access to information and technology is a significant means of fostering creativity and exchanging ideas (UN, 2021).

## 2.7 The Main Dimensions of Sustainable Development Strategies

Sustainable development is not limited to the environmental aspects only; yet, it integrate and overlap seconomic and social dimintins as well to achieve SDGs. The following figure shows the overlap between the dimensions of sustainable development (Sen, 2013).

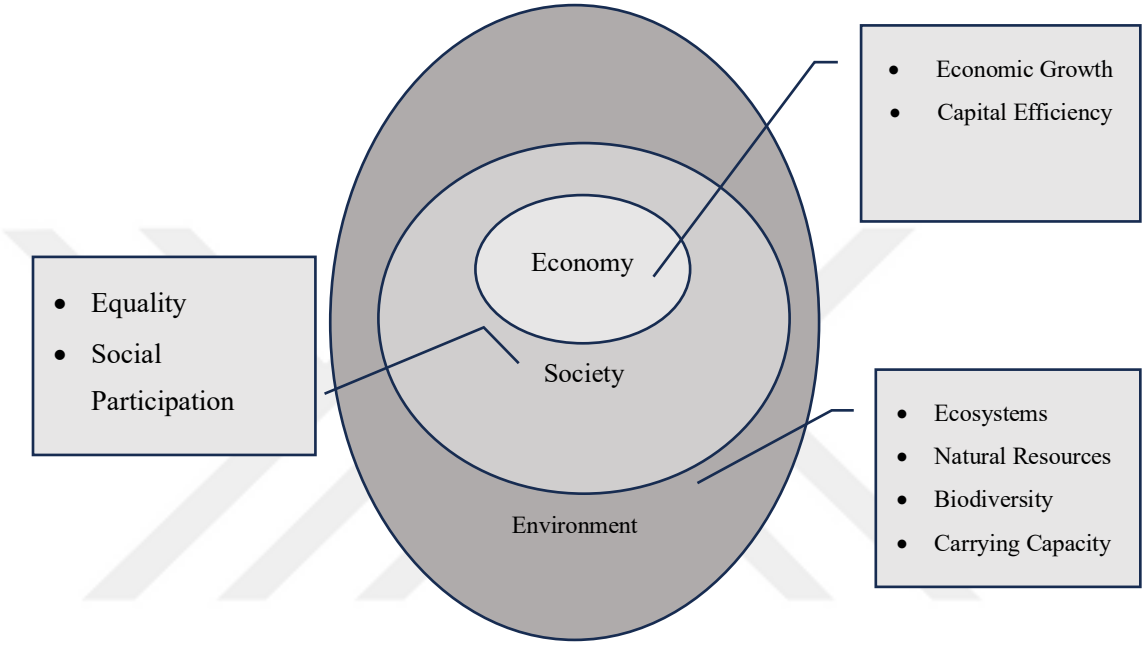



**Figure 2.1: Integration of Dimensions of Sustainable Development**
**Source**: Ismail, 2015

### 2.7.1 Economic Dimensions

The signs and ramifications of economic activity in the environment in which it functions, both now and in the future, are included in the economic dimension. Social wellbeing is a common metric used to assess economic success (Stiglitz *et al*., 2009). Economic policies often aim to stabilize prices, increase income, increase the efficiency of the production and consumption of products and services, and reach a specific level of employment. Aiming for maximum income and economic efficiency promotes activities that will raise at least one person's living level without making things worse for others (Sachs, 2006).

When it comes to allocating productive resources to maximize production and guaranteeing the best possible consumption choices that maximize consumer benefit,

market pricing are crucial. Relying on economic efficiency to enhance both production and consumption, economic sustainability also aims to maximize the flow of revenue that may be generated, at the very least to preserve the capital that contributes to these results (Janker et al., 2019). The following are included in the economic dimension:

#### 2.7.1.1 Consumption Share of Natural Resources

The per capita share of natural resources varies between rich and poor countries. People in rich countries consume several times more than people in developing countries (Dinh & Dinh, 2016). Hartwick posits that sustainability is contingent upon the balance between consumption and the depletion of natural resources, emphasizing that consumption should not decline over time (d'Autume & Schubert, 2008). Rich countries are required to reduce energy and natural resource consumption levels by improving efficiency and making a radical change in lifestyle. It is necessary to ensure that these environmental problems are not exported to other countries due to the interconnectedness of ecosystems. Industrialized countries bear the most tremendous responsibility for achieving sustainable development due to their contribution to pollution and waste of resources (Awan, 2013).

The commitment of natural resources to the ongoing enhancement of living standards is known as sustainable development in developing nations (Kaygusuz, 2012). About 8 billion people live on the planet, and its yearly GDP is 105 trillion US dollars. Nonetheless, poverty persists because of the interconnectedness of poverty, environmental deterioration, fast population increase, colonial-era backwardness, and total reliance on capitalist forces. Since the majority of the world's impoverished live in developing nations, more than 20% of them require immediate development. This means that economic growth, which is the goal of development in itself, is insufficient unless it increases the quality of life and improves the standard of living for the poor (Sen, 1988).

#### 2.7.1.2 Reducing Income Inequality

Sustainable development aims to reduce disparities and inequalities in income distribution between the rich and the poor. This goal requires that economic and social policies in

developing countries be directed towards investing the available resources and distributing them fairly among all to ensure their rights to those resources in the form of investments, goods and services. Government structural policies in education, labour, and product markets can reduce income inequality by reforming the labour market, influencing the employment rate, and increasing labour protection (OECD, 2012). The economy is a potent tool for sustainable development if it is utilised correctly. It provides effective incentives to contribute to achieving sustainable development. These incentives must be at all levels of society, both public and private sectors, directing research, knowledge, and solutions for sustainable development and influencing consumer decisions at all levels (Corbett & Swibold, 2002).

### 2.7.2 Social Dimensions

The framework for sustainable development is thought to include the social dimension as one of its primary elements. Thus, maintaining the human and social capital that societies require to provide revenue for sustainable growth is essential to sustainable development. Due to globalization and technological advancement, labor markets around the world are changing in ways never seen before. Employees with low levels of education are more likely to be unemployed, work for low pay, or lack marketable skills (Hariram *et al*., 2023).

In addition, present high-level jobs require more education and specialised training. Those skills, proper education, and social connections often bring high incomes to those who possess them. Inequality has increased in many countries over the past two decades, undermining equity, justice and fundamental human rights. Youth unemployment has increased despite the government's targeting of vocational training (Walker *et al*., 2019). Despite significant progress in terms of GDP in many countries, gender inequalities persist in many societies, and violence against women remains widespread. In addition, discrimination against ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples persists in many places (di Bella, 2023).

#### 2.7.2.1 Population Growth

The current population growth rate is one of the foremost contemporary challenges (McMichael & Butler, 2006). The rapid population growth requires more efforts from government and policymakers to protect natural resources. Rapid population growth limits development and reduces the natural resource base available to support the inhabitants. Population distribution is also essential; current trends toward urbanization, particularly the development of large cities, have significant environmental consequences.

In order to reduce the movement of people to urban areas, sustainable development encourages active rural development. It also helps reallocate or reroute resources to meet basic human needs like clean water, primary healthcare, and literacy. Additionally, it discusses the necessity of investing in human capital, preserving cultural variety, and enhancing social welfare (Nicolai *et al*., 2017).

#### 2.7.2.2 The Importance of Women's Role

Giving women access to family planning enables them to lead healthier and more fruitful lives. Better economic opportunities, improved health systems, and increased housing, food, and education spending are all associated with women's productivity. Since women typically reinvest 90% of their income back into their families, compared to only 30% to 40% for men, sustainable development is necessary to advance gender equality and establish the conditions required to ensure a better life for women at every stage of life, according to the International Family Planning Foundation.

This highlights the need for a more thorough comprehension of the social aspect of sustainable development and its relationship to the environmental aspect. Four thorough social conceptions and their essential connections to the environment are presented as a result of this procedure. These include social cohesion, equality, involvement, and public awareness (Ransom, 1999).

The principles, objectives, and metrics of sustainable development form the foundation of this paradigm. The environmental, global, and intergenerational aspects might be added

to the social component. Even though the social dimension is crucial to the process of sustainable development, it hasn't gotten the same emphasis as the other dimensions. Rather than being picked for scientific grounds, these dimensions are chosen for political considerations.

In addition to providing the opportunity to improve social interaction through social networks in society, collective participation in community stability, pride and a sense of place, safety and security, and trust between individuals, focusing on the social aspects of sustainable development helps to strengthen social cohesion, which in turn lowers crime and social conflicts. Accordingly, social cohesion policy goals seem to foster prospects for peaceful cohabitation or reduce the likelihood of civil unrest (Dempsey *et al*., 2011).

### 2.7.3 Environmental Dimensions

From preserving soil to preserving land use changes and fisheries, sustainable development necessitates the preservation of natural resources that are essential for the production of food and fuel. The goal of sustainable development's environmental component is to ensure economic prosperity for both current and future generations while safeguarding the environment, preventing pollution, and allowing it to sustain a steadily rising level of living. Included in this dimension are:

#### 2.7.3.1 Conserving Water Resources

Sustainable development aims to preserve water by reducing waste, building dams to store water, preserving groundwater, and improving water and sanitation networks and the quality of drinking water. It is certain that the consumption of natural capital in economic activities is faster than the ecosystem's ability to recover and renew itself (Zhonghua & Yu, 2011).

#### 2.7.3.2 Protecting the Climate from Global Warming

In this regard, sustainable development means not risking significant changes to the global environment, as various radiation, nuclear, and chemical wastes lead to adverse effects and climate changes that affect life on Earth, which would change the opportunities

available to future generations. This means preventing the destabilization of the climate, physical and biological geographical systems, or the destruction of the Earth's protective ozone layer due to human actions (Sosa-Garcia, 2008).

The researcher believes that development in its environmental dimension constitutes a source of concern related to the need to manage natural resources capable of wisely achieving human well-being, which ultimately depends on ecological services through the comprehensive feasibility and natural performance of natural systems and their ability to be flexible, which is the ability of ecosystems to continue despite external shocks, which express the disturbance that would cause ecosystems to change from one state to another.

Sustainable development does not necessarily have to maintain the current status of the environmental dimension. Still, this system can develop in integration and coordination with the social and economic dimensions while keeping levels of biological diversity that ensure the flexibility of ecosystems on which human consumption and production depend in the future (Sosa-Garcia, 2008).

#### 2.7.3.3 International Programs to Confront Environmental Issues

Environmental issues, including climate change, remain among the most significant problems of the era. Collective efforts are required to confront and reduce the effects. Therefore, international organizations and some countries with global influence have presented several proposals and programs that reduce environmental and climate damage while achieving the most significant progress in development, prosperity, and international security.

To confront climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, work must be done to build a green and sustainable global economy (Khanfar, 2014); this requires that the world's countries collectively meet SDGs. The environmental aspect of sustainable development strategies is necessary to support the planet's borders and atmosphere to achieve humanity's well-being in the present and future.

Firstly, Paris agreement on climate change. The Paris Agreement on Climate Change is the key and essential global agreement to reduce the aggravation of climate problems. This agreement was adopted within the UN Convention on Climate Change framework on December 15, 2015. Upon entering into force of this agreement, most of the world's countries faced a massive challenge in stopping the rise in temperatures and the causes leading to it, which requires the combined efforts of all parties. It is an enormous challenge for every country to take action at the national level to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It was understood among countries that implementing this agreement is essential for achieving SDGs, as it provides a roadmap to confront climate change and the required actions that help countries reduce emissions and move towards a low-carbon economy (Kunna *et al*., 2023).

Second, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development discusses changing the globe. At the September 25, 2015, Sustainable Development Summit in New York, the United Nations accepted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which consists of 169 goals and 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The three facets of sustainable development—economic, social, and environmental—are balanced by these mutually reinforcing, integrated aims and objectives. Considered a global cry to eradicate poverty, safeguard the environment, and guarantee that everyone lives in peace and prosperity by 2030, the SDGs were endorsed by world leaders barely three months prior to the Paris Agreement or COP 21 on climate change (Kunna *et al*., 2023).

The conference's final document stated: We have incorporated in the goals and targets that we agreed on a highly ambitious vision based on bringing transformation... Today, we announce the establishment of 17 SDGs and 169 associated targets, which are integrated and indivisible. Never before have world leaders committed to working together and making joint efforts on a policy plan of such scope and global scale (UN, 2015).

The connection between increasing energy production and the 2030 Sustainable Development Plan and Goals is one of the most important aspects of this agreement. The following are some of the objectives that addressed this issue: Ensuring universal access

to contemporary, reasonably priced, reliable, and sustainable energy is the seventh objective. The amount of renewable energy in the world's energy mix will have grown dramatically by 2030, the rate of development in energy efficiency will have doubled globally, and everyone will have access to modern, affordable, and reliable energy services. Clean cooking fuels and electricity are considered "modern energy" by the World Bank and the International Energy Agency (International Energy Agency, 2017).

Goal Eleven: By 2030, reduce the environmental impact of cities per capita in order to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Additionally, it makes public areas and green spaces accessible to everyone. This objective pertains to the transportation and heating industries, which consume the majority of the world's energy (International Energy Agency, 2017).

Additional objectives focused on ways to achieve sustainability, protect the climate, and implement the necessary legal frameworks, such as the following: Goal 12: Implement the 10-year Framework of Programs on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns to achieve sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources by 2030. lowering the quantity of food waste per person worldwide in half by 2030 and managing chemicals and all rubbish in an environmentally responsible manner throughout their life cycles. By 2030, it will also reduce waste generation through reuse, recycling, reduction, and avoidance. Incorporating sustainability data into reporting cycles and adopting sustainable practices will be promoted for companies of all sizes. In addition, national policies and priorities should encourage sustainable public procurement practices, and by 2030, everyone should have access to relevant information and awareness regarding environmentally friendly lifestyles and sustainable development (Holden, 2017).

The thirteenth goal is to improve education, awareness-raising, and human and institutional capacities to mitigate climate change. It also calls for integrating climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning, strengthening resilience to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries, and improving capacity to adapt to them (Kunna *et al*., 2023). The sixteenth goal is to create inclusive, responsible,

and efficient institutions at all levels. This objective highlights how crucial it is to have strong legal systems and a trustworthy regulatory framework that help to hasten the accomplishment of these objectives.

One of the goals, Goal Eighth, dealt with the topic of sustainable economic growth. The 10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns called for developed nations to take the lead in promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic development by progressively increasing the efficiency of global resource use in consumption and production until 2030 and working to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation (Kunna et al., 2023).

This goal is considered one of the most problematic goals of the SDGs in terms of environmental sustainability. Several studies were done to investigate the possibility of balancing economic growth with the planet's limits is possible. Pushing growth beyond the environmental limits available to make the planet habitable raises doubts about the extent to which there can be “green growth”. Many countries have achieved economic growth, as measured by increases in gross domestic product, but few have achieved growth consistent with environmental sustainability goals (Asaad, 2016). In contrast to the UN report “Our Common Future” (Brundtland, 1987), the ecological limits and burdens of accelerating economic growth have not figured prominently on the sustainable development agenda (Holden, 2017).

#### 2.7.3.4 New Proposals on Sustainable Development to Preserving the Planet

The serious approaches to sustainable development strategies must refer to environmental limits, as stated in the “Our Common Future” report and the “Limits to Growth” (Meadows & Randers, 2012) report. Among the most significant proposals to achieve this objective are as follows:

Firstly, the new approach to planetary boundaries proposed by Johan Rockström and Will Steffen. The "planetary boundaries approach" is considered the most prominent framework in emphasizing the importance of respecting environmental limits, in addition

to determining a quantitative measure of these limits. This approach was developed in 2008 by a group of researchers at the Stockholm Resilience Centre, the Stockholm Environment Institute, and the Tällberg Foundation under the supervision of the Swedish scientist Johan Rüxtrom. Researchers from several institutes in different countries worldwide then joined the group.

In 2009, they published a study in Nature journal identifying the necessary limits for human survival on earth. They stated that three of these limits had already been crossed (A Safe Operating Space for Humanity, 2009). The researchers then identified the risks associated with changes that would move the Earth system away from the relative equilibrium it had achieved since the beginning of the Holocene era, 11,700 years ago (Kunna *et al*., 2023).

The Industrial Revolution, which began in the United Kingdom in the eighteenth century, marked the beginning of human activities' impact in triggering biogeophysical global changes and the planet's transition from the Holocene era to the Anthropocene era. These nine limits include global warming, biodiversity loss, biogeochemistry, ocean acidification, land use, water security, ozone depletion, aerosols, and chemical pollution (Johan Rockström, 2009).

In an article published in the "science" journal, the group presented 2015 a recent study on the nine boundaries and improving their quantitative measurement processes. They indicated in this study that humanity has already crossed four boundaries: climate change, nitrogen and phosphorus use, biodiversity loss, and land use change. According to the authors, the irresponsible use of natural resources exceeds the sustainable limits of life support systems on the planet. It limits efforts to reduce poverty and achieve prosperity in many parts of the world, including wealthy countries (Steffen *et al*., 2015). According to the proponents of the planetary boundaries approach, climate change and the integrity of the biosphere are the "fundamental boundaries".

Several researchers presented a report published in Science journal in July 2016, in which they stated that pressure on land use has led to a decline in biodiversity, which has reduced

the integrity of local biodiversity, as the average percentage of natural biodiversity remaining in ecosystems is 58.1% of the earth's surface, where 71.4% of the population lives. It is concluded that the integrity of biodiversity within most biomes, especially grassland biomes, most biodiversity hotspots, and even some wilderness areas exceeds boundaries (Newbold *et al*., 2016).

This is an ongoing occurrence, as biodiversity continues to suffer from severe decline in many of its components; several studies and reports have mentioned the decline in green spaces (trees and forests) and the decline of some vital organisms such as insects, 40% of which are expected to become extinct in the next few decades, while vast areas of water bodies suffer from pollution that has led to the death of marine organisms (Commission, 2021).

One of the biggest concerns about climate change and biodiversity loss is the existence of tipping points, where crossing a tipping point can lead to significant and sudden changes from instability in the terrestrial ecosystem. However, crossing one or more other boundaries also causes damage and does not lead to a new tipping point in the terrestrial ecosystem (Commission, 2021).

Secondly, Holden and Lennerud proposal. Holden and Lennerud proposed a new approach to sustainable development based on three ethical imperatives/constraints: meeting basic human needs, ensuring social justice, and respecting environmental boundaries. These three constraints define the “sustainable development space” (Holden, 2017). This new approach differs from the prevailing concept that defines sustainable development as based on achieving a balance between the economic, social, and environmental dimensions known as the three pillars of sustainable development. Thus, the proponents of this new approach argue that economic growth should not be included among the main SDGs.

The ethical imperatives approach to respecting environmental boundaries is based on two premises: First, it agrees with Edith Brown Weiss, the proponent of the “intergenerational equity” approach, that as custodians of the environment we inherit, we have a duty as

members of the present generation to hand it on to future generations so that it is at least as good as we received it (Shukrany, 2017). Second, it agrees with Amartya Sen that since we are so much more powerful than other species, we bear a responsibility towards them precisely because of this disparity in power (Sen, 2010).

Thus, in contrast to the model based on defining sustainable development by balancing its three dimensions: economic, social and environmental, the proposed definition of sustainable development is based on three main constraints on human behaviour: meeting basic human needs, equity and respect for the environment. These constraints define what can be called the "sustainable development space" (Holden, 2017).

Thirdly, Doughnut Economy and Sustainable Development. The Doughnut Scheme, developed for Oxfam (a development NGO) in 2012 by Kate Raworth, is a "safe and just space for humanity" to balance human needs without harming the environment (Raworth, 2012). It is thus a framework for sustainable development that combines the consensus of both the Paris Agreement and the SDGs and goes beyond the commitment to reducing emissions as stipulated in the Paris Agreement, as it defines the ecological framework within which all humanity must live, based on what has been determined by scientists specializing in Earth system science.

The inner circle of the doughnut model represents the basic human needs as outlined in the UN SDGs and as outlined in Lynne Doyle and Ian Gough's (Doyal L, 2019) theory of human needs, including access to food, housing, clean water, energy, sanitation, healthcare, education, gender equality, and freedom of expression. The outer circle represents the extremes of environmental management and consumption, and the space between the two circles represents the safe space for humanity, embodying our investment of resources to meet human needs while considering the planet's needs.

The Doughnut Economics model offers a comprehensive economic perspective to tackle the social and environmental issues of the twenty-first century, claims Kate Raworth. The renewal and distribution dynamics that this century demands are brought about by a way of thinking rather than a collection of institutions and regulations. Using ideas from

several economic schools, such as behavioral, institutional, and environmental economics, it outlines seven basic methods of thinking about economics to move the world's economy into a safe and just place for people (Raworth, 2012).

The starting point of Doughnut Economics is that the goal is not to achieve GDP growth alone without taking into account social well-being and sustainability so that the economy is not thought of in isolation from the society of which it is a part and the environment with which it is interconnected and that there is a different and more realistic understanding of the nature of humans as being born to be social and interconnected. In short, this economic model calls for achieving sustainability for future generations and providing an adequate standard of living for individuals without harming one group at the expense of another (Kunna *et al*., 2023).

### 2.8 Quantitative and Qualitative Indicators for Measuring SDGs

Quantitative and qualitative indicators are among the most critical tools for decision-makers to study the degree to which SDGs are being achieved. These indicators reflect the policies related to sustainable development adopted in any region, and the results could be positive or negative. Sustainable development requires not only increasing per capita income but also changing decision-making patterns by integrating economic, social, environmental, and institutional development to reach SDGs. Some indicators are no longer sufficient to study economic overlaps at the macroeconomic level (Mair *et al*., 2018).

In 1996, the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (UN-CSD) issued a set of indicators for measuring sustainable development, numbered 130 indicators, and the state has the right to choose the appropriate indicators to evaluate the progress made towards achieving the sustainability goals according to the availability of data. These indicators were reduced to 59 due to difficulty in choosing between them. The United Nations provides a set of fundamental indicators that include the four dimensions of development, which are economic, social, environmental, and institutional (Mair *et al*., 2018).

### 2.8.1 Economic Indicators

Increasing individual income was the primary goal of development; however, this approach is no longer valid, as the overall figures hide the disparities between groups. Moreover, other goals, such as health and education services, are no less important in achieving sustainable development. Also, increasing individual income is not always a positive indication of development; it could also be harmful; for example, improvements in agricultural production may lead to harm and depletion of resources (Boulhol *et al*., 2008). The following are the most important economic indicators:

#### 2.8.1.1 Per Capita Share of Gross Domestic Product

This gauges the level of the nation's overall economic output in relation to its population. Clarifying economic growth rates and estimating the amount and size of total production are two of this indicator's economic significance. It is an important indicator of sustainable development's economic and developmental facets but does not directly measure it. The costs of manufacturing to society and the environment are not taken into account, though (Boulhol *et al*., 2008).

#### 2.8.1.2 Exports of Goods and Services to Imports

This indicator shows the country's ability to import, face competition, improve trade, increase the economy's capacity and productivity in light of competition, increase innovation and knowledge, encourage diffusion, and express the degree of economic openness (Dritsakis *et al*., 2006).

#### 2.8.1.3 The Change in Per Capita Energy Consumption

This indicator measures the progress achieved in a country or region in the transition to the use of clean fuels and helps in measuring energy supplies. It has four indicators, and the per capita commercial energy consumption is considered an indicator of the country's overall economic development (Sheffield, 1998).

#### 2.8.1.4 The Current Account Balance as A Percentage of the Gross Domestic Product

If this value is negative, it indicates that the country is in debt, and the current account deficit indicates the presence of instability in the macroeconomy. The persistent deficit requires a future transformation through increasing private and public savings and perhaps re-evaluating external obligations (Boulhol *et al*., 2008).

#### 2.8.1.5 The Set of Development Assistance Provided

This represents the extent of the country's contribution to development aid at the regional and international levels (Lancaster, 2008).

The ability of the nation to establish a solid basis for attaining sustainable development is reflected in economic statistics. Since it shows the pace of economic growth in the nation, the GDP per capita statistic is among the most significant. In contrast to developed and industrialized nations, developing nations—including Muslim nations—strive to form capital as a percentage of GDP at a low rate, despite the necessity for them to increase the volume of investments in order to improve the production capacities of projects and establish production technologies in line with technological progress. Therefore, in order for local products to compete economically in global markets, it is required to boost investment specialities in several economic areas (Vargas-Santander et al., 2023).

### 2.8.2 Social Indicators

Since social justice is the primary concern for raising the standard of living for the populace, it is seen as one of the fundamental principles upon which sustainable development is built. Fairness and inclusivity in decision-making, opportunity distribution, and resource distribution are all components of social justice. In the local community or globally, it entails offering comparable job and social service possibilities, such as health, education, and justice. In order to examine the development made in the social aspect indicators, several indicators are connected to social justice in order to evaluate the advancements made in each of them (Charmaz, 2005).

#### 2.8.2.1 Poverty Reduction

This represents the number of individuals living on the poverty line. As for developing countries, this indicator is a composite of three dimensions: a long and healthy life (measured by the percentage of people who have not reached the age of forty), knowledge, and the availability of economic means (measured by the percentage of people who cannot benefit from health services and water, and the percentage of children under five who suffer from moderate or severe underweight). Reducing the poverty rate is one of the most important indicators of achieving sustainability in developed and developing countries alike (Barder, 2009).

#### 2.8.2.2 Crime Rate

The High crime rate has a very negative impact on sustainable development. The phenomenon of crime undermines human dignity, creates a climate of fear that weakens the quality of life and the indicator can also be used as a measure of respect for the rule of law (Verbruggen & Kuik, 1991).

#### 2.8.2.3 Unemployment rate

This is the percentage of unemployed people to the total workforce, the indicator shows all members of the workforce other than employees or self-employed workers as a percentage of the workforce (Verbruggen & Kuik, 1991).

#### 2.8.2.4 Promoting education, public awareness and training

This is measured by Adult literacy rate, and gross secondary school enrollment rate (Verbruggen & Kuik, 1991).

#### 2.8.2.5 Protecting and promoting human health

Health is closely linked to achieving sustainable development through access to health services, disease control and ensuring proper nutrition for the population. The health aspect measurement includes several indicators, the most important of which are life

expectancy at birth and the number of people who do not have access to clean water and health services (Barder, 2009).

### 2.8.3 Environmental Indicators

Environmental indicators are an integral part of sustainable development indicators. They are essential in achieving SDGs by monitoring the current situation and observing changes to the environment and natural resources, whether positive or negative. They also measure the extent to which the goal is achieved. Environmental indicators are part of sustainable development indicators in most references that prepare environmental indicators. A vital link is noted between environmental and other sustainable development indicators, as other factors, such as population growth, health, etc., directly or indirectly affect the environment. For example, the population growth index is one of the leading indicators that lead to pressure on the environment, which leads to changes in the environment and a new state of the environment (Dong & Hauschild, 2017). The following are among the environmental indicators:

#### 2.8.3.1 Per capita share of agricultural land

This statistic measures both the per capita amount of land accessible for agricultural production and the per capita amount of arable agricultural land. Since agriculture creates jobs and supplies food for the population, it is crucial to attaining sustainable development. Therefore, it is the main driver of economic expansion, especially as it can help reduce unemployment and poverty (Dong & Hauschild, 2017).

#### 2.8.3.2 Change in forest and land areas

This indicator displays the percentage change in the country's total area that is made up of green land. A high rate of this indicator suggests the potential for increased agricultural output, whereas a low rate suggests the spread of desertification and its encroachment on green spaces (Dong & Hauschild, 2017).

#### 2.8.3.3 Desertification

It measures the lands affected by desertification and their percentage of the country's total area. Reducing desert land is one condition for achieving sustainable development (Dong & Hauschild, 2017).

## 2.9 Criticising Different Aspects of Sustainable Development

It can be said that achieving sustainable development in any society requires a set of basic conditions and elements to fulfil the plan's requirements. These influential elements may differ from one society to another according to the actual circumstances and other factors. Hence, it is difficult to put every society or country at the same level, as sustainable development has significant criticisms despite its many positive aspects. This section will address some of these criticisms that sustainable relativity has been exposed to.

### 2.9.1 Criticising the Term Sustainable Development

Some of the terms used in the definition of sustainable development have been criticized by scholars because they lack clarity. For instance, the term "needs of the present" is controversial because it does not clearly distinguish between the needs of developed and underdeveloped nations. Basic necessities including food, housing, and other necessities are material and natural in less developed nations. The meaning of "need" in the context of sustainable development is still unclear (Gultekin, 2022).

The majority of policies pertaining to sustainable development are drafted by industrialized nations and published in international publications. As a result, national development programs are shaped and managed in a way that is dependent on the preferences and policies of industrialized nations. Furthermore, wealthy nations control the majority of consulting firms that create sustainable development programs as well as all international financial organizations that research and fund these initiatives, including the OECD, World Bank, World Trade Organization (WTO), and International Monetary Fund (IMF). Because rich nations have used "global governance" to oversee developing nations, this position is deemed unsuitable (Turan & Savcheko, 2019).

Different priorities and needs exist in sustainability and development between regions and countries. Although sustainable development policies that are prepared and formulated in international documents according to the priorities of developed countries define the main goals, they are not compatible with the reality and priorities of all countries and societies. While achieving carbon emission reduction targets in the fight against climate change is not essential for people who are dying of hunger in Central African countries and who suffer from epidemics because they do not have access to clean water, combating climate change is a more critical issue for countries that will drown due to rising global warming, such as the Netherlands.

Another negative image of sustainable development is the inconsistent attitude of developed and developing countries towards environmental protection. For example, a drug can be used in developing countries, but it is prohibited in developed countries for further development in countries that have achieved the Industrial Revolution. On the other hand, another opinion is that "different political and practical tools will regulate the relationship between development and environmental quality" Here, the possibility of harmonizing the new economic balances with the environment is called for without sacrificing the development concept (Gultekin, 2022).

However, it is not possible to talk about environmental awareness and the idea of protection as a phenomenon with a generalizable content and quality because it is noted that industrialized countries prefer to use and implement environmental protection standards as long as it does not affect their interests. To clarify the matter more, it can be said that industrialized countries deal with problems that negatively affect them seriously. At the same time, they adopt different behaviours when the matter is related to developing countries. In addition to this phenomenon, developing countries focus on short-term investments to achieve profitable production using natural resources such as agriculture, animal husbandry, mining and the like as much as possible to obtain income without effort and more profit in a short time (Santamarina *et al*., 2015).

### 2.9.2 Prioritizing the Economy on the Environment

The Brundtland Report, the Rio Declaration, and Agenda 21 all made it abundantly evident that social and economic development are included in sustainable development. To put it another way, sustainable development raises social wellbeing in addition to economic progress. However, economic objectives that prioritize material progress have started to take precedence over the social dimension in sustainable development policies, practices, and applications. The objective of social development is being displaced by this development. One of the development aims is to eradicate economic, political, and legal discrimination and inequality in society; this can only be accomplished by guaranteeing social development (Marcuse, 1998).

Definitions of development are necessary for sustainable development policies, whether or not development is defined as economic growth. In conventional usage, growth and development are frequently used interchangeably. Enhancing actual production per capita, per capita consumption, inflation, and unemployment is seen as growth or development in conventional economics. Nonetheless, progress is a notion that necessitates not just a quantitative evaluation of the economy but also the enhancement of its qualitative elements and even advancements in numerous non-economic domains (Gultekin, 2022).

Sustainable development, which aims at the equitable distribution of wealth between countries and groups within the country, targets economic and human development. Therefore, all the items discussed in the United Nations Human Development Reports, such as access to clean water, electricity use rates, maternal and child mortality rates during pregnancy and childbirth, literacy rate, education level, gender equality, and Internet use rates, must be taken into account in sustainable development planning. The plan's success must be calculated on the development or improvement of these elements (Santamarina *et al*., 2015).

Based on the above, sustainable development policies should be considered necessary for social, human, political, economic, and environmental improvements for human well-being rather than economic growth alone. However, most sustainable development plans

take a superficial view of whether an activity generates economic income, whether it is sustainable over a long period, and partly whether it harms the environment or local culture. However, in order to accomplish the objective of guaranteeing human well-being, these plans must address sustainable development in all of its facets. Sustainable development is now characterized as "maximizing well-being," not "maximizing the utility resulting from consumption," even in neoclassical economic theory (Çokişler, 2017).

Accordingly, the notion of sustainable development in economic theories encompasses the fundamental components of human well-being, including food, clothes, health, and education. Stated differently, social development is a component of economic development. For instance, according to some economists, economic development is a complex process that includes all of society's social, psychological, and political dimensions, not just its economic ones (Gultekin, 2022).

### 2.9.3 Injustice in the Distribution of Wealth, Income, and Economic Growth

The world's countries are divided into two groups, considering the essential social and economic development: developed and underdeveloped countries. The developed countries have exploited the world's resources over the past several centuries and have reached their current privileged position as the sole owners of the Industrial Revolution and international trade. These high-tech industrial countries control the global flow of goods, money and resources.

The main characteristic of the underdeveloped countries is poverty. Less use of natural resources, limited social and economic development, and backwardness in information and technology are cited as the causes of this poverty. However, the developed countries that have been exploiting the world's resources for a long time, converting ground and surface resources into processed materials or energy and regulating their circulation, have not only obtained this wealth but have also caused corruption and pollution as a result of the economic activities they have carried out so far (Gultekin, 2022).

Industrialized countries that express concerns about the environment are generally located in the Northern Hemisphere; countries called underdeveloped countries that emphasize issues of poverty and development are primarily located in the South; this distinction is described as the North-South differentiation in the sustainable development approach.

One of the most critical obstacles to sustainable development is income inequality. People looking to get their next meal will not listen to advice about protecting the environment. The actions that seem to be the worst environmental damage to the countries of the North - such as cutting down rainforests for fuel - are often carried out by people who have no other means of income.

The emergence of environmental problems in parallel with capitalist development and the increased consumption of natural resources has led to the dimensions and impacts of environmental issues in developed and underdeveloped countries at different levels. Therefore, assessing sustainable development acquires different meanings for underdeveloped and developed countries. In this regard, the question of whether sustainable development is a global development model for progress has emerged (Gultekin, 2022).

While there have been significant economic developments and increases in the level of well-being in some parts of the world, a large part of the world's population still lives in extreme poverty and misery. One of the most critical factors that lead to the persistence of poverty at these high levels is the inequality in areas such as the distribution of income and wealth, health, education, and access to financial services. This inequality causes poverty, and it is also a problem in itself in different areas of life. In a study conducted to reveal economic disparities between regions, data on per capita GDP were calculated since 1870 AD (Bolt & Van Zanden, 2014).

The study's data indicates that in 1870 AD, the worldwide GDP per capita was $873. The group of nations, which included the United States of America, had a per capita GDP that was five times more than that of the African region in the same year. In 1950 AD, this difference grew to 13 times, and in 2003 AD, it was 18 times. According to data released

by the World Bank, this enormous disparity is even more pronounced now. In 2015, the richest 20 countries had an average per capita income of over $61,000, which is 46 times higher than the average per capita income of the world's lowest 20 countries, which was around $1,300 (Bolt & Van Zanden, 2014).

People in the same region have different income distributions, in addition to inequality between nations. When we examine the distribution of wealth, we find that the inequality seen in the worldwide income distribution is even more pronounced. Only 1% of the world's wealth is in Africa, where the poorest people live, but 67% of the $250 trillion global wealth is in North America and Europe. Examining the per capita wealth index, which offers a useful comparison, makes regional wealth disparity even more obvious.

### 2.9.4 Other Criticisms of Sustainable Development

One of the aspects that are criticized in the concept of sustainable development is the relationship between the plan and capitalism. In the capitalist system, sustainable development policies cannot be achieved in two ways. The fundamental requirement for any capitalist activity to be sustainable is that it must be profitable, or at the very least, the benefit must outweigh the expense.

Thus, in a capitalist system, the sustainable development plan can only be implemented in profitable industries and in a fashion that boosts profits. Hence, it is not possible for unprofitable businesses to persist across all sectors. Also, ensuring social justice and equality, such as protecting the environment, is often costly and unprofitable for a sector or a company. Moreover, the return and social benefits are long-term issues. In this case, the requirements of sustainable development cannot be applied in the capitalist system, as capitalism focuses solely on profit generation (Gultekin, 2022).

Sustainable development policies are incompatible with capitalism’s continuous production cycle and increasing consumption, as sustainable development first requires reorganizing human activities to reduce pressure on the environment. Though the goal of sustainable development policies is to increase people's income and well-being, they don't

give a damn about how they spend their money. However, because human needs and desires are limitless in a capitalist economy, people tend to spend and consume more as their wealth and economic status rise (Levy, 2016).

Luxurious needs become more and more necessary as fundamental requirements are satisfied. Furthermore, the capitalist conception of consumption encourages people to purchase larger vehicles, homes, products, food, etc. If overconsumption, which is the pressure of capitalism, is not prevented, the pressure on the environment will continue to increase.

Overconsumption not only means using more raw materials but also leads to using more energy and generating more waste. In this case, it would be a great contradiction for a person to be able to implement both sustainable development policies that require less consumption and capitalism that imposes more consumption simultaneously (Gultekin, 2022).

Every sustainable development policy, including the Brundtland Report, emphasizes the significance of increased productivity, urbanization, and industrialization. Modernization and development benefit greatly from urbanization, and developing nations are urged to follow the Western model of urbanization. Cities are settlements where economic activities with higher added value are carried out, i.e. products that provide well-being are carried out. Thus, well-being is produced and distributed through them, and innovations are achieved (Gultekin, 2022).

Therefore, sustainable development policies are considered the "modern Western lifestyle". Especially in underdeveloped countries, development is viewed as a lifestyle on the model of the United States and European countries. However, the UN-CSD Agenda 21 call for an end to the Western lifestyle. However, these calls are interpreted as an imposition of communism and an attempt to destroy the modern democratic lifestyle, especially in countries such as the United States of America, which are the centres of modern life (Levy, 2016).

## 2.10 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter includes a study of the concept of sustainable development and its historical development. The chapter shows the multiple stages that the concept of development has gone through, from its association with economic growth to growth and fair distribution to considering all economic, social, environmental and institutional aspects. The dimensions of sustainable development and indicators that measure the extent of progress achieved in development were also presented. This chapter is an introduction prior investigating the values which are relevant to sustainable development.

# CHAPTER III

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FROM AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE: CONCEPTS, VALUES, AND PRACTICES

## 3.1 Introduction

The twenty-first century is marked by various global challenges, such as economic issues like the 2008 financial crisis, social concerns including the spread of HIV/AIDS, and environmental crises, notably climate change. These challenges significantly influence the Western discourse and agenda regarding the developing world, particularly Muslim nations. This section highlights global issues and explores how Islam offers perspectives and solutions for tackling these challenges.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has explored the concept of sustainablility and development and the future of sustainability to create a new sustainability model (IUCN, 2006). According to Zaidi (1981), the environmental crisis is fundamentally moral, emphasizing the need for an ethical framework grounded in religious principles. He concluded that belief in Islam manifests in action through what he termed the “decision-action process,” as articulated in the Qur'an, which emphasizes the importance of faith combined with good deeds.

Chishti (2003) wrote for publications published by the Harvard Divinity School that sought to reinterpret Islam in the environmental context. In addition to reviewing how an Islamic worldview might be interpreted, reevaluated, and applied to environmental issues like pollution and water scarcity, Chishti described the Islamic perspective on the cosmic order. Additionally, Chishti discussed the connection between ecological preservation, reducing human poverty, and equal access to social and natural resources. This body of writing and publishing centred on the idea of "trusteeship and trust," connecting environmental problems with the Islamic conception of justice.

Erdur (1997) claims that the American environmental movement began as a radical critique of Western modernity before assimilating it. In order to develop an Islamic

perspective of the environment that is in balance with society, the environment, and culture, it was believed that the principles of the Western economic model needed to be examined and reexamined in the wake of the 2008–2009 financial crisis.

According to Nasr (1992), the moral and intellectual aspects make religion fundamentally different. Additionally, he proposed that human spiritual healing could be the solution to the environmental catastrophe. Additionally, he attacked Darwin's theories of evolution, arguing that any knowledge of the environment that is influenced by Islam must take into account the growth of "existential intelligence", or the awareness of the relationship between humanity and the cosmos. As a result, a revolutionary education that examines the creation story of the universe and humanity from the standpoint of Islamic principles and intellectual doctrine will be required. Islam sees the person as a source of knowledge and worth, a protector, a witness, and a reformer who aims to make a difference.

Therefore, the notion of sustainable development needs to be revisited, particularly from the Islamic point of view, since Islamic traditional sources contain plenty of evidence promoting the concept of sustainability in different aspects of life. This chapter aims to outline the Islamic discourse that addresses global issues. As a religion and a comprehensive system of life, Islam provides solutions and ideas for worldwide matters such as poverty, human welfare, progress, sustainable development, and a decent life for every creature. This chapter aims to achieve the following objectives: A) Outline the concept of sustainability from an Islamic perspective. B) Discuss the Islamic perspective of sustainable development in three dimensions (Economic, social, and environmental). C) Present the central Islamic values relevant to the idea of sustainability.

### 3.2 The Concept of Progress From Islamic Perspectives

It is important to recognize how Islamic culture has historically supported intercultural communication, coexistence, and information sharing. Ibn Khaldun offered a social theory in his Muqaddimah to explain the emergence and decline of countries in North Africa and Spain under Islamic authority. The theory of civilizational cycles, which examines social, economic, and political shifts over time, was created by Ibn Khaldun. He also described

the shift in society from nomadic to urban lifestyles. Ibn Khaldun maintained that the key to economic growth and collapse lies in society's social component. In order to explain social cohesion, Ibn Khaldun also presented a critical theory known as "Asabiyyah" (social capital).When social, economic, and political interests come together, a group's sentiment is known as asabiyyah. Social cohesiveness and solidarity are further stimulated by economic activities that are made possible by the existing social solidarity (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

Islam covers every facet of human existence as a way of life. It governs how mankind, nature, and Allah, the Almighty, interact. Its foundation is the understanding that Allah is one and that people should submit to His will alone. Allah created everything, and everything answers to Him. It is believed that humans are Allah's vicegerent on earth. Ensuring all materials and resources are used sensibly, fairly, and sustainably is a human responsibility. It is thought that civilizations would be able to create and change a creative and inventive solution to the problems that mankind faces today by comprehending Islamic values in the framework of sustainable development (Ebrahimi, 2017).

Nature was created by Allah SWT for the sake of humanity. Since all living things abide by Allah's law, there is harmony between humankind and the natural world. Islam promotes the sustainable exploration and use of natural resources. One could argue that the only path to social harmony and peace is to submit to Allah Almighty's will. Every human endeavour contains a magnificent component that gives it significance, purpose, and holiness. Furthermore, even when it comes to inanimate items, Islam forbids waste and extravagance. For example, it prohibits the extravagant use of water, even in the absence of a water shortage. Thus, Islam seeks to make the best possible use of all resources and minimize waste and excess in all of its manifestations (Kadir & Aziz, 2022).

Allah has given people innumerable abilities and mental capacities. Allah has also supplied people with all resources and tools they need to meet their demands by allowing their innate mental capacities to function as intended. Resources in the environment and its surroundings have been used for human benefit. According to the Holy Quran, in order

to improve the quality of life, people from all nations and religions should work together and share information and insights—the public gains when human resources are used effectively. Islam forbids any other use of capitals that results in waste or devastation (Kadir & Aziz, 2022).

This chapter makes the case that the Western paradigm of happiness, which is predicated on consumerism and the market economy, has failed both the economy and the people. One billion people are living in terrible poverty at the moment, and the 200 wealthiest people in the world make more money than the 2.5 billion people on the planet. As we see species extinction, forest destruction, and global warming, this model has also failed nature. The collapse of financial markets, the promotion of the weapons race, and the state of oil addiction are all consequences of this model's failure to promote economic development by giving development and progress a fake meaning (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

Thus, it is necessary to reconsider the existing Western growth model and create a new one influenced by Islamic principles. Therefore, the idea and framework of sustainable development will be examined from the perspective of Islamic principles, which take into account the fundamental elements of a decent life and advancement. Justice, family and community values, lowering corruption, Rahma, Ihsan, moderation, balance, etc. are some of these values. These Islamic ideas have the potential to establish new benchmarks for the advancement of civilization. A fresh interpretation of Islamic values related to sustainable development will facilitate a diversified and knowledge-based perspective on our environments and the universal community.

The value framework in Islam launches a sound connection between humans, and Allah, the eternal Creator. The oneness of Allah and the submission of humans to the Creator are fundamental principles of the Islamic faith. Hence, Allah Almighty created humans to act as vicegerents. Islam, as a system, commands humans to preserve the environment as it is Allah’s creation. Furthermore, Islam encourages the concept of goodness and hence “protecting the environment” is considered a good deed and is rewarded by Allah (al-Jayyousi, 2008).

### 3.3 Environmental Progress and Islamic Standpoint

Islam explains how the cosmos and people came into being. Humans are the reason the earth was created. As the earth's stewards and heirs, humans are responsible for ensuring that all its resources are used sustainably. Islam sees the possible dangers of climate change as a problem brought on by corruption or the lack of human guardianship. Islam views all animals, including humans, as nations. The interdependent and interrelated relationship between social and natural capital is concluded in the Holy Quran (Kamali, 1993).

Islam teachings state that all of Allah's creations, including plants and wild animals, are in a state of glorifying and praising the Allah almighty. The verse 44 in Surat al-Isra essentially highlights the universality of heavenly praise and Allah's unending benevolence, even if we only have a limited comprehension of how all of creation worships Him. The symphony of life is disturbed when any creature is harmed, and worshippers are silenced from exalting Him. The ideas of biomimicry, aesthetic intelligence, and learning from nature are all elevated and expanded upon in the Holy Quran. Numerous passages and indications in the Holy Quran and nature support and offer insights and direction for learning, creativity, and natural intelligence (Bhutto *et al*., 2020).

#### 3.3.1 Human Activity and Corruption

Islam sees that corruption is caused due to human internal corruption. This means that environmental progress could improve only with spiritual revival. This vision, in particular, is absent from most environmental theories and views. Environmentalists think they can save the world because they understand it. However, in order to truly build the earth (Imarat al-Ard) and live the good life, one must first experience inner renewal, or "inner Ihsan" (Ozdemir, 2003).

The ostentatious and wasteful lives that an increasing number of people are adopting are merely a sign of the earth's devastation and looting. Our lifestyle's current consumerism is a surefire way to wipe out ecosystems and all living things. Others will suffer and live

in poverty as a result of this style of life since it upsets the equilibrium of the environment. Since contemporary people perceive life occurrences as distinct, individual entities, each can be controlled without considering the others (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

This opinion stems from man's ignorance of the intricate connections between these phenomena. Humans devastate mountains but create islands, clear forests but pollute the seas, clone domestic animals but eradicate wild animals, kill birds, construct pens in the sky and landfills on the ground, exhaust the planet of its resources, and destroy plains but construct golf paths in the desert in the name of progress and development. Severe floods, droughts, the extinction of living things, habitat devastation, climate change, and desertification are the results of nature's interaction with human spiritual degradation. Allah Almighty said, {Corruption has spread on land and sea as a result of what people's hands have done} (Al-Rum: 41).

### 3.3.2 Progress and the Role of Human Self-change

One can cultivate nature-based thinking by focusing on the purity of the environment and acknowledging that everything exalts the Creator and is a visible expression of Allah's majesty. This will change the manner humans observe things, and this will affect human actions. Allah Almighty said, {Indeed, until a people improve their own state of religion, Allah would never change their favor} (Al-Ra'd, 11). Islam sees the quest for austere living and self-mastery as an internal conflict. Aligning with the Islamic code of conduct might help overcome negative tendencies and adjust to a more straightforward, pure way of living. Islam believes that self-mastery can be attained by remembering Allah, avoiding insatiable wants, practising simplicity and contentment, and being humble. All acts of corruption will decrease as a result of this new way of living (Kamali, 1993).

### 3.3.3 The Situation of Environment and Development in the Muslim Countries

Development has undeniably improved human societies' living conditions; however, it must be noted that over time, it has become harmful to the environment. There are many and varied examples in this regard. Thus, if overconsumption is a significant factor in the

destruction of the environment and the squandering of its resources in industrialized countries, poverty and illiteracy also contribute to this destruction in developing countries (Dariah *et al*., 2016).

Development in the Muslim world is slow, and its effect is limited; it cannot even meet the people's basic needs, especially energy and food. In light of this situation, most people, especially in rural areas, turn to the natural environment to meet these needs. However, this behaviour is often wrong and inappropriate for the balance of fragile ecosystems. It destroys environments due to forest fires, land reclamation, deforestation, overgrazing, erosion, and desertification (Dariah *et al*., 2016).

Additionally, environmental destruction is not limited to the local population in Muslim countries since the lifestyles in industrialized countries also harm the environment in the Muslim world. For example, if tropical forests exist in some Muslim countries, a large part of their destruction happens due to the industrialized countries, as the latter is behind the destruction of no less than 25 million hectares of these forests annually to meet their needs resulting from their wasteful lifestyles. With this behaviour, Muslim countries think that this is proper support for their national economy, while in reality, they are exhausting their national wealth, which is necessary for the livelihood and survival of present and future generations (Bsoul *et al*., 2022).

Considering climate change as an example, industrialized countries bear the most significant responsibility for causing these changes due to their vast industries, which, through their various secretions, cause an imbalance in the atmosphere, which leads to an increase in the average temperature of the globe. However, developing countries, including the countries of the Muslim world, especially African countries, will be more vulnerable to the consequences of climate change due to their lack of capabilities and means at both the preventive and therapeutic levels. Perhaps the most significant damage resulting from climate change is related to the disruption of water cycles, which has resulted in the Islamic world, in particular, a shortage of water for drinking, industry, agriculture, and economic activities in general (Bsoul *et al*., 2022).

On the other hand, Muslim countries are among the countries most affected by biological decline and desertification, as these phenomena negatively impact the population, the environment and the economy. As a fundamental and decisive factor in maintaining environmental balances, biological diversity is also one of the most essential sources of revitalizing economic and social development. The best example that can be cited is the decline in fish and forest resources.

Desertification also negatively impacts the economy, as it excludes vast areas of land that could have been used for development purposes in agriculture, tourism, and infrastructure from being exploited. Despite all these negatives, the countries of the Muslim world, due to the weakness of their economies and their affiliation with the international system, have no choice but to participate in the global developmental agreements (Dariah *et al*., 2016).

### 3.4 Social Progress and Islamic Standpoint

According to Islam, the absence of a social compass indicates that Islamic teachings are not being lived out. Degradation of the environment, "corruption," social and human isolation, or "severing of family ties" are the results of it. Understanding the social and human aspects of development is the second pillar of sustainability. The fundamental tenets of Islam include social justice, fairness, collective involvement (Shura), and a profound concern for the next generation. Practically speaking, the Ummah's responsibility as a community is to establish moral guidelines and to generate new knowledge focused on advancing the interests and benefits of the general public (Moten, 2013).

The Islamic development path incorporates both the spiritual and material facets of life. Humans must utilize the world's material resources as efficiently as possible to live a good life. It is pointless to discuss growth without taking into account people's spiritual side. Islam has placed a strong focus on the efficient use of resources, as well as their equitable allocation and usage, in order to attain human prosperity by fostering all human connections founded on justice. Fundamental Islamic principles include waqf, zakat (charitable contributions), and resource sharing to help the needy (Moten, 2013).

### 3.5 Economic Progress and Islamic Standpoint

The foundation of social cohesiveness and economic cooperation is the local community at the neighbourhood level. In order to seek Allah Almighty's pleasure, Zakah and Sadaqat seek to share wealth by spending it on others and the community's social needs. Arabs were also aware of charity endeavours before Islam. But in many respects, Islam broadened the idea of compassion. It required everyone with extra money to pay a minimal amount of social spending known as "Zakah" (Kahf, 2004).

The Qur'an states that spending is a condition for achieving success and prosperity. Allah SWT says, {And those who are rescued from their own souls' selfishness are the ones who are "really" successful} (al-Hashr:9). Islam also encourages spending as it is a prerequisite for success and prosperity. Success comes from keeping your word to nature and people. This entails carrying out and honouring individual responsibilities to the environment and society. Therefore, attempts to utilize natural resources are crucial to achieving prosperity, while environmental contamination works against it.

In summary, according to al-Jayyousi (2001), the Islamic perspective maintains that Allah created the entire world for the benefit of all people. Therefore, while implementing economic policies that could have a negative impact on others, it is imperative that all people worldwide consult and work together. The moral and practical requirements of attaining world peace and prosperity must be taken into account by national, regional, and local governments. This is essential for sustainability and a decent existence since they are included in the Islamic economic and social structure.

### 3.6 Overview of Islamic Values

Generally, Islamic values refer to a set of principles derived and inspired by the Quranic texts and the hadiths of the Prophet, which create an Islamic personality who can interact with society (Ishak & Osman, 2016). The terms values, ethics and principles are interchangeably used since the difference between those terms is very tiny. The viewpoints

of researchers differed on the relationship between values and ethics and the difference between them.

It can be summarized in the following points: a) Ethics is one type of value, b) all ethics are obligatory, while some values could be optional, and c) Values are universal, while ethics are societal and religious. However, the difference between principles and values is that principles are the rules that formulate and govern; they are intellectual moulds that have developed with the accumulation of experience, and their sources are diverse (religion, education, customs, personal convictions, knowledge). They form the overall outlook on life, interpret reality, and intervene in the formulation and arrangement of values. As for values, they are based on these principles derived and inspired from diverse sources and are affected by their formulation and arrangement (Mbzuh, 2024).

### 3.7 The Characteristics of Islamic Values

Islamic values are characterised by unique characteristics which distinguish them from other Western values; those characteristics can be summarised as follows (Ebrahimi, 2017): A) Pure in origin, Islamic values are based on heavenly revelation, mainly extracted from the Quran and Sunnah. B) comprehensive and integrated, they include the spiritual and physical aspects, the psychological, mental and emotional, the individual, family and social, the material and moral, the worldly and the afterlife. C) general, Islamic values are relevant to all creations, regardless of time, place, and society. It addresses people without exception. Allah SWT says, {Oh people! In fact, we turned you into peoples and tribes from a man and a female so that you might "get to know" one other} (al-Hujurat:13). D) realistic, Islamic values are not linked to the idealism that only the prophets can achieve nor to the imagination that rises above the lived reality; instead, it is easy and feasible. Allah SWT says, {No one will be charged with more than they can bear} (al-Baqarah:233). Hence, Islamic values are sophisticated and realistic in their application. For instance, values can be changed based on circumstances, customs, and traditions. This bears witness to the realism of Islamic values.

## 3.8 Islamic Developmental Values: A Global Worldview for Sustainable Progress

Values are the spirit of the religions and the means of universal communication (Bakour & Barghouth, 2024). There is a prevailing opinion among scholars that Human beings can achieve development by expanding efforts towards the moral aspects (Kahf, 2002). Linguistically, values refer to the precious things people are keen to acquire and preserve (Ibn Manzur, 1993). Regarding the contemporary interpretation, values are a collection of moral convictions and inclinations that establish our perception of what is right and bad (Allaby & Park, 2013). But according to the Islamic understanding, values are more expansive; they encompass the obligations and responsibilities outlined in the shari'ah and in Islamic teaching in general, as well as the etiquette connected to proper behavior (Halstead, 2007).

Rational philosophers have differed on the origin of values in two opinions. Some believe, such as Immanuel Kant, that there is no difference between one society and another concerning the origin of values, which means that the values of the past are the same as the values in the present, and the values in Europe are the same as the values in China. While some others, such as Whitehead, believe that the values are relative (Gorski, 2013).

However, in Islam, values are divine in origin, varying in application according to the circumstances of societies. This is said because the majority of Islamic values are extrapolated from the names of Allah SWT, such as al-Ghafoor, al-Saboor, al-Raheem, al-Kareem, al-Jamil, al-Ra’uf, al-'Adl, and al-Haleem. Those names are supreme values that Islam calls every Muslim to adopt and follow in all aspects of life. Moreover, Islam endorses values regardless of their source as long as they align with Islamic principles. For instance, Prophet Muhammed endorsed the Hilf al-Fudul, which had been formed by Arab tribes before Islam. This political alliance was mainly established based on values (Mbzuh, 2024).

Dorian Astor stated that Nietzsche, despite his negative position on religions, was very impressed by the Prophets Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad (PBUH), who have set values

for humanity (Mbzuh, 2024). There are some common eternal values provided by all messengers of Allah that are suitable for all eras. For instance, in the Quran, Allah SWT says, {Oh people! In fact, we turned you into peoples and tribes from a man and a female so that you might "get to know" one other} (al-Hujurat:13). This verse indicates that all humans are equal. This value was called by all messengers of Allah.

### 3.8.1 Islamic Valuse System

Undoubtedly, values hold a central and significant position within religious traditions, with a broad consensus across various faiths on the importance of cultivating noble values, virtuous conduct, and exemplary characteristics among their adherents. Thus, values were among religion's most vital pillars and significant foundations (Hare, 2006).

The Holy Quran and the Prophet's PBUH characters are the sources of Islamic values. Aisha (PBUH) said, Verily, the character of the Prophet of Allah was the Quran. It is a clear indication that the Holy Quran contains a comprehensive and integrated value system, practical and realistic. Its foundations and principles are indicated by many verses. For instance, Allah SWT says, {Indeed, Allah demands that intimate kin be treated with justice, grace, and charity. He prohibits aggressiveness, immorality, and indecency. He gives you instructions so you could be attentive} (Al-Nahl: 90). Ibn Masoud said: This is the most comprehensive verse in the Quran indicating the good and evil (al-Hakim, 1990).

It is noted through many studies that the Holy Qur'an is a profound repository of values, a foundational guide to ethical principles and virtues, and a source of illumination for those seeking personal elevation and cultivating noble qualities (Bhutto, 2020). The Qur'an consistently encourages individuals to embrace virtuous conduct, providing a moral framework and a spiritual impetus for developing admirable character. The Quran contains many verses that illustrate the value-based role model. For instance, Allah SWT says, {It is true that the Messenger of Allah is a great example for anyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day and frequently recalls Allah} (al-Ahzab:21). Also, Allah SWT says, {And you really are a man of exceptional character} (Al-Qalam:4).

The prophetic texts also confirmed the virtue of values, clarifying the goal of Islam is to perfect good character qualities. Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) said:

> *Allah has sent me to perfect good qualities of character and to complete good deeds, stated the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). Additionally, the Prophet (PBUH) stated, A believer will attain by his good behaviour the rank of one who prays during the night and observes fasting during the day. Furthermore, Anas stated: throughout my ten years of service to the Prophet, he never said to me, 'Shame!' or 'Why did you do such and such?' or 'Why did you not do such and such?*

Since the Prophet was a model of moral perfection, his teachings are focused on upholding moral standards and enhancing virtue while outlawing any behavior that deviates from them (Mbzuh, 2024).

### 3.8.2 Unity of Source of Creation and the Final Destiny

From the Islamic perspective, Allah Almighty created the universe for the benefit of all humanity. He has provided the earth's resources to people tasked with conserving and using these resources wisely. Humans possess the abilities necessary to comprehend the earth, environment, and life. They are regarded as guardians and custodians accountable for upholding natural laws while ensuring justice and sustainability in the use of resources. Every human action is seen as a form of worship, without distinction between spirituality and material existence or between this life and the afterlife. This unity in time and belief encourages individuals to appreciate the diversity of life and to continually seek to explore, understand, experience, and enjoy the world (Umar & Khamidi, 2012)

Islam takes a reasonably straightforward stance on the oneness and genesis of humanity. Islam emphasizes that all people are equal members of a global family that ought to communicate and exchange knowledge as all people are descended from Adam. As a result, the Islamic worldview is incompatible with the existing state of affairs when loans to wealthy states burden poor nations. Everyone should adhere to the universal ethical ideals of social, economic, and environmental justice. The Islamic economic model

incorporates checks and balances to determine the level of government intervention required to prevent excessive concentration of wealth and economic power, while prioritizing social justice and encouraging individual creativity (Kader, 2021).

Islam places a strong emphasis on the idea that humans are responsible for their acts and that creation has a purpose. As Allah's vicegerent, they bear a responsibility (Amanah) and will be held accountable for their actions on the Day of Judgment. As evidenced by debates about climate change, Islam thus creates a strong framework for accountability at all levels, including globally. The current situation, in which some strong countries and multinational corporations function without responsibility, is incompatible with the Islamic viewpoint. Islam promotes a society in which individuals in positions of power are held accountable for their deeds. It also emphasizes protecting all living things from waste, depletion, and destruction, including people and natural resources (al-Jayyousi, 2016).

### 3.8.3 Vicegerents on the Earth

In addition to material resources, humans have been endowed with a set of spiritual and mental traits that allow them to fulfil their role as vicegerents on earth, advance to the level of this mission, and carry it out successfully. Allah SWT says, {Recall your Lord's announcement to the angels that he would establish a succeeding "human" power on earth} (al-Baqarah: 30). Also, Allah SWT says, {He is the one who appointed you to be earth's heirs} (Fatir:39). Humans are given the option to carry out their responsibilities either rightly and wrongly and applying justice and injustice.

Allah Almighty has given the world unlimited resources. These resources are sufficient to meet the needs and welfare of all if used resourcefully and fairly. Human are free to deal with these resources as they like. However, the task of succession is given to all other human beings as well. The ultimate aim is to utilise the resources that Allah has given in an efficient and fair manner that ensures the well-being, prosperity and success of all.

### 3.8.4 Universal Brotherhood

This implies that all people are one and are essentially brothers. This task is not carried out by one or a small number of people from a specific race, group, or nation as all people are vicegerents on earth. Therefore, social equality and respect for all people—white or black, wealthy or impoverished—become essential components of Islam. Furthermore, a person's worth is based on his religion and service to humanity rather than his race, family, or fortune.

According to this definition of brotherhood, the proper way to treat other people is not to fight for "self-interest" but instead to cooperate and make sacrifices in order to meet everyone's fundamental requirements, realize each person's full potential, and improve human life. According to al-Jayyousi (2013), promoting competition within reasonable bounds boosts productivity and advances human welfare.

### 3.8.5 Moderation and the Concept of Decent Living

It appears that the decent-consumption economy aligns with the spirit of Islamic values. It significantly improves the environment and aids in the transition of societies to low-carbon economies. According to al-Jayyousi (2008), the Islamic viewpoint mandates that people use resources as intensively as possible until their last breath. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) opposed waste and excess and placed a high value on leading a respectable life. As long as prodigality and pride are not combined, the Prophet (PBUH) advised, "Eat, drink, give sadaqa, and wear clothes". In contrast to capitalist cultures, Islam envisions a just society with far smaller relative social and economic disparities (Jan & Asutay, 2019).

The Islamic method is based on the idea that people should behave moderately while making purchases so they are neither frugal nor excessive. It is permitted to spend in a manner that ensures a respectable existence, where he takes pleasure in all that is good and reserves the results of his labours for a time of need. Allah the Almighty says, {They're the people who spend moderately in between being frugal and being wasteful} (al-

Furqan:67). Also, Allah SWT says, {Drink and eat, but don't waste. He must dislike wasting people} (al-A'raf:60).

According to the Islamic way of life, people who can afford a high quality of living must willingly give up part of their comforts and assist others in strengthening their economies so that they might live a comparable lifestyle. Only once the majority of people have attained an equivalent quality of life should society as a whole advance socially and economically. One could contend that applying Islamic social security principles like zakat and waqf would help close the wealth disparity between the rich and the poor (al-Jayyousi, 2008).

The values framework in Islam promotes appropriate consumption, with Islamic societies founded on the fear of Allah being viewed as sustainable. This fear encompasses values like justice, kindness, and charitable spending. It encourages individuals to focus on sustainable efforts that promote spiritual growth and awareness of social and environmental issues rather than mere acquisition. Islam promotes an economy that prioritizes resource conservation over depletion. In today’s context, the Islamic perspective calls for close collaboration among all countries to manage and protect the earth's renewable resources (Halstead, 2007).

### 3.8.6 Mercy and Compassion for all beings (al-Rahma)

Mercy is a profound and fundamental value, prominently featured at the outset of every Surah in the Qur'an and referenced throughout its verses. It is also regarded as a central moral principle in philosophical discourse; for instance, the philosopher Galen identified mercy, modesty and generosity as core virtues (al-Tawhidi, 2020). Although "mercy" may appear simple, its significance is profound, carrying far-reaching implications. In a society where mercy prevails, hunger and deceit would be primarily eradicated, as mercy fosters compassion, justice, and mutual care among individuals.

Mercy is a concept that encompasses a range of linguistic meanings, the most significant of which are compassion, kindness, and gentleness (al-Jawhari, 1987). Additionally,

mercy is a human characteristic that combines friendliness and concern, arising from love and the desire to benefit others, accompanied by a fear of potential harm to them, and characterized by tenderness, compassion, and kindness (Mbzuh, 2024).

Mercy is a noble human value and a distinguished moral trait attributed to the Creator, Allah SWT. It is through mercy that He has characterized Himself, sending His messengers and prophets to embody this virtue and imparting its principles through His sacred texts and revelations. Allah SWT has instilled mercy in the hearts of His creation, designing them with an inherent capacity for it. Mercy has been a hallmark of righteous reformers, and Allah, has made it a fundamental principle that sustains human relationships and strengthens societal harmony. The significance of mercy is evident in several dimensions.

The revealed scriptures are foundational constitutions of mercy for humanity. Allah, the Almighty, dispatched His messengers and revealed to them sacred books, each imbued with the principles of mercy, offering guidance and compassion to humankind. Allah SWT said about the Torah that it was a total favor from Allah, giving believers kindness, direction, and all the information needed to live a decent life. This heavenly revelation was intended to help people become more assured in their faith, especially in regards to the assurance of their ultimate reunion with their Lord in the Hereafter (al-An'am: 154). Also, Allah SWT says, {Your Lord has now shown you mercy, guidance, and unmistakable proof} (al-An'am: 157).

The Islamic faith was revealed as a source of mercy for humanity, with the aim of fostering a society characterized by safety, harmony, and cohesion, where the guiding principles are love, affection, cooperation, and mutual understanding. Both Qur'anic and prophetic texts emphasize the virtue of mercy, while strongly warning against its negation. Mercy occupies a central place in the Holy Qur'an, appearing in approximately three hundred and twenty-six verses. As a testament to His mercy towards His creation, Allah, in His infinite compassion, extols the virtue of mercy and calls for its practice. Notably, the Qur'an contains an entire Surah titled "Al-Rahman", which underscores this divine attribute.

Moreover, the teachings of the Holy Qur'an convey some of the most eloquent expressions of mercy and the highest ideals of compassion, setting a universal standard for human relations. Allah SWT says, {Is it insufficient for them that the Book, which is read to them, has been sent down to you? There is undoubtedly mercy and a reminder for believers in this Quran} (al-'Ankabut:51). Fayruzabadi collected the meanings of mercy mentioned in the Holy Quran, and found twenty aspects of them. Centrality in the Prophetic Guidance.

The discussion of mercy necessitates a thorough examination of its meaning, along with an exploration of its practical manifestations in the life of our Prophet Muhammad, whose example is a model to be followed and emulated. This is grounded in the Almighty's declaration, {Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for whoever has hope in Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah often} (al-Ahzab: 21). The texts in the noble Prophetic guidance serve to affirm the paramount importance of mercy and its application across various spheres of life. Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad is described as a mercy to all of creation, as the Qur'an states, {We have sent you ˹O Prophet˺ only as a mercy for the whole world} (al-Anbiya: 107). His mercy encompassed all individuals, regardless of their age, proximity, belief, or disbelief. For those who believed in him, his mercy was expressed through guidance and compassion; for those who did not, it was manifested in his deep concern for their faith and well-being.

An example of the profound extent of his mercy can be seen in his response to the persecution he faced from his own people. When the Quraysh inflicted harm upon him to the point of drawing blood, the Prophet, despite his suffering, would wipe the blood from his face and pray: "O Allah, forgive my people" This act reflects his mercy even toward those who wronged him. Similarly, when the Quraysh, who had mocked, expelled, and fought him, and conspired against him, were ultimately placed in his power, his response was one of forgiveness and reconciliation. Upon gaining victory over them, he released them all (Ibn Hisham, 1955). This act of mercy underscores the central role of forgiveness and compassion in his life and teachings, setting a standard for his followers to emulate in their own lives.

### 3.8.7 Sustainable Mercy

It is the mercy that extends to future generations. It manifests in preserving their right to environmental and natural resources through sustainable ecological practices. This mercy also appears in leaving them a scientific, intellectual, value-based, and creative legacy that enables them to advance and overcome challenges efficiently.

In this regard for preserving the right of future generations, Allah SWT says, {Let the guardians be as concerned ˹for the orphans˺ as they would if they were to ˹die and˺ leave their own helpless children behind. So let them be mindful of Allah and speak equitably} (al-Nisa:9). This verse indicates the importance of thinking about the future of next generations. Also, Sa'd was reported to have stated that the Prophet paid me a visit while I was in Makkah, O Messenger of Allah, should I leave all of my money? I asked. No, he responded. One-half? I asked. No, he responded. One-third? I asked. (Bequeath) one-third, and one-third is a lot, he stated. It is preferable to leave your heirs without money than to leave them impoverished and begging for help (Narrated by Bukhari, 3/1006, Hadith 2591).

### 3.8.8 Perfection (Ihsan)

Perfection is one of the great values and attributes of Allah the Almighty, and it is also one of the characteristics of His Messengers. It is the spirit of Islam. Allah Almighty said, {And do good, for Allah certainly loves the good-doers} (Al-Baqarah: 195). The word "perfection" (Ihsan) varies in its meaning depending on context. It occurs in the form of treating others well and denotes sincerity in one's profession. the Prophet (PBUH) explained Ihsan when Gabriel asked him: What is Ihsan (i.e. perfection or Benevolence)? The Prophet (PBUH) said, Ihsan is to worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you do not achieve this state of devotion, then (take it for granted that) Allah sees you.

Ihsan comes in many degrees and types, all of which fall under the previous concept. It begins with a person’s Ihsan towards himself, then with all people and creatures. Ihsan to people is through good treatment, companionship, and sound speech; Allah Almighty said,

{Speak kindly to people} (al-Baqarah: 83); Ihsan can be through good deeds; Allah Almighty said, {and pardon others. And Allah loves the good-doers} (al-Imran:134). This level of Ihsan includes even those who object and disagree; it is indicated by Allah Almighty's saying, {You ˹O Prophet˺ will always find deceit on their part, except for a few. But pardon them and bear with them. Indeed, Allah loves the good-doers} (al-Ma'dah:13).

The Holy Qur'an mentioned Ihsan in different categories: Allah Almighty said, {Worship none but Allah; be kind to parents, relatives, orphans and the needy; speak kindly to people} (al-Baqarah:83), and Allah said in another place, {And be kind to parents, relatives, orphans, the poor, near and distant neighbours, close friends, ˹needy˺ travellers, and those ˹bondspeople˺ in your possession} (al-Nisa:36). Those two verses were directed to perform Ihsan to specific categories, i.e. Parents, relatives, poor, needy, and orphans. Ihsan to these people means being kind to them, tolerating and forgiving their wrongdoings.

Ihsan can also be performed with the environment. This includes life with everything in it, whether animal, plant or inanimate. Allah SWT says, {Do not spread corruption in the land after it has been set in order. And call upon Him with hope and fear. Indeed, Allah's mercy is always close to the good-doers} (al-A'raf:56). Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) emphasized the importance of Ihsan in all aspects of life, stating, "Verily, Allah has prescribed proficiency in all things", also Prophet said, for every cool liver there is a reward.

### 3.9 The Status of Sustainable Development in the Discourse of Shari'a Objectives

The Islamic teachings revolve around several High values, one of which is Rahma (Mercy) to all humanity. Allah SWT says, {We have sent you ˹O Prophet˺ only as a mercy for the whole world} (al-Anbiya:107). This verse summarizes one of the most significant goals Allah sent the Prophet Muhammad to achieve for humanity. Rahma is a high Islamic value that includes many lofty principles, such as attaining sustainability, prosperity and well-

being for all members of society regardless of race, colour, age, gender, and nationality. There is a close connection between Shari'a's goals and achieving sustainability and prosperity for humanity. However, Islamic teachings have provided a unique vision and mechanisms that should be followed to achieve and sustain sustainability and prosperity (Chapra, 2008).

The objectives of Shari'a (Maqasid al-Shari'a) are defined as the goals which Shari'a is keen to achieve for the benefit of the Muslims. Allal al-Fassi defined the Shari'a objective as follows: The general objective of Shari'a is the development and reform of the earth, the preservation of its coexistence system, ensuring the continuation of its goodness, and the fulfilment of justice and righteousness, and the extraction and management of its sources. The objectives of Shari'a represent the sublime meanings, good rulings, and reasonable goals that Shari'a sought to achieve and reach from the rulings that Allah legislated for His servants. In a nutshell, it can be said that the objectives of Shari'a revolve around the interests of humans, who are Allah's vicegerents on earth and responsible for establishing justice, fairness, and happiness for all members of the nation.

Shari'a objectives are divided according to their degree of strength into three levels: Darruriyat (Necessities), Hajjiyat (Complementary), and Tahsiniyat (Embellishments). Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali classified objectives into five basic groups, stating that "the Shari'ah objectives are to preserve religion, life, intellect, lineage and property". Any matter or action that includes preserving these five principles is a Maslahah "interest", and whatever impairs these principles is a Mafsadah (damage).

The fact that the Muslims are the vicegerent of Allah on earth has made them successor and responsible for its reform and development. Accordingly, the climate changes resulting from the outcomes of Western modernity and the results of adopting materialistic thought have affected the environment, threatened the rights of future generations, and affected the ecological balance. This led Muslims to face colossal responsibility as Muslims bear the responsibility of development, preserving blessings, and ensuring the preservation of the earth and protecting it against corruption. Accordingly, the concept of

sustainable development was commonly discussed based on the objectives of Shari'a; due to the rapid developments that humanity is experiencing in this era, issues and problems in development have arisen, raising several questions. For instance, the relationship between the objectives of Shari'a and the environment. This relationship is evident from two aspects (Almaala & Shanin, 2023).

The first aspect is that the five necessities cannot be achieved except through the environment. The environment is necessary for the survival of humans, their intellect, their lineage and their property. Humans cannot neither survive nor exist without the environment. Moreover, for the second aspect, contemporary Islamic jurisprudence tends to consider the environment alone as an independent objective by preserving and reforming it and preventing corruption. Allah SWT says, {Corruption has spread on land and sea as a result of what people's hands have done} (al-Rum:41). The environment is one of the most important pillars to guarantee a happy life for the whole human being.

The detrimental effects of the Western development model were the subject of intense discussion during the 20$^{th}$ century. Linking the quest of happiness to excessive consumption and turning luxuries into needs was one of the main criticisms. Environmentalists also attacked the Western development model for its detrimental effects on soil, water, and air pollution as well as the depletion of natural resources (Alden *et al*., 2020). According to al-Jayyousi (2008), the Western development paradigm has turned natural resources into commodities and put them in danger due to excessive depletion, land corruption, and crop and offspring destruction. In contrast, Islamic thought sets standards for justice and social responsibility, as well as the consecration of the principle of benevolence, non-excess, protection of natural resources, and kindness to living beings (Almaala & Shanin, 2023).

### 3.9.1 Characteristics of Development and Shari'a Objectives

From the Islamic perspective, development is distinguished by a set of characteristics, the most important of which are: A) Comprehensiveness; Shari'a does not recognize the separation between material and spiritual aspects, as development issues cannot be

addressed unless all elements are considered. B) Balance: Development from the Islamic perspective achieves a balance between the material economic aspect, the spiritual aspect, and the moral aspect. C) Justice: Development from the Islamic perspective focuses on the principle of achieving justice, freedom, equality and social solidarity, ensuring a sufficiency level for each individual in society according to his needs, and is keen to achieve justice in distribution according to mechanisms within the rights of the poor and the rich alike, through the mechanism of Zakat (Almaala & Shanin, 2023).

Moreover, Humanity is also one of the development characteristics from an Islamic perspective. Islam seeks the welfare of society, the happiness of people, and their liberation from exploitation as the purpose of human succession was not limited to eating and drinking, but instead, Humans were created to perform a divine mission in this universe and to be genuinely the successor of Allah on His earth. In Islam, development aims primarily to achieve material security from hunger and moral security from fear. Allah SWT says, {Who has fed them against hunger and made them secure against fear} (Quraysh: 3-4). Islam aims, through the development process, to provide a good and dignified life for every human being.

Additionally, according to the Islamic approach, future generations have a right to the wealth of present generations. Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) says, “If you leave your heirs rich, it is better than leaving them poor”. Interestingly, Omar bin Al-Khattab relied on the former Hadith; he did not divide the lands of Iraq among the conquering soldiers, but rather, he imposed a tax on them for the benefit of successive generations. Omar said, “I do not want people to come after us who have nothing?”

### 3.9.2 Sustainable Financing between Achieving SDGs and Embodying the Objectives of Shari’a

Sustainable development requires that the idea of sustainability be included in all human dealings so that it works to bring benefit without causing corruption or harm, which may lead to corruption on earth or depletion of resources that are considered a right for future generations. Accordingly, sustainable investment has emerged as one of the dilemmas of

the environmental crises imposed in today's world, and perhaps in some of its dimensions, it is consistent with the objectives of Sharia and its principles based on preserving life and money and bringing benefits (Almaala & Shanin, 2023).

In order to enhance long-term investments in sustainable economic activities and projects, the financial industry adopts the idea of sustainable finance, which involves taking environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors into account when making investment decisions. Green finance is defined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development as funding intended to promote economic growth while lowering greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, cutting waste, and increasing the effectiveness of the use of natural resources. This leads to enhancing equality and social welfare, consistent with sustainable development principles and goals. This also expresses the discourse of the objectives of Sharia, which calls for preserving money and prohibiting corruption on earth by depleting resources (Kunna *et al*., 2023).

Sustainable financing activities are embodied through green finance companies, sustainable project funds, green bonds, targeted investment, green microfinance, loans for sustainable projects, and reporting on environmental, social and governance standards and disclosing them. Green sukuk is also considered one of the most critical sustainable investment tools, and green sukuk is a type of Islamic financial instrument that allows issuers to use their proceeds to finance investments in renewable energy or environmental assets. Green, Social and Sustainability (CSS) Bonds are bond issues linked to environmentally friendly investments with positive social and environmental impacts and financial returns.

Sustainable financing aims to help society better meet today's needs while ensuring that future generations are unaffected. Islamic Finance aligns with sustainable finance's goals of emphasising environmental protection and social responsibility, including stopping the development or financing of operations that may negatively affect the human race's environment and/or health or safety. There are also similarities between the social focus of analyzing and introducing governance practices, the environment and social

responsibility and the principle of profit and loss sharing, which ultimately aim to adopt the perspective of stakeholders and enhance social cohesion and ensure that no social group is exploited (Kunna *et al*., 2023).

This leads to the material dimension of the objectives of Sharia, which is the construction of the earth in various fields and the exploitation of all material capabilities according to the principle of succession in a way that guarantees a good life for humans while preserving what has been enchanted for them in accordance with the principle of the trust he has been entrusted with, and achieving the level of sufficiency for individuals in society. The construction of the earth in Islam is represented in all means through which various types of development can be achieved, whether economic (industrial, agricultural), social, health, spiritual, etc. The cultivation of the earth is also a primary goal of sustainable development, in addition to being a religious goal and a legitimate purpose (Almaala & Shanin, 2023).

Allah created humans to carry out three main tasks: Firstly, worshipping Allah, as Allah Almighty says: {I did not create jinn and humans except to worship Me} (al-Zariyat:56). Secondly, acting as vicegerent of Allah on earth, as Allah Almighty says, {Remember when your Lord said to the angels, I am going to place a successive human authority on earth} (al-Baqarah: 30). Thirdly, to cultivate, build and reform the earth, Allah says, {He is the One Who produced you from the earth and settled you on it} (Hud:61). To achieve these goals, socially responsible products have emerged in the Islamic finance sector. These products can make a difference when it comes to socially responsible financing (Almaala & Shanin, 2023).

One of the aims is to empower financial institutions to support sustainable development with financing commensurate with available resources by avoiding usury and distributing risks among members of society in a manner consistent with their financial capacity by sharing risks and avoiding uncertainty, gambling and gambling. With these characteristics, sustainable financing gives society sufficient margin to deal with crises and sudden fluctuations, thus preserving their interests and money.

Through the promotion of clean technology and innovation, the development of green products, clean industrial production, and the rationalization of consumption and recycling, as well as the creation of new job opportunities in the recycling and repair of old goods and infrastructure projects, sustainable financing helps finance projects that are based on the circular economy. By doing this, the rights of future generations are safeguarded and the environment is kept free from corruption. When Prophet Muhammad, PBUH, said, You are all shepherds, and each of you is responsible for his flock, he was advocating for social responsibility and an authentic Islamic culture. This encouraged the development of eco-friendly projects that help shield the planet from the effects of climate change (Kunna *et al*., 2023).

### 3.10 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter outlined and discussed the idea of sustainability and progress from an Islamic point of view. It also discussed the Islamic perspective of sustainable development in three dimensions (Economic, social, and environmental). Moreover, the chapter presented the central Islamic values relevant to the idea of sustainability, such as the unity of the source of creation and the final destiny, vicegerents on the earth, universal brotherhood, moderation and the concept of decent living, Mercy and Compassion, and Perfection (Ihsan).

# CHAPTER IV

# PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH FRAMEWORK OF ISLAMIC VALUES FOR A SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE

## 4.1 Introduction

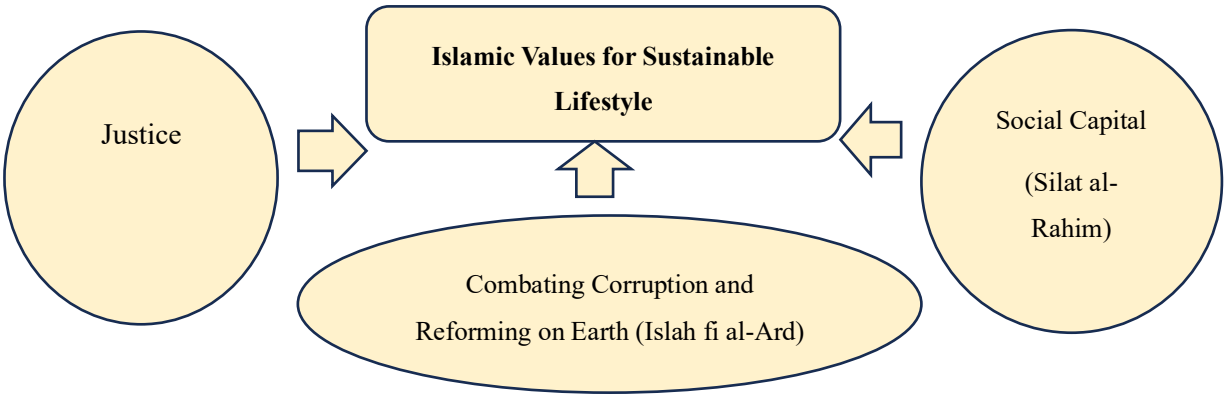
This chapter is initiated on the need to rethink a new model inspired by Islamic teachings to replace the current Western development model. It is worth noting that despite the UN setting SDGs, there is pressure on the planet in all directions and forms, whether from individuals or governments of countries. Today's world faces substantial environmental problems that negatively affect economic and social development. There is a near-general conviction that development goals cannot succeed unless an ethical aspect accompanies them to ensure a fair balance between the requirements of present generations and the rights of future generations. Over the past few years, many countries have realised a gap in development plans, which is the ethical aspect that cannot be separated from the development strategies (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

There are growing calls for rebuilding an integrated system for sustainability from an Islamic value perspective. This requires formulating a new intellectual system derived from Islamic principles. The relevant Islamic values to the concept of the sustainable development model can be derived from the verse where Allah SWT says, {Indeed, Allah commands justice, grace, as well as generosity to close relatives. He forbids indecency, wickedness, and aggression. He instructs you so perhaps you will be mindful}. (An-Nahl: 90). The below figure illustrates the central relevant values to the sustainable development, in which a decent life can be guaranteed to every human being. The following sections will discuss the values in light of sustainable development.

Considering Islamic rules and principles, a comprehensive framework has been set to regulate the relationship between individual and individual, as well as between individual and nature. Nature in this context includes all types of natural capital, such as forests,

plains, rivers, seas, soil, etc. This is due to the belief that any defect or injustice in the natural capital will negatively affect different aspects of life, such as cultivation, offspring and kinship ties in accordance with Allah almighty's saying, {Now if you hypocrites turn away, perhaps you would then spread corruption throughout the land and sever your ˹ties of˺ kinship!} (Muhammad: 22). This verse indicates that turning away from the path of revelation and deviating from Allah's law will lead to the spread of corruption on earth. Hence, the concept and framework of sustainable development will be discussed based on Islamic values that consider the essential components of the foundations of decent life and advancement.

These values include justice, social capital, reducing corruption, and reforming the earth. Each of these three values will be elaborated in the following sections. This framework is developed in light of the Islamic Moral system discussed by monzer kahf (2000) in his book "Notes on Islamic Economics: Theories and Institutions". These Islamic values can constitute new standards for society's progress. The objectives of this chapter are as follows: A) Identify the fundamental notions of justice -from an Islamic viewpoint- and their implications for sustainable development. B) Present the meaning and value of social capital and social justice in Islamic teachings. C) Present Islamic views on climate change and the importance of the principles of reforming the earth.




**Fiure 4.1: Islamic Values for Sustainable Lifestyle**
**Source:** Author, 2024

### 4.2 Justice (al-'Adl)

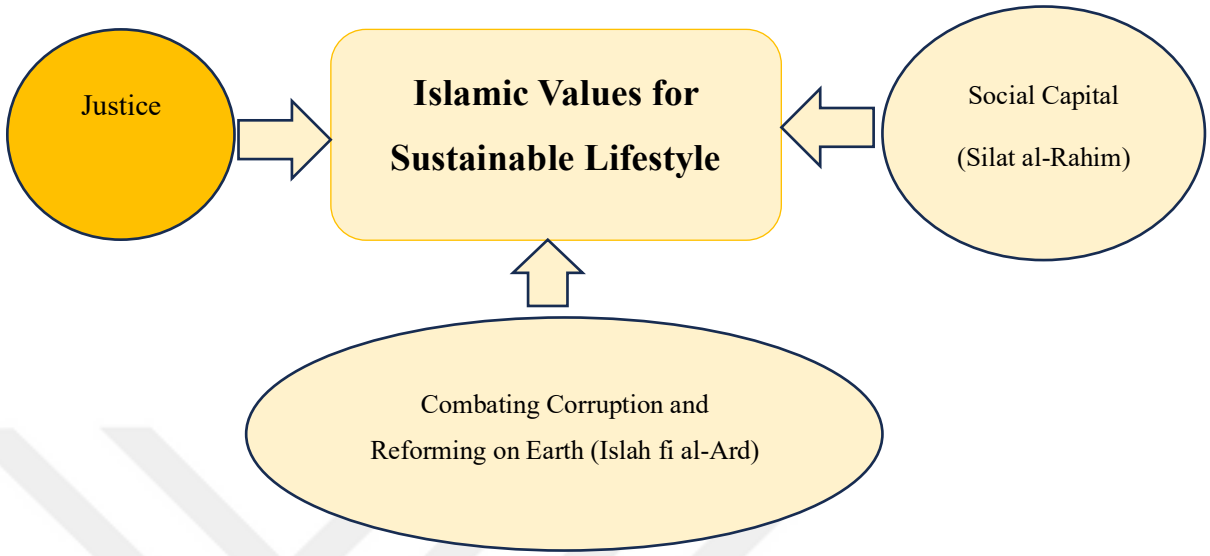



**Figure 4.2: Jusitce - Islamic Values for Sustainable Lifestyle**
**Source:** Author, 2024

Islamic philosophy places a strong emphasis on justice and equity. The Qur'an also makes justice a major issue, mandating legal systems and how they should be applied. Furthermore, despite its repercussions, fairness is a vital duty in Islam that all believers and society as a whole must uphold. Islam's conception of justice is considerably better than all other man-made laws, including formal justice, natural justice, and distributive and corrective justice (Hassan, 2017). Allah SWT says, {O believers! Stand firm for Allah and bear true testimony. Do not let the hatred of a people lead you to injustice. Be just! That is closer to righteousness. And be mindful of Allah} (al-Maidah:8).

The idea of justice forms the foundation of Islamic teachings. Justice was practiced in family and social interactions by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). "You are all guardians accountable for your subjects" the PBUH declared. The king is the protector of his subjects, the man is the protector of his family, the woman is the protector and protector of her husband's home and children, and so you are all protectors and protectors of your subjects. According to the concept of guardianship, which is based on the idea of justice, the role of the guardian serves as the foundation and support that binds the family,

organizations, and society together to form the nation (Hassan, 2017). The concept of justice in the theme of sustainable development will be discussed, focusing on three dimensions: environmental, social and economic.

### 4.2.1 Social Justice

Plato discussed social justice regarding the individual's services and functions towards the state. According to this theory, social justice was defined in Greek political theory as a principle in society that includes a combination of humans who have come together out of a need for each other, and hence their union in one community forms a single unit (Bhandari, 1998).

In contrast, the state, in Islam, is not considered something sacred but rather a social organization subject to divine law. People in Islamic society do not come together out of need for each other; instead, they do so as a community where each member looks out for the others and is accountable for the group's well-being. The following is a brief definition of social justice (Hasan, 1971): A) Treating the individual (man or woman) fairly and ensuring freedom for everyone. B) Providing equal opportunities for the individual to develop his personality so that he becomes competent in society. C) Managing the interaction between an individual and society for the good of all.

The Islamic system is characterized as a compromise between communism and capitalism. It passionately supports social justice and upholds each person's freedom and dignity. To ensure its revolutionary development within universal fairness, human society must continue to progress within moral bounds. Lifetime is a gradual course of transformation that demands each generation to ocercome its issues and challenges, according to Iqbal (2013).

It is well-agreed among Muslim scholars that "property rights" are one of the main fundamental pillars which Islam preserves. In his pilgrimage, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) emphasized the importance of property rights when he declared: "It is not lawful for a person to take his brother's stick except if he is pleased with such". In Islamic

economics, the idea of property rights emphasizes poverty reduction and redistribution, with ramifications that go beyond the physical world. Islamic beliefs encourage a variety of beneficiaries, such as minorities, women, children, and those without land, to have access to land rights (al-Jayyousi, 2016).

Moreover, several principles were set by Islamic law in terms of dealing with Property Rights. For example, it must not be overused or applied in a way that denies others their property rights. (Forni, 2005). The Qur'an requires everyone to respect the property rights of all persons regardless of religious belief. All members of society, Muslims and non-Muslims, enjoy the same property rights and shall benefit equally from natural resources. The state has the right to "ownership" of land in the name of Allah, which is conditional on society's benefit. Property rights in Islam include an element of redistribution, manifested in institutions such as waqf and zakat. These organizations, which have aided governmental institutions, infrastructure, social progress, general public health, water resource, protection, and education, are crucial parts of social responsibility, claims al-Jayyousi (2008).

According to Islamic principles, people must put in much effort and make money through fair and legal means. Furthermore, everyone must fulfil their societal responsibilities. The person must abstain from sins such as unwarranted personal gain, unfair business practices, deception, fraud, and corruption. Exploiting other countries and starting wars to seize resources are unacceptable ways to acquire wealth and property. Instead, it must be acquired in fair and lawful ways, such as trade that is acceptable to both parties (Kamali, 1989).

Islamic teachings hold that material belongings should be worthless unless they fulfil the reason they were made. An attitude like this encourages self-control when using limited resources, which lowers wasteful spending and overuse of them. Through decent living, social cohesiveness, and solidarity, this ethical framework helps to meet everyone's requirements so that everyone in society feels empowered by their community rather than by their personal belongings. Material belongings have become an aim when the ethical

component is absent; regrettably, this is a prevalent occurrence in the modern world (Al-Jayyousi, 2013).

In brief, the parties responsible for achieving SDGs should not neglect the aspect of social justice due to its great importance. The basic requirements of human dignity, decent living standards, and access to the necessities of life and sanitation services, energy, health care, food security, and biodiversity should be adhered to. At the same time, education, training, and job creation should be provided to all members of society without any discrimination. The rule of law, gender equality within the Islamic framework, women's empowerment, and a general commitment to establishing just democratic societies for development should be ensured.

### 4.2.2 Economic Justice

The idea of "fair trade" can be presented to describe economic fairness. This idea refers to an economic ideal that strongly highlights giving producers a "fair" price that covers their costs, promotes social fairness, and allows for environmentally friendly production. Islamic principles, which encourage the sharing of wealth between the rich and the poor, are consistent with fair trade. Islam endorses the notions of equality, fairness, and public interest, all of which allude to the notion that an individual or group should refrain from taking a course of action or encouraging commercial dealings that would have a more significant negative impact on society or the environment than a positive one (Uddin & Khan, 2014). Allah SWT says: {O believers! Do not devour one another's wealth illegally, but rather trade by mutual consent. And do not kill ˹each other or˺ yourselves} (al-Nisa:29).

Nevertheless, discussing economic justice will decidedly lead to discussing two essential concepts: Withholding and greed. Several texts in Islamic sources alert about both conducts. In the fight in Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) criticized their greed and said: There are two characteristics which are not combined in a believer: miserliness and a bad disposition. Similarly, Islam strongly forbids withholding, as it creates prohibited income and leads to inequality. Prophet Muhammad forbade such withholding,

warning: “If anyone keeps goods till the price rises, he is a sinner”. These Islamic precepts so demonstrate how Islam is consistent with equality and justice.

One excellent illustration of people-centred development that is consistent with Islamic principles is Fairtrade. Promoting biological farming, sustainable energy, and sensible ecological exercises that honour both people and the environment are all part of it. In this sense, fair commerce can be viewed as an example that upholds Islamic principles. Islam also encourages individuals to use natural resources wisely, advocates for restraint in consumption, and requires humanity to preserve the natural equilibrium. The producers of fair trade goods and the customers who purchase them must adhere to these fundamental standards (Khan & Thaut, 2008). Allah SWT says, {Indeed, We have created everything perfectly preordained}. (al-Qamar: 49)

Furthermore, transparent management and commercial partnerships that foster honesty and decency among trading partners are part of fair trade ideals. Islam promotes the idea that mutual consent is a prerequisite for successful commercial dealings. Fairtrade demands that workers receive fair compensation and working conditions. The handling of employees is guided by several core concepts, including solid and transparent contracts and workers' knowledge of their rights, obligations, and responsibilities. Allah says, {O believers! Honour your obligations} (al-Ma’idah:1).

Promoting diversity and long-term sustainability while guaranteeing higher profits by enticing investment in underdeveloped communities is one of the primary arguments for fair trade. Islam's core belief in trade is that the market should be allowed to respond freely to supply, demand, and natural competition. This implies that in order to make commerce free and equitable, price controls, tariffs, and other obstacles must be eliminated.

In short, economic justice aims to eliminate poverty, create a relative balance between the social classes in society, and create equal opportunities for all. This means that everyone can enter the field of production, and there will be no such thing as a monopoly of production in the hands of a specific class. Therefore, the hope of progress in proportion to a person's work can be considered another effect of economic justice in the lifestyle.

The hope of progress and advancement leads to self-confidence and reassurance in a person's life, which is expressed by psychological health in life.

### 4.2.3 Environmental Justice

Some Western development models have serious flaws in that they primarily concentrate on the economic side of growth, ignoring the environmental side (Sardar, 1979). According to al-Jayyousi (2008), Islamic principles encourage sustainability by advancing environmental justice. Islamic law has established precise guidelines for creating public policies and striking a balance between private and public interests in topics pertaining to the environment. A more comprehensive understanding of sustainability may result from the notion of public interest.

Islamic teachings on ecological sustainability serve as the foundation for environmental justice. In actuality, Muslims have a unique duty to protect all living things. Islam holds that all living things, not just humans, are entitled to the natural components of land, water, sunlight, and forests. As long as they commit not to overuse, harm, or destroy natural resources, humans have been granted the right to use them as they see fit. Regardless of religion, race, social class, or geographic location, Islamic environmental justice principles emphasize the fair distribution of environmental resources (such as air, water, biodiversity, forests, etc.) among all communities and groups (Mohamed, 2012).

Islam holds that all people are stewards of the natural world and ought to coexist peacefully with other living things. This implies that all Muslims are required to protect, preserve, and care for the environment. They must also abstain from wasting or exploiting natural resources and from carelessly damaging natural elements such as forests, water bodies, soil, and air. Furthermore, Islam condemns all forms of corruption, including ecological corruption, which includes careless use of natural resources, environmental harm, and industrial pollution. Environmental justice is both a social and a theological requirement in Islam (Mohamed, 2012).

The protected area (Hima), one of the organizations that supported environmental justice during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), is a prime example. The urge to encourage harmony and coexistence between people and the natural world led to the establishment of the Hima. Human reason and experience led to the development of this invention, which was influenced and borrowed from the local culture. An outstanding illustration of a development paradigm that emphasizes the human being as the universe's steward, observer, and agent is the Hima. The Hima system can be considered an ecological development paradigm that forbids corruption and environmental deterioration (Abd Al-Kader, 1959).

In short, it can be said that the Hima had an influential role during the era of the Prophet PBUH and after him. It reinforced the principle of environmental justice as it promoted environmental development. Moreover, the Hima concept was adopted in society based on the principle of justice among people.

### 4.3 Social Capital (Silat al-Rahim)

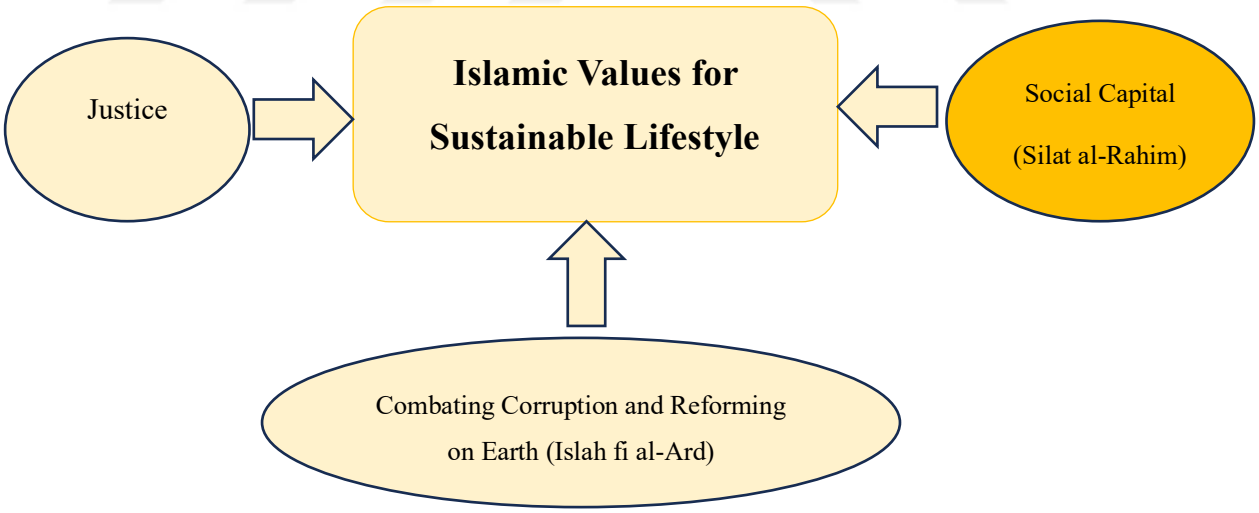



**Figure 4.3: Social Capital - Islamic Values for Sustainable Lifestyle**
**Source:** Author, 2024

Social capital is one of the aspects of the framework for a sustainable lifestyle. According to Islam, the social order is interconnected with human existence and symbolizes the area

where people might discover opportunities for personal development and self-realization. The ummah, the family, and the individual are the three tiers of the Islamic social structure. Since the ummah is the epitome of collaborative action, it will be the centre of attention. "al-Ummah al-Wasat" (Middle Ummah) is the name given to the Islamic Ummah. From an Islamic standpoint, social capital includes both social and human aspects. As part of the comprehensiveness of the Islamic viewpoint, the social order, the social agreement of the ummah, and societal norms will be discussed. A case study of Waqf will be used to demonstrate social cohesion and social responsibility.

### 4.3.1 Social Equality

Islam has a distinct perspective on human social existence. It holds that all people, regardless of colour, race, or religion, are descended from Adam and Eve, meaning that they are all related and belong to the same family tree. This system is inclusive and all-encompassing. This system describes the normative behaviour of people and delineates the rules, regulations, and principles of society, economy, and politics. It also attempts to meet people's multifaceted requirements by enacting natural and societal laws. When the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) established the first model community in Medina, it also outlined the fundamentals of a virtuous society. Islam also emphasizes the necessity of a cohesive society in order to foster communal service (Laluddin, 2014).

### 4.3.2 Accountability

The Islamic perspective holds that humans were made with a specific purpose. Humans are, therefore, accountable and responsible (Laluddin, 2014). The evidence for this is found in the Holy Quran: Allah the Almighty says: {Did you then think that We had created you without purpose and that you would never be returned to Us?} (al-Mu’minun: 115). Allah has created human beings, who are trustees and vicegerents, to worship Him and call for His obedience. At the individual level, humans must worship Allah and act ethically. At the collective (societal) level, the individual’s mission is to establish a social and moral order to achieve a good life. The phrase "trust," which means applying the brain and mind to maintain equilibrium, order, and the "natural state" on earth, is used in the

Holy Quran to describe this mission. Only when the acts are directed by a correct understanding of religion (Iman), based on Allah's unity and oneness, and the belief that all normative values and regulations derive from Allah's sayings, can a human trustee perform his responsibility. Whether a person succeeds or fails is determined by his or her desire to make life meaningful (Khan, 2003).

### 4.3.3 Unification of the Social System and Human Existence

Islam's social structure is closely related to human life since it is the setting where people can grow, realize themselves, and serve one another. As a result, the Islamic social structure must be founded on divine direction and fashioned after the timeless principles and ideals of Islam. According to multiple verses in the Qur'an, corruption is a condition of moral, social, or political disintegration in society as a whole, and the Qur'an aims to prevent it.

Allah SWT says, {A clear proof has already come to you from your Lord. So give just measure and weight, do not defraud people of their property, nor spread corruption in the land after it has been set in order} (al-A'raf:85). Also, Allah SWT says, {And when they leave ˹you˺, they strive throughout the land to spread mischief in it and destroy crops and cattle. Allah does not like mischief} (al-Baqarah- 205). People become corrupt when they commit sin. The demise of earlier civilizations is frequently mentioned in the Qur'an as a lesson for humanity. Building moral and social models that harmonized the demands of people and the spirit was the prophets' role. To put it briefly, the Qur'an's primary objective is to create just social and moral structures. (Moten, 2013).

### 4.3.4 The Islamic Social System

The Islamic social system can be divided into three levels: society, the family, and the individual. This section will focus on society, as it embodies the essence of collective action.

#### 4.3.4.1 Islamic Society: Global Community and Shared Destiny

According to Islamic literature, and in this context, society is defined as “Ummah” (Abdelmadjid, 1997). Ummah is a exclusive Islamic notion that describes a group of the same belief (Iman). In this community, faith is the link among all members worldwide. Allah SWT says, {O humanity! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may get to know one another} (al-Hujurat:13). This implies that all people are members of the same big family and that no one is better than another. It also implies that everyone has the same level of human dignity. The core of human rights, which are emphasized in the Islamic worldview, is equality. "Taqwa" is the term used to describe the degree to which people are distinguished from one another by their moral behaviour, qualities, and good deeds.

Moral principles underpin the Ummah's oneness, which is unconstrained by national, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, political, or geographic factors. Because the Ummah is a worldwide nation of followers bound jointly by the Islamic faith, its teachings, and its values, the Islamic conception of the Ummah transcends nationalism and racism. Everyone should cooperate in times of adversity and struggle to the same extent and significance as in times of prosperity, as this reflects the unity and concerns of the Ummah as a whole (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

The Islamic Ummah is portrayed in the Holy Qur'an as a working group of professionals and specialists with a formal entity and character rather than as a country with a religious identity alone. An organized and cooperative civil group that tackles issues of common human concern, such as poverty, governance, climate change, education, health, and energy, is regarded as the ideal model of the Ummah. This Ummah is in charge of recognizing and resolving human suffering on a global scale (Moten, 2013).

#### 4.3.4.2 The Positive Interaction in Society

Islam places significant emphasis to the social system. In the social system, valuable policies, decisions, and choices inspired by Islamic values are shaped (Hasan, 1971). Allah

SWT says: {They are˜ those who, if established in the land by Us, would perform prayer, pay alms-tax, encourage what is good, and forbid what is evil. And with Allah rests the outcome of all affairs} (al-Haj:41). Prayer thus stands for the concepts of economic fairness and aiding the vulnerable. By promoting morality and outlawing immorality, the Ummah highlights the collective objectives of doing good in all spheres of life, including financial, societal, political, and cultural ones. Additionally, it identifies and explains society's necessary role as a "uniting force for good" (Abdelkader, 2000). To make the Islamic Ummah the Khayir Ummah (Best nation), Islamic society seeks to reform and alter society in order to guarantee social cohesiveness, security, well-being, and wealth.

Carrying out the mission of enjoining good and forbidding evil leads the Muslim nation to become “Khayir Ummah." Allah SWT says, {You are the best community ever raised for humanity—you encourage good, forbid evil, and believe in Allah} (al-Imran: 110). Several passages in the Holy Quran mention the "Khayir Ummah," or standards that determine a country's status as the best nation, highlighting the Islamic society's goal of establishing a moral and social order where injustice is eradicated and social and human security are guaranteed. Allah Almighty says, {They are˜ those who, if established in the land by Us, would perform prayer, pay alms-tax, encourage what is good, and forbid what is evil} (al-Haj:41). Furthermore, according to the Holy Quran, this values-based community is referred to as the "middle nation" or "al-Ummah al-Wasat" in order to be accountable for working to establish a common language and point of agreement for everyone. Being a middle nation is essential because it sends a strong message that Islamic society is just and balanced, distant from extremism (Selim, 2015).

#### 4.3.4.3 Equality among Human

As a universal philosophy of life, Islam emphasizes that all people are equal because they share a common ancestor. This implies that everyone has the same fundamental human rights, regardless of their religion. It also implies that everyone, irrespective of gender or social standing, ought to get the same treatment under the law. According to the equality principle, non-Muslims living under Islamic law are entitled to the same economic, social,

and religious freedoms as Muslims. The communities of Non-Muslim can so operate as autonomous, free entities with their own laws, customs, and spiritual framework (Laluddin, 2014).

When the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) created the Islamic state's constitution in Medina, he gave the Jewish community independence. In a similar vein, he gave the Christian community freedom and autonomy when it came to Islamic governance. The principles of religious tolerance, equity, and peaceful coexistence among all members of Islamic society were still applied fairly during the Caliphs' rule. As a result, the Islamic social system accepts diversity in culture and religion. (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

#### 4.3.4.4 Mutual Cooperation for the Public and Private Interest

Islam defines the Ummah as a group of people who cooperate, help, and protect one another in all areas of life. This idea is expressed in the Holy Quran in many verses that promote equality and justice as well as uncountable verses that deal with interpersonal relationships. The establishment and upkeep of the social and moral order depend on group endeavors and communal cooperation. Allah the Almighty says:

> *The believers, both men and women, are guardians of one another. They encourage good and forbid evil, establish prayer and pay alms-tax, and obey Allah and His Messenger. It is they who will be shown Allah's mercy. Surely Allah is Almighty, All-Wise* (*al-Tawbah:71*).

The principle of mutual cooperation is the cornerstone of the ethical code in Islamic society.

#### 4.3.4.5 Social Commitment

The concept of social responsibility and collaboration in Islamic financial organizations was highlighted by Farook (2007). Islam holds that work and faith are synonymous, with work reflecting and being a result of faith. It is reflected in elements of devotion such as prayer, fasting, zakat giving, and the Hajj. Only a small percentage of Islamic laws, rules, and governmental policies address religious ceremonies; the majority deal with social

order. Beyond the corporate sector, social responsibility encompasses both individuals and policymakers. Social cohesion of this type supports society's long-term survival. Allah SWT says:

> *And hold firmly together to the rope of Allah1 and do not be divided. Remember Allah's favour upon you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts, so you—by His grace—became brothers. And you were at the brink of a fiery pit and He saved you from it. This is how Allah makes His revelations clear to you, so that you may be ˹rightly˺ guided (al-Imran:103).*

The main point from this situation is that constructive group action is necessary to protect society and advance its well-being. Unless society's participants attempt to overcome moral, economic, social, and political difficulties, development and a sustainable way of life are impossible.

Asad (1980) asserts that when a nation's moral framework develops throughout time, it is associated with greater political and material prosperity. Moral decay has a negative impact on social, economic, and political life. Every Muslim should always think about evaluating his social environment for the good of the public. Among the Islamic ideas that the entire society will remember are justice, honesty, goodness, and all the procedures related to morality and a happy existence. Because it is accountable for what happens in society, the Islamic Ummah must seek to reform and address all social and economic ills.

This fact is mentioned several times in the Qur'an when discussing past civilisations' history. The main result is that any community that rejects social justice and the concepts of natural sustainability will fall apart, just like the ancient Saba culture did. Therefore, human civilization will be in danger unless intentional, thoughtful, and collaborative works are made to address the challenge of poverty, unemployment, climate issues such as pollution and wasting resources.

#### 4.3.4.6 Social Solidarity

The pillars of the Islamic social structure are unity of faith (Iman), unity of purpose, and social cohesion. This is something that is frequently mentioned in the sacred Quran. Allah SWT says: {The believers are but one brotherhood} (al-Hujurat: 10). There are more groups within the Islamic social framework besides the Muslim Ummah. Justice, mercy, compassion, empathy, and cooperation are, hence, social virtues that apply equally to relations between Muslims and non-Muslims as well as to all other members of society. Al-Jayyousi (2009) asserts that Islamic ideals respect cultural diversity. This suggests that everyone in the community must abide by the social compact. It is guided by the teachings of the Holy Quran, which promote cooperation via equality and righteousness and is based on the values of justice, kindness, and solidarity.

The Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) position and attitude toward non-Muslims (Ahl al-Dhimmah) must be noted. He supported their rights. I shall be his adversary on the day of resurrection if anyone wrongs a man with whom a covenant has been made, curtails any right of his, imposes more on him than he can bear, or takes anything from him without his ready agreement, he (PBUH) declared. This statement from the Prophet (PBUH), along with the Quranic verse, makes it very clear that the state has a duty to ensure the security and wellbeing of non-Muslims. Muslim jurists' requests, the general policies of Islamic society, and the deeds of the early caliphs all demonstrated this concern (Moten, 2013).

According to this viewpoint, the Islamic social system portrays a pluralistic society where people coexist peacefully and cooperate with one another based on shared interests in order to create and fortify a moral community driven to realize the principles of equality, social justice, and social solidarity for all.

#### 4.3.4.7 Family System in Islam

A feeling of belonging, that can be attained at the family, national, regional, and international levels, is one of the fundamental human wants. Since the family is the

fundamental unit of the Islamic social structure, it is seen as the pillar that supports and strengthens society. One of the fundamental institutions of the social structure and one of Islam's enduring and crucial values is the family. Islam sees women and men as equals, albeit they play different roles. Islam often views men and women as partners who support and enhance one another's roles in the home. Allah SWT says, {The believers, both men and women, are guardians of one another. They encourage good and forbid evil, establish prayer and pay alms-tax, and obey Allah and His Messenger} (al-Tawbah:71).

According to the Holy Quran, men and women have the same rights, obligations, and moral and religious obligations. It acknowledges women's role in safeguarding society and their right to take part in public affairs. It should be mentioned that the Qur'an does not forbid women from working and becoming financially independent. Women's financial personalities are acknowledged by Islam, which permits them to possess property and requires them to pay zakat (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

Providing the proper moral and ethical foundation for all participants of society to engage in cooperative life and contribute through different ways is a fundamental tenet of Islam. Regardless of the activity, Islam values the work of both men and women equally. It takes a balanced stance on the division of labour, giving women the fundamental freedom to work and make money. At the same time, men have more significant obligations to the family and, consequently, to society. Additionally, they are free to engage in public life. In summary, the Islamic perspective views women as having a productive role in building the earth by emphasizing their roles in different productive sectors, family relationships, and education quality. In contrast, the Western perspective exploits women's consumer role through the media, music, and fashion industries (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

#### 4.3.4.8 Forms of Participation in Social Responsibilities

The idea of sharing the responsibilities of all members of society while taking into consideration their capacities is embodied in the Holy Quran. It also makes the point that certain people in society might be unable to afford to share these costs. Contributing to work and thought is sufficient and valuable in these situations. Every individual has the

capacity to contribute to society, at least in part, according to the Holy Quran. This can be accomplished in several ways, including social service or donations. Therefore, Allah sees a Muslim who works hard and dedicates himself, his wealth and his ability to meet the needs of society as superior to someone who doesn't put in any effort. The sorts of social spending—voluntary (sadaqat) or required (zakat)—will be discussed in the following section.

#### 4.3.4.9 Sadaqat and Social Responsibilities

The Holy Quran refers to all forms of social spending as sadaqat. Sadaqah, then, is what a Muslim voluntarily gives out of compassion, love, and concern for other people. It is what a person is morally required to give without anticipating any material gain. Put differently, sadaqat is an act of charity. Zakat is a type of sadaqat, although sadaqah also encompasses social, philanthropic, and voluntary spending unrelated to zakat (Amuda & Embi, 2013).

Sharing one's resources with family members and neighbours, even people of different religions, is known as sadaqah. This has to be done without expecting anything in return. Islam encourages Muslims to contribute to society by attending to and addressing social needs, which are regarded as the highest virtues in the Islamic value system. This is the opinion of Islam on altruism, which, if used, can provide significant funding to government or community to support sustainable development initiatives (Amuda & Embi, 2013).

It is not appropriate to view the goal of sadaqah, or social and charity spending, as a way to justify the presence of the underprivileged and destitute in society. Islam, on the other hand, considers poverty to be the most prominent social and economic issue. In Islamic civilization, sadaqah is essential for bolstering social cohesion and safety nets. Sadaqah supports sustainable development by funding associations, educational institutions, charity endowments, and general social welfare initiatives once fundamental necessities are satisfied and poverty is eradicated. Through Sadaqah, the Holy Quran offers enduring

private resources to satisfy public needs and advance prosperity and sustainable development (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

#### 4.3.4.10 Zakat and Social Responsibilities

Muslims are required to pay zakat on their income and wealth. Literally meaning "purification" and "cleaning," it represents moral rectitude and empathy in the community. The purpose of this deed is to rid one's property of selfishness. Zakat is a legal entitlement of society, a moral duty to Allah and society, and a necessary component of worship and religion. Zakat is a required contribution to social, economic, and human development. In contrast, the general perception of a tax is what is offered in return for receiving specific services. The fact that zakat is gathered and used locally shows how valuable the idea of people-centred development—where locals profit from local resources—is. Decentralization and regional development are the cornerstones of the Islamic development paradigm. However, Zakat is a significant public policy that should be codified (Amuda & Embi, 2013).

Zakat has a vital role in stimulating the economy and achieving development. As one of the key pillars of Islamic finance, it encourages the redistribution of wealth within society, directly contributing to a more dynamic and equitable economy. Hoarding money hinders economic development as static resources do not contribute to the economy's productive capacity but rather reduce the size of resources, which negatively affects development. Zakat contributes to the economy by enabling the poor and needy to be involved in investment opportunities (Gultekin, 2022).

In nutshell, the economy is impacted by the Zakat collection in several ways. First, it fights capital hoarding and promotes and supports investment. Second, zakat directly contributes to rising consumption expenditures, which in turn raises aggregate demand by funding the consumption expenditures of the most impoverished segments of society. Economic growth, output, employment, and national income all rise as a result.

Thirdly, zakat spending on public goods and services improves productivity, education, and overall health. The intended beneficiaries' income levels rise as a result, but the potential for economic growth also increases. Zakat is a helpful and advantageous institution for both the giver and the recipient, and its content is multifaceted. It has an economic, social, and moral component as well. Thus, the social and ethical principles of Islam are embodied in zakat. Accordingly, the Holy Quran called for its creation as a worldwide and humanitarian organization (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

#### 4.3.4.11 Waqf for Sustainable Development

One of the organizations of Islamic civil society is Waqf. When Omar was consulted concerning a plot of land, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stated to him, “Make it a Waqf and give its produce in the cause of Allah (SWT)”. This led to the establishment of the Waqf institution. Omar then made it Waqf. During the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), there were more instances of public endowments being established with assistance from the private sector, particularly to address necessities like food security and drinking water. Waqf can therefore be a useful and advantageous instrument for a number of societal demands in this century (Amuda & Embi, 2013).

Given the extent of human reliance on ecosystem services and functions, environmental deterioration has significant social and economic effects on human life, according to al-Jayyousi (2007). The two most pressing environmental problems in the Middle East and North Africa are desertification and land degradation. Over the course of a person's life, environmental deterioration is causing nature, which has thrived for thousands of years, to change. To supply its water needs, the area depends on desalination facilities and groundwater. Five of the seven Arabian Peninsula nations have now recovered their renewable water supplies and are turning to non-renewable ones. Access to drinkable water has improved with the deployment of desalination plants. The discharge of salt products, which endangers marine habitats, is one of the additional environmental issues it has brought about. It is seriously harming the fisheries in the area.

Overuse of land and water resources is contributing to the growing food production deficit. Over the next 30 years, financial security will have a major impact on the region's social and economic landscape and will become a major barrier to further progress. Since cattle has occupied a large portion of the land in the developing countries for hundreds of years, it is imperative that human and environmental requirements be balanced. However, as more consumerist lifestyles have replaced more sustainable ones, cattle numbers have only surpassed the land's carrying capacity in recent years due to better veterinary care. The annihilation of natural species in the area has been caused by habitat degradation, hunting, deforestation, and urbanization. The severe and changeable conditions of infertile and semi- infertile areas, which are the region's predominant environmental features, increase the threats to species (Gitz *et al*., 2016).

Increased investment and stable, long-term funding sources are necessary to address these challenges because the funds available to address environmental issues and conservation in the region are not increasing in line with the problems' growing size and significance. The Gulf Cooperation Council, Saudi Fund for Development, Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Fund for International Development, Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, Islamic Development Bank, Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, and Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development are some of the regional development funds and organizations. Nonetheless, the main objective of these funds is to provide institutional and financial assistance for economic and social infrastructure, including dams, roads, electrical grids, airports, health centers, and education centers (Amuda & Embi, 2013).

In the Arab world, investments in environmental sustainability are uncommon. A plan to create an endowment for sustainable development is presented below. A non-profit fund with an environmental focus is becoming more and more necessary. In addition to offering more creative and adaptable funding options, the new Waqf fund will expand the list of conventional development funds in the area. The Waqf fund seeks to guarantee a sufficient amount of long-term funding for environmental preservation initiatives in underdeveloped

nations. Consequently, the fund will aim to achieve the following two broad goals: 1) provide sufficient funding through the private sector, organizations, and individuals for the environmental components of sustainable development in poor nations. 2) Investing funds in carefully selected and developed humanitarian projects and programs and implementing them through relevant partner organizations worldwide (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

The Endowment Fund can enhance collaborations between all relevant stakeholders, including the government, banking sector, donors, corporate sector, and civic society, both domestically and internationally. The Fund may provide financing for projects that tackle environmental conservation issues that experts and specialist organizations have identified as priorities. Determining these goals will need analysis and strategic planning with organizations in all significant sectors of the world's poorest countries.

#### 4.3.4.12 Waqf and Sustainable Economic Development

Waqf is a vital economic resource and a contributor to organizing social relations. The basic economic idea of Waqf is not to freeze funds and deprive society of benefiting from it, as Waqf, if employed correctly, is a continuous source of income that meets the needs of current and future target groups. Waqf is also one of the essential activities in moving the economic wheel, achieving growth, and addressing economic problems and obstacles that affect the economy and economic development. Waqf has contributed to society, benefiting from the resources Allah has placed at its disposal. Waqf has a prominent impact in the economic field through its various activities and multiple effects (Gultekin, 2022). Considering the role of Waqf in trade, Waqf plays an essential role in stimulating the commercial sector and raising its efficiency and internal and external trade movement. It can also provide the necessary markets for producers and consumers to meet supply and demand more efficiently. It also contributes to providing the infrastructure as part of the Islamic economic system to create appropriate conditions for society in general, traders, and the trade sector in particular (Khan & Hassan, 2019).

However, Waqf plays a significant role in the industrial and agricultural sectors; it affects the development of the farming and industrial sectors. Waqf lands used in the agricultural

industry support the national economy and provide and produce basic food materials for the community. The industrial sector, like farming, develops through allocated Waqf, which is earmarked to produce raw materials, intermediate goods, and other things the community needs. Moreover, Waqf also contributes to eliminating unemployment; it has an impact in reducing unemployment as it benefits from human resources by employing individuals in Waqf institutions and investments, as well as through their private establishments that Waqf helps them establish by lending and financing them. Waqf also combats unemployment that threatens the entire society, as unemployment is one of the fundamental challenges to development and countries, including developed countries. Waqf can contribute to solving this negative phenomenon by absorbing Waqf institutions from the workforce in various fields, which creates a great demand for workers in society (Khan & Hassan, 2019).

#### 4.3.4.13 Waqf and Sustainable Social Development

The importance of Waqf in the social aspect and its impact on society is no less than its role in other aspects. Most aspects of life in society have a connection that links it to the Waqf system. This social work comes with targeted social goals for justice among individuals and the advancement of society in terms of economy, well-being and stability. All of these achieve the preservation of life, offspring, religion and wealth from the objectives of Shari'a. Waqf contributes to arranging the relationships of society as it provides general social services in righteousness to society and kindness to future generations, as is the goal of sustainable development. Thus, Waqf, as a pillar of social solidarity, focuses on providing for the needs of society, improving its conditions, and promoting the desire to solve its problems (Khan & Hassan, 2019).

For instance, in Health and social care, many Awqaf have been allocated to the health sector over the ages, and there is no doubt that health is one of the most critical sectors of society. The donors have allocated their properties to benefit this sector and the community, especially in remote areas. This is one of the most essential advantages of the Waqf. In addition, the Waqf helps develop the medical profession by providing buildings

and lands for the health sector and establishing hospitals and medical education centres. It also equips hospitals and medical centres with the necessary equipment from the effects of the Waqf, including a nursing home and an orphanage. The Waqf has taken care of the issues of divorced women, circumcising children from the poor, marrying orphans and the needy, and meeting the needs of the poor, the destitute, and students as much as possible. This results from the social solidarity that the Waqf system aims for. It also helps spread the spirit of compassion among people and reduce classism in society, as well as spending on projects that aim to benefit society and initiatives that achieve solidarity from the effects of the Waqf (Gultekin, 2022).

Moreover, considering food security, It is well known that population growth and increased urbanization cause problems, including food shortages, a significant phenomenon, especially in developing countries and remote areas. In addition, the lack of food production and the problem of vast quantities of waste consumption are among the reasons for the emergence of food shortages. Waqf may contribute to solving or improving this problem, as one of Waqf's tools is arable land, and the Waqf institution cultivates, exploits, and invests in those lands, thus supporting food production (Gultekin, 2022).

Additionally, Waqf plays a massive role in the education and environment sector. Waqf is the process of educating society by supporting the role of science in schools and universities in addition to their professors and students, which leads to an increase in the number of learners in various specializations, which raises the level of civilization in society (Khan & Hassan, 2019).

As for the environment, the Waqf institutions have used Waqf funds to pave and clean roads inside the country, and Waqf have been invested in providing health care for sick animals and birds, as well as wasting natural and unnatural resources, which the endowment system also combats. This phenomenon is rarely found in any other economic system except in the Islamic economic system and in Muslim countries. In this way, the Waqf system has contributed to building civilization, achieving sustainable development, and preserving and reviving the environment (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

### 4.4 Combating Corruption and Reforming on Earth (Islah fi al-Ard)

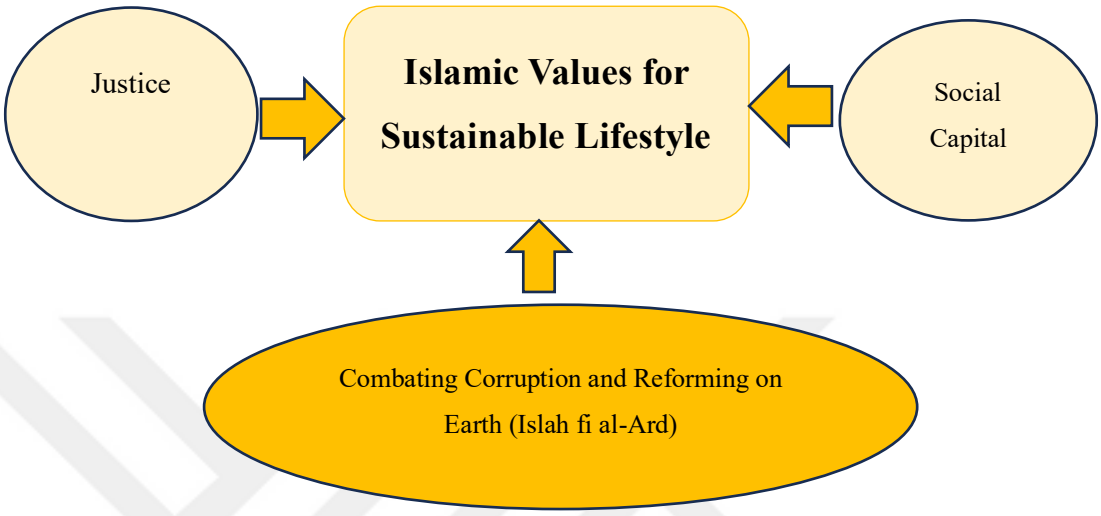



**Figure 4.4: Combating Corruption - Islamic Values for Sustainable Lifestyle**
**Source:** Author, 2024

According to scientific evidence, climate change has been happening since the dawn of humanity. Additionally, there is proof that the effects of climate change have worsened to the point that they cannot be reversed. According to Houghton (2004), the Earth's temperature is greatly influenced by planetary forces, mainly because of slow moves in the earth's connection with the Sun. The climate is also influenced by volcanic activity and sun radiation. Deforestation, urbanization, industry, and human activity have all increased the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Fossil fuels including coal, oil, and gas are thought to be responsible for 70% of the carbon dioxide produced by humans. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, the concentration of carbon dioxide was 280 parts per million, but it has since risen by 35% to 380 parts per million, according to the Met Office (2005). The Earth's temperature will then probably reach a tipping point, where it will be close to 2 degrees Celsius warmer than it was before the industrial revolution (Zhonghua, 2011).

Since nations with a small contribution to pollution will be more affected by climate challenge risks concerning agricultural produces and rainfall irregularity, the argument over climate change is tied to the concepts of fairness and environmental spillovers. Furthermore, flooding and heavy rains will occur more frequently. Inaction has a price, and immediate activity is required to lessen and alleviate the worst effects of climate change.

The loss of biodiversity is expected to pick up speed over the next 30 years, and ecosystems will be less able to sustain human needs for food, medicine, energy, water, and air. Climate disruptions will be more likely as a result of the increased vulnerability of the world's environmental and economic systems. A global immune system is required to develop adaptive capacity and to fortify the ability to cope with risks and the unpredictability of future occurrences in order to lessen potential dangers and threats. It is well known that there are complicated issues related to climate change, and it is uncertain how these issues will interact with one another in the future. When it comes to handling the uncertainty of future events, global environmental governance institutions fall short (Gitz *et al*., 2016).

In general, "corruption" refers to the cause-and-effect relationship associated with deliberate human behaviour in all spheres of human endeavour. In addition to economic and political corruption, corruption in our day and age can also refer to environmental effects like rising sea levels, more frequent flooding, droughts, and hurricanes—all of which are caused by human-caused climate change. In addition, corruption has a substantial financial impact (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

The term corruption was used as an “obscenity, evil, and transgression” according to the Quranic text (Ahmed, 2018). Allah SWT says, {Indeed, Allah commands justice, grace, as well as generosity to close relatives. He forbids indecency, wickedness, and aggression. He instructs you so perhaps you will be mindful} (al-Nahl:90).

Islamic teachings are full of evidence showing concern for combating corruption in all aspects of life. Moreover, Islamic teachings have contributed to shaping a new discourse

to explain the root causes and potential remedies for environmental challenges. Fighting corruption and using local expertise, creativity, morals, and innovative development strategies to combat issue of poverty and protect the environment require a complete overhaul (Ahmed, 2018). This section attempts to discuss the issue of corruption, climate change, and reforming the earth from an Islamic perspective.

### 4.4.1 Islamic Viewpoints on Climate Change and Environmental Stewardship

In 1987, the United Nations Commission on Environment and Development came to the conclusion that unless sustainable development is made a worldwide priority, human civilization and future existence will be in jeopardy. The progressive integration of policies supporting sustainable development will strengthen the quest for a sustainable society. Humans are unique in their creation, as the Islamic teachings demonstrate. The will of Allah Ta'ala governs all of creation. Through the revelation and his messengers, Allah SWT has given comprehensive guidance on all aspects of life. But Allah has granted everyone the ability to make moral decisions. Nonetheless, the duty to behave appropriately has been placed on humans.

Humans have carried their responsibility, which is a significant trust. In the Qur'an, the idea of guardianship or trust is referred to as khilafat. According to Llewellyn (2003), khilafat is a trust and a duty rather than a privilege. Khalid (2002) and Chishti (2003) contend that human failure to fulfil the duty of khilafat is the root cause of the environmental problem. It is necessary to alter worldviews, thought processes, lifestyles, and development models in order for humans to fulfil their right to trust. Islam as a worldview has influenced the development of a fresh conversation about the underlying causes of climate change and possible solutions. To solve poverty and environmental challenges, a complete change is required to leverage local knowledge, creativity, ethics, and new development models. An outline of the fundamental Islamic ideas around climate change can be found below.

Numerous verses and precepts in the Holy Quran encourage people to use their imaginations and minds to learn about the natural and cosmic systems. Islam lays

established guidelines and principles that give decision-makers a framework for ensuring that the interests of the public and private sectors, as well as those of people and the environment, are balanced. However, as Kamali (1991) and Ramadan (2001) point out, using fundamental Islamic principles to address contemporary concerns needs the modification and selective absorption of Islamic laws, which calls for a solid grasp of contemporary issues, especially those related to politics, science, and the social sciences. Shariah's goals and tenets offer a foundation for a rule of conduct regarding climate change. The main cause of the lack of climate change action is the absence of global environmental ethics and principles, as demonstrated by the climate conferences in Copenhagen in 2009 and Cancun in 2010.

The Islamic concept of "necessities" guides policymakers in determining priorities, and Maqasid Shariah serves the same purpose. For example, preserving human life and security comes before material gain. Since the current Western economic model prioritizes economic expansion over preserving natural and human capital, it is criticized for failing to disclose the environmental truth. The needs of current and future generations are taken into consideration in Islamic teachings based on the five necessities, as stated in the Maqasid.

Therefore, one of Islam's primary principles is the safety and well-being of future generations. Life on Earth and human security may be impacted by the possible dangers and hazards posed by climate change. To rescue people and the environment, these new ethics must be reflected in laws and regulations that encourage hard work and leadership (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

### 4.4.2 Combating Corruption Via Greening

As a middle nation, the Muslim community must embody the ideal and well-rounded way of life. The Ummah's primary responsibility as a vicegerent on earth is to uphold justice, beauty, and balance in the cosmos. In keeping with the Islamic perspective, civil union activities in the Islamic world must encourage and support a green lifestyle. One way to

promote harmony and balance between people and the natural world is through this practice (Erdur, 1997).

Greening, which upholds all the values of justice and kindness and promotes the process of development and soil cultivation, should be the focus of Islamic communities' energies. The Qur'anic perspective, which states that all living things are members of the Ummah, that they are a part of the community of nations or life, and that all living things should be respected, was discussed by Llewellyn (2003). He went on to say that all living things give praises Allah, even if we cannot comprehend it. Allah SWT says, {The seven heavens, the earth, and all those in them glorify Him. There is not a single thing that does not glorify His praises—but you ˹simply˺ cannot comprehend their glorification} (Isra:44).

Fitrah, which Khalid (2002) defines as "a state of purity, a state of inner beauty", is likewise consistent with the greening idea. Islam refers to itself as the religion of fitrah, as noted by Chishti (2003). This is the condition of inner beauty that inspires constructive activity. The environmental movement was founded in the 20th century to address environmental and human justice concerns, with a particular emphasis on pollution, mining, and extraction.

This movement attacked public policies, donor organizations, corporate power, and the oil sector. Greening is a good thing that keeps everything in balance, safeguards societies, and promotes justice and decent living. From this spiritual standpoint, Nasr (2003) highlighted the consequences of species extinction, stating that all living things in the natural world give thanks to Allah. It follows that worshipping Allah is impacted if any species are driven extinct.

Muslims can have a moral discourse about climate change based on the Islamic value system. The growth in the concentration or percentage of greenhouse gases, which are measured in parts per million, is what is referred to as climate change. The human development model and consumption habits are causing the concentration of carbon

dioxide to rise, and this growth is more than 420 parts per million, higher than the pre-industrial values, which were 280 parts per million.

As a result, tackling the problem of climate change from an Islamic standpoint entails taking on the roles of the middle nation (Umaat al-Wasat), which is responsible for maintaining harmony and balance, ensuring the proper ratio of carbon dioxide concentration, and enjoining good and forbidding evil. Human decisions that result in excessive resource use, exploitation, and consumption have upset this equilibrium. Through the growth of new consciousness, spiritual development, and a sense of duty to the cosmos, Islam's ethical dimension aims to connect theory and practice. Environmental activism to defend the planet's health by preserving life on Earth, respecting the rights of other species, and maintaining the diversity of all cultures would follow from the embodiment of Islam (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

### 4.4.3 Combating Administrative and Financial Corruption

It is known that administrative corruption refers to the misuse of public influence to achieve personal benefits, while financial corruption is the ability to evade financial oversight agencies to plunder public money. Undoubtedly, corruption harms the entire systems of countries. It is known that Islamic law came to combat administrative and financial corruption. There are pieces of evidence from the Qur'an and Sunnah that prohibit corruption.

Allah SWT says, {Do not consume one another's wealth unjustly, nor deliberately bribe authorities to devour a portion of others' property, knowing that it is a sin} (al-Baqarah:188). Also, the Prophet (PBUH) says, Allah cursed the one who bribes and the one who takes bribes. Undoubtedly, combating financial and administrative corruption is among the primary requirements for achieving SDGs (Alazzabi *et al*., 2020).

Administrative corruption practices undermine the effectiveness of sustainable development strategies in countries. This is due to that administrative corruption practices place personal interest as a priority without considering the public interest; thus, a certain

segment of society benefits without the rest, which contradicts human rights that call for justice in the distribution of wealth and ensuring the provision of a decent life for all individuals at all levels (al-Quhumi, 2022).

### 4.4.4 Combating Environmental Corruption

Islam considers protecting the environment from pollution an Islamic duty. Deliberately damaging the environment is corruption on earth that deserves punishment, while upgrading the environment through plantation, beautification, and eliminating all sources of pollution are virtuous deeds by which a Muslim draws closer to Allah. The Prophet (PBUH) says, Iman has over seventy branches, the uppermost of which is the declaration, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah'; and the least of which is the removal of harmful object from the road.

All forms of harm that damage the environment and people's interests, health, tastes, and emotions are included in the harm mentioned in the noble hadith. A word that offends modesty is a word that pollutes the moral environment, offends people's modesty, and ruins their tastes. Similarly, dumping trash in the streets is harmful to people. One of the religious obligations that completes a believer's faith is to combat this evil in all its manifestations; it is not a trivial issue that should be disregarded.

The Hisbah apparatus, which represented a method of controlling, dominating, and monitoring pollution by adhering to preventive and therapeutic measures to prevent pollution, was one example of how Islam went beyond establishing the theoretical framework for environmental protection to include practical application (Alazzabi *et al*., 2020).

### 4.4.5 Reforming on Earth (al-Islah fi al-Ard)

Reforming the earth is one of the acts of worshipping Allah. Allah Almighty has requested his servants to perform these tasks on the planet. Allah SWT says:

> *Remember ˹when your Lord said to the angels, I am going to place a successive ˹human˺ authority on earth. They asked ˹Allah˺, Will You place in it someone who*

*will spread corruption there and shed blood while we glorify Your praises and proclaim Your holiness? Allah responded, I know what you do not know (al-Baqarah:30).*

Hence, this verse shows that Allah decided to populate the earth and give all humans the responsibility of preserving it.

Allah Almighty created this universe with its precise, integrated, and perfect system suitable for construction and warned against corruption in it. General reform from the perspective of Islam is correcting all distortions in the practice of religious and worldly matters and returning them to their original state that has not been affected by corruption. As the Qur'anic verses have shown, the Muslims carried out this task from the prophets and messengers. The Messengers were sent with a comprehensive system for reform; they led the reforming with wisdom and peace and carried out their duty in the best way, clearing the earth of corruption, injustice and crime and transforming it into societies of mercy, brotherhood and peace (Ahmed, 2018).

Islam has provided a comprehensive approach to protecting and saving the environment and preserving the earth's resources. The aim is to keep the planet beautiful and valid for current and future generations. Among the Islamic principles is combating desertification by urging the development of the land, its revival, its reclamation and its planting of trees so that it does not remain barren and arid. In this regard, the Prophet (PBUH) said, He who cultivates land that does not belong to anybody is more rightful (to own it) (Bsoul *et al*., 2022).

Moreover, Islamic teachings urged the preservation of trees and considered tree cutting an act of injustice to the environment. Cutting trees diminishes the environment's aesthetic value and the resources available to humans and animals. Moreover, by destroying trees, the natural balance is disturbed, and wildlife and people are deprived of the shade, cover, and food trees offer. The significance of protecting trees was highlighted by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), who said, “Do not cut down trees, for they are a protection for livestock in times of drought”. This guideline emphasizes the moral obligation to protect

natural resources for the benefit of all living things, underscoring the connection between environmental preservation and the welfare of both human and animal existence (Kula, 2001).

### 4.4.6 Zuhd (Asceticism) and its Role in Reforming on Earth

Islamic instructions emphasize the notion of living moderately in the earth planet, calling for preserving it and reducing extravagance and waste. Islam also encourages humans to contemplate Allah's blessings and bounties (Armstrong, 2001). This contemplation of the natural world stimulates innovation and natural intelligence.

The verses in the Quran emphasized the unity of Allah Almighty and urged people to abstain from injustice, greed, and hoarding wealth. Islam's early doctrines associated the Creator with nature. The word "Ayat," which means "signs," is used in a way that makes this link very plain. The term "ayat" describes natural and Qur'anic signs. According to Nasr (1998), there are divine qualities in nature from an Islamic standpoint. Muslims believe that all of Allah's creatures are signs that must be deciphered from the Qur'anic cosmic verses. According to Nasr (2003), the significance of nature to humans extends beyond its tangible advantages to include spiritual sustenance. These connections between the Qur'an and cosmic signals strengthen the bond between people and the Creator and offer a remedy for the negative consequences of a system that prioritizes production, profit, and economic expansion, including its detrimental role in accelerating climate change.

As noted by Abouleish (2005), green living is a lifestyle incorporating resource conservation. Regardless of their abundance, Islam promotes the preservation of resources such as food, energy, and water. Fossil fuels, the main contributor to the problem of climate change, are the foundation of the existing economic model. Manufacturing, the processing of raw materials, and the international shipping of completed goods depend on energy. The energy use of these processes has a significant impact on climate change. Depending on public policy decisions, development objectives, and social choices, the many forms of energy—whether fossil (coal, oil, and gas) or renewable (wind, solar,

hydrogen, hydropower, nuclear, or biofuels)—determine the planet's climate and health in the future (Abouleish, 2005).

Islam promotes people-centered development, which lessens the significant ecological effects of global trade. This implies that rather than focusing on making as much money as possible and raising demand for luxury products, manufacturing should be driven by need. Islam has regulations in place to protect the earth's carrying capacity. Therefore, regardless of the hazards posed by climate change or the scarcity of resources, Islamic beliefs support policies that lessen reliance on fossil fuels. According to this viewpoint, climate change is a sign that the Zuhd principle has been broken. The primary message is that Muslims must uphold and adhere to Islamic values as a middle-nation in order to protect the world and human existence and well-being, even in the absence of climate change dangers (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

Comprehensive guidelines for addressing climate change from an Islamic standpoint are part of the Islamic system. The idea of greening is to use civil society action to protect the environment and people's right to live free, secure, and healthy lives. In order to enhance human well-being, the greening principle is predicated on maximizing human potential and encouraging innovation. Zuhd also emphasizes avoiding excessive consumerism and resource exploitation and living graciously on the planet. However, the media plays a big part in turning human necessities into desires. Islam encourages everyone to give up consumerism and embrace more cultured ways of living. As middle-nations, Muslims should assume responsibility, move past the consumer mindset, and create clean production, fair trade, local production, and renewable energy models to lower carbon emissions and the dangers and catastrophes associated with climate change (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

The Holy Quran indicates that natural disasters do not occur randomly but rather are the result of human activities, as illustrated by the following verse, {Corruption has spread on land and sea as a result of what people’s hands have done} (al-Rum:41). In its broadest sense, the term "corruption" describes the cause-and-effect relationship and is associated

with deliberate human behaviour in all spheres of human endeavour. Along with economic and political corruption, corruption in the modern era can also refer to environmental effects like rising sea levels, more frequent floods, droughts, and hurricanes—all connected to human-caused climate change. In addition, corruption has a substantial financial impact (al-Jayyousi, 2013).

According to World Bank estimates from 2009, bribes total approximately $1 trillion USD annually. Since corruption skews the concepts of the rule of law and good governance, it is regarded as one of the barriers to sustainable development. Due to the corporate sector's pressure to change commandments and guidelines to suit its interests by commodifying natural resources and placing the additional costs of corruption on the poor, corruption in all its forms can also have a negative impact on the environment. The economic, social, and ecological balance of society is also harmed by corruption, and the opportunity cost of averting this harm is the loss of resources that could have been used for sustainability and progress.

In order to promote peace and harmony between humans and nature, the Islamic worldview considers the notions of justice and ethics to be essential cornerstones. According to Islam, corruption is a social and moral issue brought on by human behaviour. Islam takes a holistic approach to the problem of climate change, taking into account the ideas of justice, equity, and integrity. Adopting revolutionary education, human development, and finance strategies can help realize the concept of "green transformation".

For instance, the worldwide need for energy to support modern market economies is related to the hazards of climate change, which might spur monopolies and wars. Weapons of mass annihilation are prime samples of global corruption and poor management that permeate many facets of life, whether it is in relation to the reasons and drivers of conflict or other matters, including oil corporations and human rights. Economic reasoning has not taken into account the expensive human, ecological, and societal repercussions of these

conflicts. For instance, Stiglitz and Bilmes (2008) estimate that the overall cost of healthcare for veterans has ranged from $422 billion to $717 billion.

The Islamic world has descended into anarchy and corruption as a result of a lack of human supervision and guardianship. Addressing the underlying causes of climate change rather than just its symptoms is crucial for leadership at all levels. The Western economic model, the media, consumer culture, and modern lifestyle harm humans and the environment. It is also necessary to reevaluate the essential economic theory determining the pursuit of pleasure and economic opulence. By embracing the idea of discounting the future, the banking system and compound interest rates are justified based on the over-exploitation of natural resources, undermining the notion of intergenerational equality (Kader, 2021).

### 4.5 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter discussed the concept and framework of sustainable development based on Islamic values. These values include justice, social capital, reducing corruption, and reforming the earth. Each of these three values was elaborated on in this chapter. Moreover, this chapter can be summarized in the following axes:

Firstly, balance and equilibrium. Allah Almighty created the universe according to a precise, balanced, and accurate system. Allah SWT says, {As for the sky, He raised it ˹high˺, and set the balance ˹of justice˺, so that you do not defraud the scales} (al-Rahman:7-8). This balance depends on man observing the cosmic laws so that he does not cause corruption on earth.

Secondly, balance in living. Islam is keen to emphasize the principle of not being extravagant in living and not increasing luxuries even if the sources and resources are available, as mentioned in the noble prophetic hadith about the prohibition of extravagance in the use of water for ablution, even if the person is performing ablution from a flowing river. This behaviour in living means reducing excessive consumption,

thus reducing the consumption of fossil energy, which leads to the extent of the concentration of carbon dioxide emissions and avoiding corruption on Earth.

Thirdly, the future of future generations. Every human being is responsible for bequeathing the Earth to the next generation and in a position that allows for decent living. Accordingly, it is unreasonable to transfer what is suffered from today regarding harmful waste and pollution to the next generation. Therefore, initiatives and calls have emerged calling for a shift towards a green, low-carbon economy, free of any waste, through clean production, increasing energy efficiency, investing in renewable energy, and protecting natural resources from reserves, coral reefs, vegetation cover, forests, seas, oceans, and rivers, as this helps natural systems increase their resistance to the effects of climate change. Accordingly, a new way of thinking is urgently needed to understand the nature of the planet, as humans are stewards (Guardians to the preservation of the earth).

# CHAPTER V

# THE COMBINATION OF VALUES AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE WELFARE STATE: ZOOMING ON THE WELFARE MODEL OF NORDIC COUNTRIES

## 5.1 Introduction

The late nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of the most critical social, political and economic philosophies that criticized the liberal foundations on which the capitalist system was built due to poverty, inequality in income and wealth, economic depression and social unrest resulting from the Industrial Revolution. These philosophies were used to justify state intervention to eliminate socioeconomic issues. There was a debate about the necessity of strengthening state intervention in order to achieve social cohesion and integration, as well as for a just society (Muhammadin, 2022).

It was noted that a common belief was created among societies regarding the need for more government efforts to achieve justice and social cohesion. Additionally, there was a call from the socialists for state intervention in economic activity intending to attain social justice due to the poor conditions resulting from applying the capitalist system, which led to significant disparities between individuals in wealth and income (Ferguson, 2016).

Moreover, the welfare state received more attention during the first two decades of the twentieth century post the massive destruction and significant losses of life and property during the First World War. The three decades following World War II were the golden years of social welfare states. The implementation of the welfare state system varied among countries. The Scandinavian experience was one of the best experiences (Obinger *et al*., 2018). The global financial crisis that began in the fall of 2008 brought the issue of the role of the state and the effectiveness of the performance of the social welfare state model back to the forefront once again. The aim was to support the welfare state model in a more rational, ethical, and disciplined framework to prevent the world from falling into similar financial and economic crises in the future (Hemerijck *et al*., 2012).

For a few decades, researchers have invested abundant efforts in understanding the Scandinavian model. The central idea revolves around the appropriate combination of economic efficiency and social equality (Hilson, 2008). It is noted that the Scandinavian countries seem to have succeeded in reconciling economic efficiency and social equality, employing high levels of taxation to finance a social welfare state that provides comprehensive services to citizens. However, going into more detail, it is noted that the Scandinavian model is distinct and complex; despite obvious economic shortcomings, the overall economy remains performing well and sustainably (Carlson & Hatti, 2017).

It is worth noting the Scandinavian affinity. The Nordic countries are considered relatively similar culturally, civilizationally, historically, ethnically, linguistically and religiously. Since ancient times, geographical proximity has created strong interactions, and similar environments have led to similar lifestyles. However, the main reason for the Scandinavians' closeness to each other remains political. Finland was part of Sweden until 1809, while Norway was part of Denmark between 1412 and 1814, then became part of Sweden until 1905. Between 1397 and 1523, Norway, Denmark and Sweden were ruled by the same monarchy within the "Kalmar Union". All these interactions between the Scandinavian countries have formed standard political, religious and social customs and arrangements (Hilson, 2008). The common elements among the Scandinavian countries make them a single entity or a coherent model. These interconnected factors make it appropriate and valuable to investigate the Nordic model.

The welfare state model will be discussed in detail in this chapter, emphasising the Nordic model. Because of its advantages in various developmental areas, this model was selected. Scandinavian nations performed the best among the 193 UN Member States (Sachs *et al*., 2024). The social welfare of an economy that combines aspects of capitalism, like the market economy and economic efficiency, with some elements of social democratic systems, like interest in social dimensions like equal income distribution, is the most notable characteristic of the Scandinavian economic model, also known as the "Nordic countries".

### 5.2 Overview of the Concept of Social Welfare State

The concept of social welfare refers to the services and support provided to people, especially the neediest. Therefore, countries that expand the provision of social services to their citizens are often described as welfare states. This description applies to many developed countries seeking social justice and reducing inequality (Giddens, 2005).

The United Nations has developed a definition of social welfare that has been widely accepted. Social welfare has been defined as "a consistent set of activities and programs directed towards social services to improve the condition of the local community and the individual" (Roseland, 2000). The welfare state is a concept related to the style of ruling in which the state plays a fundamental role in protecting and caring for citizens' social and economic welfare. The famous sociologist Marshall defines the welfare state as "a specific mixture of democracy, welfare, and capitalism". (Marshall, 1961).

Equality of opportunity, equitable wealth distribution, and public accountability for those who cannot afford the necessities of a decent life are the cornerstones of the welfare state. Taxes are used to fund the welfare state. These taxes, known as progressive taxes, lessen the wealth gap between the rich and the poor and typically include a high-income tax for high-income people. The welfare state's dedication to attaining the fundamental well-being of its citizens is based on its belief that such well-being is crucial to preserving national security (Gal & Bleikh, 2019).

Despite the differences between the states called welfare states based on their intellectual principles, several standard features can be found between most welfare states. The majority of welfare states are developed and relatively wealthy industrial states. Most of these countries are capitalist countries with a developed market economy. Moreover, those countries usually have a democratic system of government that recognizes its citizens' civil, political and social rights. In this context, the services the welfare state provides to its citizens are not an act of philanthropy but rather part of the fundamental rights that every citizen deserves (Ali, 2023).

Hoynes identifies welfare states as a model of society characterized by a welfare system sponsored by a democratic government on new foundations and providing collective social welfare for citizens while maintaining the capitalist production system (Hoynes, 2000). Like Hoynes, Marshall also represents the welfare state as part of a complex society, allied with a capitalist market economy and a democratic political structure (Marshall, 1961). The best example of these countries is the Nordic countries.

### 5.3 The Scandinavian Model: A Combination of Values with Economic Efficiency and Social Equality

The efficiency of the Scandinavian countries is evident from different perspectives (Falkenberg, 1998). However, no single measure of economic efficiency can be relied on to examine the financial performance of the Nordic countries. Therefore, the economic approach should examine the dimension of wealth generation before looking at its organizational and structural foundations and effects on the labour market.

The Nordic nations rank among the wealthiest globally in terms of gross domestic product per person, significantly above the EU average. As shown in Table 5.1, Norway holds the highest position in the Nordic order. The Scandinavian countries have sought to apply the value of equality among their citizens in income distribution, especially since they are among the wealthiest countries in the world in terms of GDP per capita (Kenworthy, 2004).

It is true that over the past few decades, the gap between rich and poor has been steadily increasing across many developed nations, particularly those with higher average incomes. Yet, Scandinavian nations stand out as they are seen as having the most minor income disparities. Sweden, in particular, ranks among the most equal in terms of income worldwide (Chancel *et al*., 2022). Yet, it was once among the most unequal nations in the early 1900s. The growth of democratic systems facilitated the creation of the Scandinavian welfare state, which resulted in a significant reduction in inequality. This trend has been observed in Denmark and other countries in the Scandinavian region (Atkinson and Søgaard, 2016).

**Table 5.1: GDP Per Capita**

| Rank | Country | GDP per capita (Thousand Dollar) | GDP (Billion Dollar) | Population (Million) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **8** | **Norway** | 90 | 499 | 5.5 |
| **15** | **Denmark** | 72 | 428 | 5.9 |
| **20** | **Iceland** | 78 | 26 | 0.3 |
| **25** | **Sweden** | 64 | 676 | 10.5 |
| **31** | **Finland** | 57 | 321 | 5.6 |

**Source:** CIA, 2023

The vast difference in economic performance that separates the Scandinavian countries from other countries is due to the effectiveness of their institutional systems, the consistency of their transitional economic policies, and the high productivity of the Scandinavian people. This is also confirmed by the rates of gross domestic spending on research and development as shown in table 5.2, which is one of the main foundations of the new economy based on the human ability to create and innovate.

The massive investment by Nordic countries in research and innovation is due to their interest in all types of sciences. The ultimate goal is to achieve the value of spreading knowledge among society. Knowledge grounded in science is crucial for the ongoing progress of society in every sector; it aids in the shift towards environmental sustainability, enhances competitiveness and expansion, and fosters socially sustainable communities. The collaboration between Nordic research institutions boosts the effectiveness and significance of the research. Additionally, this collaboration provides benefits to the researchers and nations involved, including reduced costs and an improved capacity to secure funding from different programs and initiatives (Rylander & Haselmayer, 2008).

**Table 5.2: R&D Expenditure as a share of (GDP) in 2022**

| Country | Ratio |
|---|---|
| **Sweden** | 3.41% |
| **Finland** | 2.96% |
| **Denmark** | 2.89% |
| **Iceland** | 2.66% |
| **Norway** | 1.56% |

**Source**: Statista, 2022

Scandinavian countries spend more than $1,000 per person per year on research and development, while many Islamic countries spend between $10 and $20 per person per year on research and development. These impressive results are also confirmed by evidence of innovation and technology, which are the beating heart of the new economy.

The growth performance of the Nordic economies in recent years has been linked to the increased use of new technologies, which reflects the readiness of these countries to participate in and benefit from developments in information and communication technology. These countries have been pioneers in the use of information technology compared to most countries since the 1990s when the information technology revolution took off (Diani, 2017).

Moreover, for decades, Sweden has been the European country with the most televisions, cars, and telephones per capita, followed closely by Denmark. According to Table 5.3, the Scandinavian countries ranked well in the World Digital Competitiveness Ranking in 2023.

**Table 5.3: World Digital Competitiveness 2023**

| Country | Ranking |
|---|---|
| **Sweden** | 7 |
| **Finland** | 8 |
| **Denmark** | 4 |
| **Iceland** | 17 |
| **Norway** | 14 |

**Source**: IMD, 2023

One way to illustrate the impressive results of the Scandinavian economies based on this investment in education and human capital is through the Nobel Prize-per-capita ratio (in all categories: chemistry, literature, peace, physics, medicine, economics, and since 1968) –the Scandinavian countries rank among the top countries in the world. Sweden, for example, ranks fifth in the world with 34 Nobel Prize winners . These results were achieved due to the existence of high values in society, such as the value of respecting scholars in the society. Moreover, these countries have an international reputation for promoting legal protection of academic freedom and university studies (Karran *et al*., 2023).

As a result of these solid economic foundations, the Scandinavian economies have been producing remarkable successes in recent times in terms of innovation, as shown in Table 5.4. This noteworthy success is exemplified, for example, by IKEA, which in 2024 was present on five continents and in 63 countries, with 476 giant stores. Besides IKEA, other Scandinavian economic success stories at the global level include H&M, Skype, Rovio, Lego, and Volvo. Innovation has become an obsession for Scandinavian companies investing heavily in research, innovation, and training. It is no surprise that Finland, with

a population of just five and a half million, is home to a wealth of new technology companies that are globally renowned and competitive. In addition, encouraging start-ups in the next generation of activities is another policy tool for improving Total factor productivity growth (Diani, 2017).

This shows the Scandinavian people's passion for serving humanity in general and their people in particular through new innovations, which is of great value.

**Table 5.4: Global Innovation Index 2023**

| Country | Ranking |
|---|---|
| **Sweden** | 2 |
| **Finland** | 6 |
| **Denmark** | 9 |
| **Iceland** | 19 |
| **Norway** | 18 |

**Source**: Dutta *et al*., 2023

### 5.4 Scandinavian Countries between Liberalism and Socialism

Given the Scandinavian countries' positive economic and social outcomes, it is necessary to ask the following questions: On what economic basis did the Scandinavian successes emerge? To what extent is this economic prosperity related to the liberal approach of these countries? And should the Scandinavian countries be labeled as liberal countries even though they include many components of the socialist project?

The Scandinavian nations are unquestionably ranked at the top of the list of leading indicators currently available to gauge the openness and liberal tendencies of national economies. This is evident from the World Economic Forum's annual Global

Competitiveness Report, which has been published since 2004 and ranks nations using the "Global Competitiveness Index", which aggregates elements of macroeconomic and microeconomic competitiveness into a single index. According to the degree of the efficient utilization of available resources within a specific competitive framework, the report evaluates governments' capacity to offer their population high levels of prosperity (Diani, 2017).

According to the Global Competitiveness Index, as shown in Table 5.5, both in terms of basic requirements and efficiency enhancers, the Scandinavian countries rank high in the world, meaning that they are among the most competitive and open countries in the world, despite their generous social policies.

This is also confirmed by the Ease of Doing Business Index, as shown in Table 5.6, which the World Bank created to rank countries according to the best and easiest company regulation and the strongest protection of property rights. This is based on the fact that these regulations have a strong impact on economic growth (Einhorn, 2017).

**Table 5.5: Global Competitiveness Index (GCI)**

| Country | Ranking |
|---|---|
| **Denmark** | 3 |
| **Sweden** | 6 |
| **Norway** | 10 |
| **Finland** | 15 |
| **Iceland** | 17 |

**Source**: IMD, 2024

**Table 5.6: Ease of doing business**

| Country | Ranking |
|---|---|
| **Denmark** | 4 |
| **Norway** | 9 |
| **Sweden** | 10 |
| **Finland** | 20 |
| **Iceland** | 26 |

**Source**: World Bank, 2019

The Scandinavian countries come to the forefront (Denmark ranks fourth globally, Norway ranks ninth, and Sweden ranks tenth). Those countries have overcome the manifestations of bureaucracy, favouritism, corruption, failure to honour contracts, and weak judicial independence. It can be said that the Scandinavian countries, contrary to what many believe, are liberal par excellence; those countries support the market economy and free competition to the furthest extent. This is also confirmed by the Economic Freedom Index, as shown in Table Table 5.7, which measures economic freedom through twelve elements (Diani, 2017).

**Table 5.7: Index of Economic Freedom**

| Country | Ranking |
|---|---|
| **Denmark** | 7 |
| **Sweden** | 9 |
| **Norway** | 10 |

**Source**: The Heritage Foundation, 2023

Moreover, consdering the corruption index as one of the most prominent factors of the weakness or strength of the economic environment, it is noticed as per the below Table 5.8, that according to the Corruption Perceptions Index for 2023, Denmark came in first place globally, followed by the rest of the Scandinavian countries (Diani, 2017).

**Table 5.8: Corruption Perceptions Index**

| Country | Ranking |
|---|---|
| **Denmark** | 1 |
| **Finland** | 2 |
| **Norway** | 4 |
| **Sweden** | 6 |
| **Icelnd** | 11 |

**Source**: Transparency International, 2023

This Corruption Perceptions Index, produced by Transparency International, ranks countries and regions based on the level of perceived public sector corruption based on corruption-related data from surveys and opinion polls provided by several independent international institutions. It is obvious that Scandinavian countries have very low levels of corruption and are among the best in the world (Diani, 2017).

### 5.5 The Combination of Economic Efficiency and Social Equality

Economic efficiency is undoubtedly an essential element and is considered a precondition for achieving other goals. However, from the Scandinavian point of view, economic efficiency is neither the exclusive nor the most important goal. Hence, the Scandinavian political system attaches great importance to social considerations and achieving social equality or justice.

In this context, the Scandinavian countries, even the most advanced ones, are characterized by a low degree of income inequality and a high degree of social justice compared to the rest of the world. This social dynamic indicates the smoothness of the transfer of income and wealth between generations, that is, the nature of the relationship between the income levels and wealth of parents and children. It can be said that family redistribution policies, especially the education system, are among the key elements that contribute to the smooth transfer of income and wealth between generations (Aaberge *et al*., 2002).

The discussion began in the 1950s when two Swedish economists contended that wage equality among Swedish businesses and industries would spur economic growth by requiring wage increases even in low-productivity businesses or industries while maintaining low wages in high-productivity companies. This will help us understand how these egalitarian social policies started to gain traction in Scandinavia. However, labour and capital are induced (or coerced) to shift from low-productivity to high-productivity activities by decreasing profits in low-productivity firms and increasing earnings in high-productivity firms. This improves equity across sectors and increases overall economic efficiency (Agell & Lommerud, 1993).

Thus, wage compression directly promoted capital flow from less productive to more productive enterprises, but it had an inconsistent impact on workers' motivations to switch careers. Employers in high-productivity companies lost the capacity to recruit workers by providing higher salaries, even though wage compression would increase job losses in low-productivity industries and job creation in high-productivity sectors (Diani, 2017).

In response to this issue, the government, labour unions, and businesses implemented several active labour market policies that facilitated workers' transfers between industries by providing training programs and financial aid to pay the costs of the move. The Swedish Firms' Confederation lobbied for government nationalization and the provision of health care and pensions in order to prevent the most productive firms from

undermining wage-limiting measures by providing lavish benefits to workers (Swenson, 2002).

Accordingly, a Swedish study on productivity development showed that solidarity bargaining transcended the desire for "equal pay for equal work" to the objective of "equal pay for all work," extending the concept of "equal pay for equal work" from one industry to the entire economy. Mooney and Wallerstein demonstrate that when pay disparity decreases, there is a greater consensus on social insurance for income loss from illness, disability, unemployment, and occupational injuries. Political demand for social insurance programs will rise if the policy boosts the income of most workers below the average salary, assuming insurance is a typical good (Swenson, 2002).

According to a Swedish study on productivity development, solidarity bargaining expanded the idea of "equal pay for equal work" from one sector of the economy to the whole, and it went beyond just calling for equal pay for equal labour to aim for "equal pay for all work." To put it briefly, the reduction of pay disparities in Scandinavia has significantly impacted the economy, society, and politics. On the one hand, it has accelerated economic growth, while on the other, it has decreased social unrest and political disputes. As a result, the Scandinavian model is identified as having the lowest levels of income inequality globally, both vertically (based on age groups) and horizontally (based on differences between residents). The idea of the "people's house" best captures the social character of these nations, which goes beyond relative income equality to more profound social arrangements where solidarity, cooperation, integration, agreement, and consensus are the norm. (Wallerstein & Moene, 2001).

The origins of the central concept of the Scandinavian social pattern go back to 1928, when the leader of the Swedish Social Democratic Party, Per Albin Hansson, gave a historic speech to the parliament in which he said: The rules of the house (the Scandinavian house) are community and a sense of solidarity, no one will be contemptuous of the other or seek to gain advantages at the expense of others, and the

strong will not oppress or plunder the weak. In this house, equality, appreciation, cooperation and solidarity will prevail (Rogers, 2002).

Per Albin Hansson's economic and social ambition was to lift the country once and for all out of the poverty that had driven hundreds of thousands of Swedes (and all Scandinavians in general) to emigrate to America. His ideal was, therefore, to build a society that would guarantee material security to every citizen, regardless of gender, social class or origin. This was the birth of the "People's House", which began with a massive construction program that brought together the state, municipalities and cooperatives and aimed to guarantee a decent life for all. Starting in 1933, nordic countries set five specific goals along with the Future Programme, which were as follows: 1. All citizens should be given employment opportunities; 2. All citizens should have access to housing; 3. All citizens should have access to adequate nutrition; 4. Every child should be provided with education and training opportunities regardless of the economic status of his or her parents; 5. All citizens should have proper access to treatment and medicine (Einhorn, 2017).

Moreover, interest-free loans were provided to newlyweds, housing and unemployment allowances were granted, family allowances, parental insurance, social assistance, supplementary benefits for the blind, widows' compensation, free dental care for children up to eighteen, etc. As a direct and immediate result, infant mortality fell, and life spans increased. Gustav Möller, who is considered the real architect of the "People's House", having been Minister of Social Affairs for nearly twenty years, described this period as "a peaceful revolution that changed the living standards of the masses". The economic and social achievements that followed were so frequent that the Swedish Göran Haag, who wrote a book about this period of history, wrote: It was the first step towards utopian socialism (Diani, 2017).

In general, the cornerstone of this system is the control of wages and taxes, which reduces inequality and establishes new foundations for coexistence, development and progress. Whether some consider it “old-fashioned capitalism” or others think it “civilized socialism,” this economic and social model represents a “third way” in a world that has

long been bipolar. In this third way, the issue of financing social policies is of great importance as long as it is related to the incentive economic system. For example, in order to fund social programs, Denmark reviewed its deduction patterns. Between 1987 and 1989, the country chose a social tax on value-added, which meant that labour costs fell from 50 per cent to 30 per cent with a 3 per cent increase in the goods and services tax. Contrary to what some experts believe, this measure had no effect on inflation, and the Danish economy benefited from it as a whole; as the unemployment rate fell significantly, there was a budget surplus, strong growth and a positive trade balance (Diani, 2017).

These social balances and dynamics produced a coherent social system consistent with current economic dynamics. This model supports large-scale occupational and geographical mobility and active and ambitious labour market policies. For this reason, the Scandinavian model is often presented as an example to be emulated, especially in times of crisis. From this fertile ground, many social achievements began to blossom on several levels. In the remaining part of this section, a brief discussion will be provided to explore such social achievements on the ground, starting with the Human Development Index, which is considered the most significant and illustrative.

**Table 5.9: Human Development Index (HDI) 2022**

| Country | Ranking |
|---|---|
| **Norway** | 2 |
| **Iceland** | 3 |
| **Denmark** | 5 |
| **Sweden** | 6 |
| **Finland** | 12 |

**Source**: United Nations, 2024

The fact that a Scandinavian country tops the world rankings based on human development is the most striking evidence justifying the global interest towards the Scandinavian model. All Scandinavian countries are ranked among the top in the world, especially Norway and Finland, which came in second and third place globally, which is the greatest evidence of the progress of these countries.

Quality and perfection are among the most critical values that contributed to the rise of Scandinavian countries in the global ranking at the institutional level (Biswas *et al*., 2010). Most institutions in these countries work with sincerity and mastery to achieve the well-being and happiness of their citizens. In addition, these countries have been distinguished by their commitment to values that contribute to reducing corruption and maximizing citizen participation and representation in various decisions to gain their trust.

One of the essential values in Scandinavian society is generating a sense of belonging to society from a young age, trust and social cohesion among citizens, which in turn contributes to reducing crimes and other issues in the country. The values related to freedom of the press and the dissemination of science and knowledge also contribute to keeping these countries at the top of the global ranking in various aspects (Martela *et al*., 2020).

It is worth discussing the different aspects of the global ranking to highlight the position and ranking of the Nordic countries. The below part will highlight some essential indicators which prove the advancement of those countries:

**Table 5.10 Top World Healthcare by Country 2023**

| Country | Ranking |
|---|---|
| **Norway** | 7 |
| **Iceland** | 8 |
| **Sweden** | 9 |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Finland** | 15 |
| **Denmark** | 16 |

**Source**: Vankar, 2023

Part of the Nordic countries' shared vision is for the region to be socially sustainable, which includes goals for health and well-being, inclusive green transformation and living conditions for children and young people. One of the biggest indicators of health is life expectancy, which is one of the most widely used indicators of health status. The Nordic countries have a relatively high life expectancy. Childcare in the Nordic region is among the most generous in the world (Lundgren *et al*., 2020).

The Nordic countries seek to achieve the values of justice and equality in providing health services to all citizens. Everyone receives the necessary health care without discrimination based on gender, colour, and religion (Pedersen & Kuhnle, 2017).

**Table 5.11: Literacy Rate 2023-2024**

| Country | Rate |
|---|---|
| **Sweden** | 99% |
| **Denmark** | 99% |
| **Norway** | 100% |
| **Finland** | 100% |
| **Icelnd** | 99% |

**Source**: Mane, 2023

The issue of gender equality is at the heart of world public discussion. Moreover, it is included in the fifth point of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Scandinavian countries are at the forefront of reducing the disparity between men and women and, in recent times, have established themselves as leaders in global rankings. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reports that nearly three in four women of working age in Nordic nations are employed, and their governments actively promote equality in the workplace, domestic life, and society. These countries also enjoy a well-established welfare system and encourage innovative programs that help women re-enter or rejoin the workforce.

Reducing gender gaps and empowering women remain some of the most significant indicators of the success of the Scandinavian social system at the political and economic levels. The Gender Gap Index demonstrates this Scandinavian distinction at the global level, as shown in Table 5.12 below.

**Table 5.12: The Global Gender Gap Index 2023**

| Country | Ranking |
|---|---|
| **Iceland** | 1 |
| **Norway** | 2 |
| **Finland** | 3 |
| **Sweden** | 5 |
| **Denmark** | 23 |

**Source**: World Economic Forum, 2023

Finally, concluding with the Social Integration Index as an accurate representation of the social situation in different countries:

**Table 5.13: Global Social Progress Index**

| Country | Ranking - Global Social Progress Index 2023 |
|---|---|
| **Sweden** | 5 |
| **Denmark** | 1 |
| **Norway** | 2 |
| **Finland** | 3 |
| **Icelnd** | 4 |

**Source**: Social Progress Imperative, 2024

In addition to all these comprehensive social elements, social peace is normative. The construction of the "people's house" entails the establishment of a consistent and stable general climate marked by the quasi-sanctity of social peace and the rejection of violent conflicts and disputes. Compromise and negotiate solutions, in addition to aversion to confrontation, are the slogans of the Nordic countries and the spirit of their nations.

Finally, the flexicurity formula sums up a formula that seeks to combine the best of both worlds: flexibility for the employer and security for the employee. Danish employers, like their American or British counterparts, can dismiss employees without notice, compensation or a social redundancy scheme. In return, employees are guaranteed decent unemployment benefits for at least four years and have the possibility of vocational training if necessary. In fact, when the system was established in 1994, Denmark officially had 300,000 unemployed (10 per cent of the workforce); before, this was reduced to less than 100,000 in 2001 and then to less than 47,000 in June 2008, just before the global crisis reached the Baltic shores.

This system is satisfactory for workers, employees, and companies. It is no wonder that Denmark monopolizes the top positions in the world ranking of employers after having

managed in about a decade to increase the employment rate and reduce the unemployment rate from 9.6 per cent of the workforce in 1993 to 6.2 per cent in November 2004, then to 4.8 per cent in 2005, and then to 3.5 per cent in 2007. This rate is much lower than the European average of 8.8 per cent. In Denmark, the legislative framework always remains minimal, and the law does not specify the minimum wage or legal working hours, nor does it protect the right to strike or impose any standard employment contract (Pedersen & Kuhnle, 2017).

For example, destructive weapons have been used in other countries to use strikes to settle labour disputes. In the event of dismissal, the law does not allow the employer to pay compensation. When a worker loses his or her job, he or she receives 90 per cent of his or her previous salary, with a maximum duration of four years. On average, the unemployed receive 23,200 euros (about $35,000). For those without unemployment insurance, municipal social assistance is conditional on actively looking for a job. Unemployment insurance is a voluntary system run by 35 private funds, authorized by the state and closely linked to the unions (Diani, 2017).

Nevertheless, the sustainable development paradigm has developed over the past years a new conception of the public interest that includes and goes beyond the traditional understanding of economic growth to take into account the environmental and social aspects that are linked to the long-term vision of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

It is no coincidence that these countries have achieved remarkable successes in environmental protection in recent decades, and on related human levels, all of which support and enhance economic and social achievements. Immediately after the Stockholm Conference in 1972, which represented the first global meeting on the environment, the Scandinavian countries developed an environmental policy to reduce the use of chemicals, impose taxes or ban harmful substances, and promote "recycling" (Einhorn, 2017).

For instance, these actions would later serve as an example for the rest of Europe and the world. The phrase "sustainable development" was initially used in the 1987 report "Our

Common Future," which was prepared by the World Commission of the Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission), which Prime Minister of Promotion Gro Harlem Brundtland chaired. The global program for sustainable development (Agenda 21) was established at the 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit as a result of the Commission's proposals. Since then, environmental issues have spread throughout Scandinavia (Einhorn, 2017).

In Sweden, for example, municipalities have developed their own Agenda 21. From north to south, Swedes are engaging in ecological approaches either individually or through associations by making their own compost, sorting out unions, using bicycles and public transport instead of private cars, etc. The results of this shift in everyday behaviour are tangible today: doctors prescribe fewer antibiotics and rely on antibodies in patients' bodies, almost all Swedish companies publish an annual environmental report, while workspaces are comfortable and healthy, facilities for people with disabilities are plentiful, and fresh air is available (Metzger & Olsson, 2013).

In addition, the Scandinavian countries have taken proactive steps in renewable energy, partly due to strong political will and partly because they have critical natural assets such as hydropower in Norway or geothermal energy in Iceland. For 20 years, wind energy has been the cornerstone of Danish energy policy, and wind contributes around 20 per cent of Denmark's energy production (Einhorn, 2017).

Recently, Scandinavians have become increasingly interested in offshore wind energy and its production, both for aesthetic reasons (the visual pollution caused by hundreds of wind turbines) and for technical efficiency reasons (the wind is more regular at sea), to the point that Denmark, for example, is now aiming to become completely free of oil in the coming years, with renewable energies (biofuels, wind energy, and tidal energy) replacing fossil energy entirely by 2050. It is enough to look at the most prominent environmental indicators to demonstrate this Scandinavian passion for nature, its protection clearly, and its preservation for future generations (Diani, 2017).

**Table 5.14: Environmental Performance Index 2024**

| Country | Ranking |
|---|---|
| **Sweden** | 6 |
| **Denmark** | 10 |
| **Norway** | 7 |
| **Finland** | 4 |
| **Icelnd** | 19 |

**Source**: Environmental Performance Report, 2024

This environmental awareness is generally reflected in all public policies, and crystallizes in an "ecological spirit" that underlies all policies in these countries, enriching them with the control and good governance of resources regardless of budgetary challenges or available resources.

Scandinavian interest is not limited to maximizing GDP, but extends to maximizing overall happiness. This is what we can see through the Gross Domestic Happiness Index launched by the OECD in May 2011 as a real and sustainable alternative to the exclusive "economic (52)" criterion "GDP".

**Table 5.15: World Happiness 2024**

| Country | Ranking |
|---|---|
| **Sweden** | 4 |
| **Denmark** | 2 |
| **Norway** | 7 |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Finland** | 1 |
| **Icelnd** | 3 |

**Source**: World Happiness Report, 2024

### 5.6 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter discusses several aspects of the Scandinavian model. Several statistics were presented that prove the dominance of Scandinavian countries in advanced rankings in all of these statistics. This indicates the distinction of this model due to its association with several values. For example, Scandinavian countries are distinguished by achieving justice at all levels and for everyone. There is economic justice in distribution among the residents, social justice among all segments of society, and environmental justice in preserving natural resources. Also, the Scandinavian model is distinguished by its keenness to combat all forms of corruption, as the rates of moral and ethical corruption and others are relatively low in these countries.

The unique feature of the Scandinavian state was the rise of the independent peasant class due to the specialization and development of agriculture, the peaceful agricultural revolution (the transition to commercial agriculture for the market economy and the use of new farming methods). Additionally, the reasons for the economic success of the Scandinavian model, perhaps, lie in non-economic factors but instead are related more to the prevailing cultural values in society. Strong community cooperation, personal responsibility, and a pro-social mentality are the basis for the success of the Nordic model.

The Scandinavian countries are small and ethnically and culturally homogeneous, and these special conditions facilitated high levels of trust, cooperation, and widespread willingness to pay higher than average taxes, resulting in the success of the welfare state experiment. The economic model of the Nordic countries is based on developing the public sector and achieving fundamental reforms that guarantee equality and justice in terms of enjoying services while developing countries abandon the public sector through

the privatization of institutions. Therefore, the Scandinavian model is based on a combination of the free market economy and social interest, which has made it possible for society to enjoy first-class services and free education, health care and generous retirement benefits.

The importance of the environment and environmental issues has increased through the establishment of organizations calling for the danger of climate change and global warming, which focused on Environmental security as an essential means in the issue of sustainable development rights, which includes mitigating resource scarcity, environmental degradation and biological threats that constitute social unrest and regional conflicts. Considering environmental security strategies in the Nordic region, the most important fields are climate and environment, economic development, and the human dimension. Multilateral cooperation in the Nordic region is emphasized as the primary goal of the Scandinavian countries, which are trying to achieve environmental security in the region through ecological development measures and strategies.

The Scandinavian model is characterized by specific characteristics, most notably the social welfare of an economy that combines the features of capitalism, such as a market economy and economic efficiency, and some features of social democratic systems, including a strong emphasis on social equity, such as equal distribution of income. The economic system of these countries relies heavily on taxes to fund public social services, education, health, childcare, and other services related to human capital, in addition to strong protection of the workforce through unions and a social safety net.

The success achieved by these countries is remarkable and makes it worth studying them and benefiting from their experiences. There is hardly an economic indicator that does not include these countries at the forefront. The economies of Nordic countries demonstrated high flexibility during the global financial crisis of 2008, at a time when the world's economies faced a significant recession and problems that they continued to suffer from for a long time, and the world's largest economies witnessed negative growth rates after the crisis, these countries achieved favourable growth rates, at varying rates.

However, some experts warn that the remarkable success of this model faces challenges that are gradually emerging. The economic achievements of these countries have been based primarily on extractive industries, whether in Norway, where the oil industry is booming, or iron ore in Sweden. With increasing international awareness of environmental issues, these countries are expected to be under global pressure regarding carbon emissions, which represents a pressing factor on their primary industries, especially if it is taken into account that some Scandinavian countries rank very high in terms of per capita carbon emissions, with Norway ranked 24th in the world and Finland 26th.

Climate change and the crossing of planetary borders seriously threaten civilization and human well-being. To reduce such pressure, there is a global political agreement that greenhouse gas emissions must be radically reduced. The climate change mitigation policies required to keep global warming within 1.5 degrees Celsius, to which the European Union member states have committed.

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This dissertation aimed to study the intersection of values and sustainable development from an Islamic perspective. The topic of sustainable development is considered among the contemporary hot issues. Several aspects of the values and sustainable development were addressed in this study. It came in six chapters, where the first chapter provided a brief overview of the research background, research problem, research objectives, importance of the dissertation, and methods and techniques used. The second chapter began with the general background of sustainable development, the current status of sustainable development, and the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental). Islamic development values are highlighted in the third chapter. It also provides insight into sustainable development from an Islamic perspective and covers the three aspects of sustainable development from an Islamic perspective (economic, social, and environmental). The fourth chapter advocated for a sustainable lifestyle by promoting sustainable development through Islamic principles. It offered a framework for Islamic-based sustainable development that considers the fundamental elements of the basis for advancement and a good life. These ideals include justice, social capital, lowering corruption, and earth reform. The Nordic welfare model was introduced in the fifth chapter.

In the twenty-first century, sustainable development necessitates utilizing countries' technology and cultural resources. This conclusion will draw attention to the significance of several factors that need to be included in a fresh conversation about sustainability that is based on both the environment and culture. The world has been consumed by financial and economic issues since 2008. Global unemployment is rising quickly, commodity prices have significantly changed, food costs have gone up, pension assets have lost a significant amount of their value, and global stock markets have lost trillions of dollars.

The global collapse of ecosystems and biodiversity is an issue that is mainly ignored, while the worldwide economic and financial status is receiving tremendous attention. However, the difference between an economic crisis and a natural crisis is that the

economic crisis may be resolved in due course. In contrast, the loss of natural capital and biodiversity may be irreversible. The consequences of ecological degradation are likely to erode the basis of economic recovery, which policymakers must keep in mind.

**Investing in the Human capital**

Global issues, including poverty, climate change, HIV/AIDS, and biodiversity loss, necessitate a deeper understanding of sustainability concepts and ecosystem management in order to create an economic structure that supports it. Economic progress will be adversely affected by climate change. Therefore, as part of the shift to a green economy, investing in nature and increasing the resilience of natural systems is essential. All living things, including microbes, plants, and animals, coexist in ecosystems that offer humanity "natural system services," or long-term cycles of advantages. Food production, a steady supply of fresh water, climate maintenance, crop pollination, soil erosion prevention, disease and pest control, lessening the effects of extreme natural events, and nutrient recycling are some of these services.

Human activity has exceeded the carrying capacity of the Earth's resources. The pattern of development is the cause of the present environmental problems. According to McNealy (2009), prehistoric societies had a sustainable relationship with their surroundings and were stable and lasting. Only heat from the sun entered the natural and human systems, with all other energy being recycled back into space. Today, this isn't the case. Human activity is outpacing the planet's ability to support life. According to worldwide studies, the Earth is a finite system with limited space, resources, and renewable potential. These limits have already been exceeded. In the northern hemisphere, tons of sulfuric acid fall in the form of acid rain every day. At the same time, many hectares of tropical forest are lost every minute, tons of fertile soil are washed away, tons of carbon dioxide are added to the atmosphere, and many hectares of productive dry land are turned into deserts every hour.

Biological goods account for around 40% of global trade, and the growing reliance of many nations on food and other biological resource imports highlights biodiversity's vital

role in economies. National security is also impacted by biodiversity. Around the world, disputes over fisheries, water, and other shared resources are common. Blogs and social networking sites have made it possible for the general public to band together on important conservation issues. These networks can serve as monitors, offering a strong voice in favour of or against particular advancements. Web applications can also impact public awareness campaigns. The foundation of a sustainable future is protecting the planet's wealth, made possible by the new and ever-evolving ICTs.

**The Role of Spirituality in the Sustainability**

According to Hossein (1968), the environment would be destroyed if the spiritual aspect of the environmental crisis was not accepted. In actuality, this stems from the interaction between people and their surroundings. The primary cause of the ecological problem is thought to be human activity. Therefore, restoring a spiritual understanding of nature significantly contributes to the global ecological debate. Nonetheless, human behaviour is the cause of many significant environmental issues, including the deforestation that destroys natural habitats, the decrease in wild food, biodiversity loss, soil erosion, the depletion of natural resources, human-caused toxins and alien species, and the phenomenon of climate change brought on by overpopulation. According to historical analysis, the primary cause of the dissolution of earlier societies is humankind's incapacity to coexist peacefully and adhere to the fundamental rules of nature.

Deforestation, habitat destruction, soil issues like erosion, salinization, and loss of soil fertility, water management issues, overfishing and overhunting, the introduction of alien species, overpopulation, and growing individual environmental impact are the eight primary factors that Diamond (2002) identifies as contributing to the collapse of society. Diamond said four other novel factors—the human-caused phenomenon of climate change, the buildup of hazardous substances in the environment, and energy shortages—may also play a role in the demise of present and future societies.

It is crucial to understand that a shift from a development model and pattern that is centred only on the individual to one that stresses harmonious relationships between the

individual, society, nature, and the Creator is necessary in order to essentially activate sustainable development and guarantee the advancement of human civilization. It is essential to assess the idea of human rights in this setting. The idea of the human being must be reintroduced in a comprehensive framework that takes into account his relationships with society, other people, the natural world, and the Creator. At a high level of development, spiritual values and the quest for social well-being are therefore prioritized.

The Brundtland Report (1987), "Our Common Future," defined sustainable development as a process of change that enhances present and future capacities to meet human needs and aspirations by harmoniously integrating resource exploitation, investment orientation, technological development, and institutional change. Since religion is primarily about the relationship with God (Allah) and every surrounding, including the environment, spiritual-religious ideals can offer direction for sustainable living. Since religion establishes a code of conduct for how people should act in this world, it is crucial for personal growth.

**The Role of Islamic Values in a New Worldview**

Islam maintains that nothing Allah has created is worthless or without meaning. Humans have been given the task of creating a sustainable civilization that values each and every individual. According to the Holy Quran, killing one person is equivalent to killing all of humanity. Allah says: {If someone kills someone, it will be as if they have murdered all of humanity, unless it is as retribution for murder or other wrongdoing in the land. If someone saves a life, it will be as if they have saved all of humanity}. (al-Ma'idah:32).

The task of governing life on Earth has been given to humans, both for their own benefit and that of the other living things that call the planet home. Furthermore, all that Allah has made in the world is the result of human activity. The safety and survival of the human race so depend on upholding the laws of nature and the laws governing life on Earth. According to these rules, the environment is a gift from Allah.

Instead of attempting to control, subjugate, or overuse nature, humans must accept its laws to coexist peacefully. Human values, ethics, and spirituality are primarily responsible for human civilisation's long-term viability. Our perception of nature, the human situation, and our relationship to Allah and the natural world must undergo a profound metamorphosis. This calls for a fundamental shift in our development paradigms and worldviews. Values and a reverence for the natural world must guide development initiatives. To put this idea into practice, human organizations and communities require motivation. Harmonious interactions between humans and nature are the source of human prosperity.

**Islam and Sustainable Lifestyle**

Humans are the vicegerent and trustees in upholding justice, protecting the environment, and using sustainable methods to extract natural resources. Every human endeavour and deed is regarded as an act of worshipping Allah. The spiritual and material aspects of this life and the afterlife are the same. Islam demands that people balance pursuing the hereafter and material possessions. An essential component of Islam is the concept of Zuhd, which offers a self-control mechanism to prevent excessive resource use and consumption. This point of view guarantees respect for the idea of our natural systems' carrying capacity as well as environmental stewardship. Every generation must also use resources with consideration for future generations. All countries must demonstrate transformative leadership on a global scale, guarantee ecological justice, and promote sustainable development for all people and beings.

Islam takes a simple stance on the origin and unity of humanity. According to Islam, all people are descended from Adam (PBUH). Every human being is an equal member of the global family, and as such, they must coexist and exchange knowledge. As a result, the current state of affairs, in which impoverished nations owe wealthy nations debt, is inconsistent with the Islamic perspective. Everyone must uphold the universal human ethics of social, economic, and environmental justice. In order to prevent the consolidation of economic power in the hands of a small elite, the Islamic economic model, which is

founded on social equality and promotes individual efforts, includes some checks and balances to define the boundaries of governmental power.

Islam teaches that humans are responsible and that this creation has a purpose. As Allah's vicegerent on earth, humans have a duty and a trust; on the Day of Judgment, they will answer to Allah for whatever they do. Islam thus offers a robust system of accountability at every level. According to Islam, everyone is responsible for their acts, even the government. Islam also emphasizes the need to safeguard natural resources and all people from exploitation, depletion, and destruction.

Zuhd, which signifies sufficiency and living softly in the environment, is one example of how Islamic civilization has reinvented the idea of sustainable life. Western lifestyles, living standards, and consumption habits significantly impact food, energy, and commodities consumption. In human history, there has never been environmental degradation of the magnitude and intensity that has occurred over the last fifty years.

To preserve humanity and a sustainable model that is in line with principles provides balance and fairness, and respects the harmony between nature, humans, and the market, a complete shift in worldviews and a reassessment of the foundations of the Western economic model are required. The Western model's conundrum of poverty versus wealth stems from the delusion propagated by the media, which holds that accumulating material belongings and pursuing happiness is the path to happiness. According to Islam, happy souls and peace of mind are reflected in joy, which can be attained when one's life is balanced with the natural world and other people. When material and spiritual demands are sufficiently met, this occurs. The intended fulfilment can only be attained when the spiritual aspect is incorporated into all material endeavours to give them significance and direction, as material and spiritual demands are not distinct entities.

Meeting the requirements of every member of society could not be feasible until all unproductive uses are minimized or eliminated and all social and economic institutions that support inequality are addressed. In order to use resources effectively, each person

must be conscious of society's objectives and inspired to act in accordance with them. People should care more about the well-being of others than they should about their own.

There is no more suitable framework for instituting such a discipline than the creator's moral code. Material belongings are worthless in and of themselves under this discipline. As long as they fulfil the function they were designed—a function specified by the value system—they are valuable. By encouraging voluntary self-control when using limited resources, such an attitude lessens wasteful spending and resource overuse. Meeting everyone's needs through Zuhd and the understanding that prosperity can be attained without expansion are made feasible by this ethical framework. Due to the ensuing social cohesiveness and solidarity, everyone in the socity will feel empowered by their feeling of belonging rather than their worldly possessions.

When morality is lacking, material belongings become a goal unto themselves, and competing with others rather than meeting necessities leads to fulfilment. Models and the fashion industry are trading one blank for another in a world devoid of meaning and purpose. Every person is always busy getting the things he needs for his life, leaving little time to fulfil his responsibilities to his family and society. The individual loses peace of mind because the pressures placed on them are too much to handle. Maximum want satisfaction becomes the direct or indirect goal of the entire manufacturing mechanism. Banking policies encouraging people to live beyond their means and capacities foster this lifestyle. As a result, more demands are placed on resources, imbalances grow, and people unable to keep up with this struggle fall behind. Human alienation, social difficulties, and discontent will result from this.

Islam embodies the idea of "Wasatiyyah" as a forum for those who share beliefs, morals, and ethics. It imagines a societal structure that represents multiple countries coexisting peacefully and harmoniously. Through dedication, social solidarity, and prioritizing the needs of others over one's own, it suggests working together to advance the goals of the public and private sectors. As a result, all citizens have typical duties. It encourages citizens to be socially responsible. Therefore, to achieve maximum social and economic

well-being and create opportunities for personal growth and development for the most significant number of people, all participants of society must support to the establishment and upkeep of the social and moral system.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends the following: A) Commitment to the characteristics of the Islamic vision of sustainable development: balance, responsibility, comprehensiveness, prioritization, and achieving prosperity. B) Commitment to the legislation enacted by Islam that guarantees prosperity and a good life for people while preserving planetary boundaries in the present and the future. These legislations include prohibiting corruption on earth, prohibiting extravagance and waste, preventing harm to creation and aggression against their interests, encouraging the development of the planet, and urging cleanliness and afforestation. C) Referring to the verses of the Holy Quran, approximately 200 verses related to environmental protection. D) Calling for Islamic principles to encourage Muslims to preserve the environment rather than Western concepts of the environment. E) Environmental messages should be included in Islamic speeches to increase public awareness and concern for the environment and issuing a fatwa calling Muslims to protect endangered species. F) More effort should be put into highlighting the clean environmental economy and expanding the green economy. G) Calling to issue decisions through the Islamic Fatwa Bodies and assemblies on sustainable development and the environment.

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