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Islamic Legal Perspectives on Gender Equality and Human Rights: Contributions to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze Islamic legal perspectives on gender issues and human rights in contemporary society and to examine their contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, particularly Goal 5 on gender equality and Goal 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions. This study employed a qualitative library research design using secondary data from academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, Qur'anic exegesis, legal documents, and scholarly publications related to Islamic law, gender equality, human rights, and sustainable development. The data were collected through documentation techniques and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that Islamic law normatively upholds justice (*al-'adl*), equality (*al-musāwāh*), human dignity (*karāmah al-insān*), and public welfare (*maṣlahah*), which are compatible with contemporary human rights and SDG principles. However, its implementation remains challenged by patriarchal culture, conservative interpretations, and weak institutional translation into gender-responsive policies. This study contributes by positioning Islamic law as a contextual, maqāṣid-oriented, and policy-relevant ethical framework for advancing gender equality, human rights protection, and sustainable social development.

Keywords: Islamic Law; Gender Equality; Human Rights; Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah; Sustainable Development Goals.

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INTRODUCTION

Global development in the 21st century is no longer solely focused on economic growth, but also emphasizes aspects of social justice, equality, and respect for human rights as the main pillars of sustainable development. This paradigm is comprehensively formulated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, which place gender equality and the protection of human rights as strategic objectives in creating an inclusive and just society [1]. Normatively, this commitment is also in line with the mandate of the Indonesian Constitution, namely the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, particularly Article 28D paragraph (1), which affirms that every person has the right to recognition, guarantees, protection, and fair legal certainty. Thus, issues of gender and human rights are not only a global agenda, but also a constitutional mandate that must be realized in national and state life.

Issues of gender and human rights can be understood through a social justice approach that emphasizes the importance of the distribution of rights, opportunities, and equal treatment for every individual without discrimination. This theory views gender inequality as often arising from social constructions that place men and women in unequal positions, both in the domestic and public spheres [2], [3], [4]. In this context, law plays a strategic role as a normative instrument that not only regulates but also shapes more equitable social relations. Therefore, the analysis of gender and human rights issues cannot be separated from the legal framework, including Islamic law as one of the value systems that has significant influence in Muslim societies [2].

Islam, as a religion of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (a mercy to all creation), fundamentally upholds the principles of justice, equality, and respect for human dignity. This is affirmed in the word of Allah in Surah An-Nisa verse 1, which emphasizes that all human beings are created from a single soul, implying ontological equality between men and women. Furthermore, Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13 states that human nobility in the sight of Allah is not determined by gender, but by piety. These verses indicate that normatively, Islam provides a strong foundation for the respect of human rights and gender equality [5], [6], [7]. However, in practice, interpretations of Islamic law are often influenced by social constructions and patriarchal cultural contexts, which can give rise to gender bias in various aspects of life [6].

The main problem that arises is the gap between the normative values of Islamic law, which uphold justice and equality, and the empirical reality in society, which still shows discrimination and gender inequality. Previous studies have examined this issue from various perspectives. For instance, Amina Wadud approaches Islamic law from a gender-egalitarian perspective, arguing that the Qur'anic message fundamentally supports equality, although patriarchal interpretations have often distorted its application [7]. Similarly, Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im analyzes the relationship between Islamic law and human rights from a socio-legal perspective, finding that contextual reinterpretation is necessary to align Islamic principles with contemporary human rights standards [8]. In addition, Asma Barlas, through a hermeneutical approach, emphasizes that the Qur'an does not inherently justify gender inequality, but rather that such inequalities arise from biased exegesis. These studies highlight that the existing gap is largely influenced by interpretative frameworks and socio-cultural contexts, rather than the core teachings of Islamic law itself [8], [9]. This phenomenon occurs not only at the global level but also within the local context in Indonesia, where various forms of gender injustice

persist, such as limited access to education, political participation, and legal protection for women [10]. In addition, the lack of comprehensive understanding of human rights within the perspective of Islamic law also contributes to the persistence of stigma and bias in its implementation [9].

In this context, a research approach is needed that is capable of critically examining the relationship between gender issues, human rights, and Islamic law, as well as how these three aspects can contribute to achieving the SDGs 2030. This research is important in bridging the gap between normative texts and social practices through comprehensive and contextual analysis. Thus, Islamic law should not only be understood as a textual normative system but also as a dynamic and relevant ethical framework in addressing contemporary social challenges, including gender equality and human rights protection.

A significant research gap exists in the limited integration between the normative principles of Islamic law and their practical application in advancing the SDGs, particularly in the areas of gender equality and human rights. While previous studies have explored Islamic law from theological, legal, and hermeneutical perspectives, relatively few have examined its concrete contribution to global development agendas, especially in linking Islamic legal principles with policy frameworks and measurable social outcomes. This gap highlights the need for a more comprehensive and applied approach that connects religious values with contemporary development challenges.

The urgency of this research, therefore, lies in the need to develop an integrative perspective between Islamic values, human rights principles, and the global development agenda. In the context of the SDGs 2030, particularly Goal 5 on gender equality and Goal 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions, the contribution of Islamic law becomes highly strategic in building normative and cultural legitimacy for women's empowerment and human rights protection efforts. Furthermore, this research is expected to provide academic contributions in enriching contemporary Islamic legal studies that are more responsive to social issues, as well as offering practical recommendations for policymakers in formulating more inclusive and equitable policies.

Based on preliminary observations, the phenomenon developing within society indicates that the understanding of gender and human rights issues from the perspective of Islamic law remains partial and tends to be normative without being accompanied by contextual understanding. This is reflected in the persistence of views that position women in limited roles, as well as the lack of awareness regarding the importance of equality in various aspects of life. On the other hand, there are also progressive efforts from various groups, including academics, religious leaders, and community organizations, to integrate Islamic values with human rights principles within the framework of sustainable development. This condition reflects a dynamic social landscape that is worthy of in-depth study. Therefore, this research is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of how gender and human rights issues within the perspective of Islamic law can contribute meaningfully to the achievement of the SDGs 2030. Ultimately, this research holds not only academic relevance but also practical significance in addressing the challenges of just and sustainable social development in the era of globalization. While previous studies have primarily focused on theological interpretations, gender-egalitarian readings, or the compatibility of Islamic law with human rights norms, they have generally not explicitly linked these perspectives to the operational framework of the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in terms of concrete policy applications and measurable social outcomes. Therefore, this study offers scientific novelty by integrating Islamic legal principles with the SDGs framework especially Goal 5 (Gender Equality) and Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) through a more applied and policy-oriented approach. The objectives of this study are: (1) To analyze the concepts and perspectives of Islamic law on gender issues and human rights within the context of contemporary society. (2) To examine the contribution of Islamic law perspectives to the achievement of the SDGs 2030, particularly in the areas of gender equality and the protection of human rights

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with a literature study (library research) design. The qualitative approach is chosen because this research aims to deeply understand and analyze concepts and phenomena related to gender issues and human rights from the perspective of Islamic law, as well as their contribution to the SDGs 2030. The literature study method is utilized to examine various relevant written sources in order to obtain a comprehensive, systematic, and critical understanding of the research topic [11], [12].

The data sources in this study are entirely derived from secondary data [13]. These data are obtained from various relevant literatures, including academic books, national and international journal articles, previous research findings, scholarly papers, official documents, and Qur’anic exegesis (tafsir) related to gender issues, human rights, Islamic law, and the SDGs. The selection of data sources is conducted systematically based on several criteria: (1) publication year range, primarily from 2015 to 2024 to ensure the currency of the data; (2) journal indexing status, prioritizing reputable indexed journals such as Scopus and Sinta; (3) thematic relevance to the research focus on Islamic law, gender equality, human rights, and sustainable development; and (4) types of documents, including peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, legal regulations, tafsir literature, and other credible scholarly sources. These criteria are applied to ensure the credibility, relevance, and academic rigor of the data used in this study.

To strengthen the transparency and systematic process of literature selection, this study also presents a classification of literature sources that met the inclusion criteria. The included literature was selected based on thematic relevance, credibility of publication sources, accessibility of full texts, and alignment with the objectives of the study. The classification of selected literature is presented in Table 1.

Tabel 1. Classification of Literature Included in the Study

No	Author(s)	Year	Type of Literature	Main Topic	Index/Source
1	Ahmad, N., Zamri, Z. H., & Omarali	2024	Journal Article	Gender discrimination and women’s rights in Islamic countries	Jure: Jurnal Hukum dan Syar’iah

No	Author(s)	Year	Type of Literature	Main Topic	Index/Source
2	Patoari	2019	Journal Article	Women's rights in Islam and contemporary misconceptions	Beijing Law Review
3	Jamrozi, A. S. I. S., Fikriawan, S., Anwar, S., & Ardiansyah	2022	Journal Article	Maqashid al-Sharia and Islamic law renewal	Justicia Islamica
4	Al-Jayyousi, O., Tok, E., Saniff, S. M., Wan Hasan, W. N., Janahi, N. A., & Yesuf	2022	Systematic Literature Review	Sustainable development within Islamic worldviews	Sustainability
5	Awang, M. Z., Nong, N. M., & Chik	2025	Journal Article	Integration of Islamic social finance and SDGs through Maqasid al-Shariah	International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences

The data collection technique is carried out through a documentation study, which involves systematically collecting, reading, and reviewing various literatures related to the research focus. This study utilizes several academic databases, such as Google Scholar, Scopus-indexed journals, and Sinta-indexed national journals, by employing specific search keywords, including “Islamic law,” “gender equality,” “human rights,” and “Sustainable Development Goals.” The literature selection process is conducted through several stages, namely identification of relevant sources, screening based on titles and abstracts, eligibility assessment based on predefined criteria, and final inclusion of selected literature for analysis. Through this systematic procedure, only credible, relevant, and up-to-date sources are selected, ensuring that the data obtained are well-structured and capable of providing comprehensive and in-depth insights into the research problem.

The data analysis technique in this study uses the interactive analysis model of Miles and Huberman [13], [14], which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction is conducted by selecting and focusing on information relevant to the research topic. Data presentation is carried out in the form of systematic descriptive narratives to facilitate understanding of the findings. Furthermore, conclusions are drawn gradually by examining the relationships among concepts and findings from various literature sources.

The validity of the data in this study is tested using source triangulation techniques. Triangulation is conducted by comparing various literature sources to ensure the consistency and validity of the information obtained. Therefore, the results of this study are expected to have high validity and be scientifically accountable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Concepts and Perspectives of Islamic Law on Gender Issues And Human Rights Within The Context of Contemporary Society

The findings of this study, based on a systematic review of the literature, reveal three principal patterns. First, the literature consistently shows that Islamic law normatively upholds justice (al-'adl), equality (al-musāwah), and human dignity (karāmah al-insān), positioning all individuals as equal moral agents and legal subjects [15], [16]. Second, a recurring empirical finding across studies is the persistence of gender inequality in practice particularly in access to education, leadership, and legal protection indicating a clear gap between normative principles (das sollen) and social reality (das sein) [17]. Third, the literature demonstrates that this gap is largely shaped by interpretative frameworks and socio-cultural contexts, especially patriarchal structures, rather than by the doctrinal substance of Islamic law itself.

From an analytical perspective, these findings indicate that the alignment between Islamic law and human rights is partial and conditional. At the normative level, there is strong convergence, particularly in the recognition of human dignity and fundamental rights. However, at the level of application, this alignment becomes uneven. It is most evident in areas such as ethical principles, social justice, and general human rights discourse, but more contested in domains like family law, gender roles, and leadership, where conservative or textualist interpretations tend to limit egalitarian outcomes.

The literature further highlights an ongoing epistemological divide. On one hand, scholars such as Fatima Mernissi and Amina Wadud argue that gender inequality stems from patriarchal interpretations and advocate for contextual, gender-just readings of Islamic texts [18], [19]. On the other hand, more conservative approaches emphasize textual rigidity, often resisting reinterpretation. This debate demonstrates that the extent to which Islamic law supports gender equality depends significantly on who interprets the texts, within what context, and using which methodological framework.

In this regard, the maqāṣid al-sharī'ah approach proposed by Jasser Auda provides an important theoretical contribution by reframing Islamic law as a dynamic and purpose-oriented system [20], [21]. His emphasis on multidimensionality, openness, and human welfare allows for a more flexible interpretation that accommodates contemporary human rights concerns [22]. Within this framework, the protection of human dignity becomes central, supporting arguments that gender equality is consistent with the higher objectives of the Sharia [23], [24]. However, the adoption of this approach remains limited in practice, particularly in more conservative legal and institutional settings.

The findings also indicate that gender inequality operates not only at the level of discourse but through structural and institutional mechanisms. Limited access to education, restricted participation in religious authority, and the dominance of male-centered interpretations contribute to the reproduction of inequality. This suggests that the issue is not solely theological, but also linked with power relations and knowledge production within society.

In terms of practical implications, the contribution of Islamic law to the SDGs, particularly Goal 5 (Gender Equality) and Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), is contingent upon specific enabling conditions. These include the adoption of contextual and inclusive interpretative approaches, the expansion of women's access to education and participation in religious and social institutions, and the alignment of religious values with gender-responsive public policies. Without these conditions, the normative compatibility identified in the literature is unlikely to translate into measurable social outcomes.

The study finds that Islamic law possesses significant potential to support gender equality and human rights, but this potential is neither automatic nor universally realized. It is shaped by interpretative diversity, socio-political contexts, and institutional capacities, all of which determine whether its principles function as instruments of justice or as mechanisms that inadvertently sustain inequality.

Contribution of Islamic law perspectives to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, particularly in the areas of gender equality and the protection of human rights

The findings of this study indicate that the contribution of Islamic law to the achievement of the SDGs 2030 particularly Goal 5 (gender equality) and Goal 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions) is both significant and conditional. The literature shows that Islamic law provides not only a normative foundation but also a potential operational framework for supporting development goals through ethical guidance, social norms, and institutional values. However, this contribution varies depending on interpretative approaches, socio-political contexts, and the degree of integration into public policy.

Empirically, the literature identifies a consistent alignment between Islamic legal principles and the human-centered development paradigm underlying the SDGs. The concept of humans as khalifah (vicegerents), responsible for justice and social welfare, reflects a shared orientation toward inclusive and equitable development [25], [26]. In this regard, the principle of al-'adl (justice) extends beyond formal equality to encompass distributive justice, particularly in ensuring fair access to resources, opportunities, and legal protection. This alignment is most visible at the level of ethical principles and development discourse.

In the domain of gender equality, the findings show that Islamic law substantively supports the recognition of women's rights as part of broader human rights. The principle of al-musāwah (equality) affirms the equal moral and legal status of men and women [27]. This is reflected in literature advocating for women's access to education, participation in public life, and protection from discrimination as expressions of Islamic values. However, the analysis also reveals that this alignment is uneven in practice. In particular, areas such as family law, leadership roles, and social norms remain contested, where conservative interpretations often limit the realization of gender equality.

Regarding Goal 16, the literature highlights that Islamic law contributes to the promotion of justice, institutional accountability, and peaceful conflict resolution, including the concept of ṣulḥ (reconciliation) [28]. These principles are relevant to governance frameworks that emphasize integrity, transparency, and responsibility. Nevertheless, their practical application depends on institutional capacity and political will, and in some contexts, these values are not fully reflected in governance practices.

Theoretically, the *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah* framework developed by Jasser Auda strengthens these findings by conceptualizing Islamic law as a dynamic and purpose-oriented system centered on human welfare (*maṣlaḥah*) [20], [21]. This approach allows for greater flexibility in addressing contemporary issues such as gender equality and human rights by emphasizing multidimensionality and contextual interpretation [22]. Within this framework, the protection of human dignity becomes a central objective, aligning closely with SDG priorities [23], [24]. However, the literature also indicates that the adoption of this approach remains limited, particularly in more conservative legal environments.

Similarly, Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im's perspective underscores the importance of integrating Islamic values with modern human rights principles to enhance the social legitimacy of development policies [29], [30]. His argument suggests that global agendas such as the SDGs are more likely to be effective when grounded in locally recognized value systems, including religion. This finding highlights the role of Islamic law as a potential bridge between global norms and local contexts. At the same time, debates persist regarding the extent to which such integration can occur without tension between universal norms and traditional interpretations [33].

At the practical level, the literature shows that the effectiveness of Islamic law in supporting the SDGs depends on its translation into policies and social programs. Community-based approaches that integrate Islamic values with local practices such as those observed in “everyday peace” contexts demonstrate the potential for fostering inclusivity and social cohesion. However, these examples remain context-specific and are not yet widely institutionalized.

Critically, the study identifies several key challenges. First, there is a persistent gap between normative commitments and implementation, influenced by patriarchal culture and conservative interpretations. Second, the integration of Islamic values into public policy remains limited, as many development frameworks adopt technocratic approaches that overlook cultural and religious dimensions. Third, there are ongoing epistemological debates between reformist and conservative scholars, which affect how Islamic law is interpreted and applied in relation to gender and human rights.

These findings imply that the contribution of Islamic law to the SDGs is neither automatic nor uniform. It is most effective under specific conditions: the adoption of contextual and inclusive interpretations, the strengthening of women's participation in social and intellectual domains, and the alignment of religious values with gender-responsive and justice-oriented public policies. Without these enabling factors, the normative compatibility identified in the literature is unlikely to produce substantial social impact.

In conclusion, Islamic law holds considerable potential to support the achievement of the SDGs, particularly in advancing gender equality and human rights protection. However, this potential is contingent upon interpretative openness, institutional support, and the ability to bridge normative principles with empirical realities. In this sense, Islamic law functions not only as a system of beliefs but as a strategic resource whose effectiveness depends on how it is interpreted, institutionalized, and applied within contemporary development contexts [31], [33].

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that Islamic law provides a strong normative foundation for advancing gender equality and human rights, particularly through the principles of justice (*al-‘adl*), equality (*al-musāwah*), and human dignity (*karāmah al-insān*). This finding is consistent with previous studies emphasizing that social justice, equality, and human rights are central components of contemporary sustainable development discourse [1], [2], [3], [4]. In this regard, Islamic law should not be viewed merely as a religious-normative system, but also as an ethical and legal framework that can contribute to the construction of more inclusive social relations. The alignment between Islamic legal principles and human rights values is especially visible in the recognition of human dignity and the moral equality of all individuals before God and society [5], [6], [7]. However, this study also demonstrates that such alignment remains conditional because the normative ideals of Islamic law are not always translated into social and institutional practices.

A central finding of this study is the persistent gap between the normative values of Islamic law and the empirical reality of gender inequality. Although Islamic law normatively upholds justice and equality, gender discrimination continues to appear in several areas, including access to education, leadership, legal protection, and public participation. This supports Ahmad et al. [15], who show that several Muslim-majority societies continue to face challenges in combating gender discrimination despite the existence of Islamic legal and ethical principles that support women’s rights. Similarly, Patoari [17] argues that many misconceptions about women’s rights in Islam are not rooted in the essential teachings of Islam itself, but in social practices, cultural assumptions, and limited interpretive traditions. Therefore, the problem identified in this study is not primarily doctrinal, but interpretative and institutional.

This study also strengthens the argument that patriarchal interpretation plays a significant role in shaping gender-biased applications of Islamic law. The findings are in line with the gender-egalitarian perspectives discussed in the introduction, where scholars such as Amina Wadud, Fatima Mernissi, and Asma Barlas argue that the Qur’anic message does not inherently legitimize gender inequality; rather, inequality often emerges from interpretive traditions shaped by male-centered authority and socio-cultural structures [7], [8], [9], [18], [19]. This confirms that Islamic law is not a static body of rules detached from social context. Instead, it is continuously mediated through interpretation, authority, and institutional power. Consequently, gender justice in Islamic legal discourse depends not only on textual references, but also on who interprets the texts, what methodological approach is used, and how those interpretations are institutionalized in society.

The findings further indicate that the *maqāsid al-sharī‘ah* framework offers an important pathway for reconciling Islamic law with contemporary human rights concerns. This is consistent with Jamrozi et al. [20], who highlight the relevance of Jasser Auda’s *maqāsid*-oriented thought for the renewal of Islamic law. A *maqāsid* approach allows Islamic law to be understood as a dynamic, purpose-oriented, and welfare-based system rather than a rigid legal structure. Through this lens, gender equality and human rights protection can be interpreted as part of the higher objectives of Sharia, especially because they are closely related to the protection of dignity, justice, welfare, and social order [20], [21], [22], [23], [24]. The implication is that Islamic legal reform does not require abandoning religious values; rather, it requires recovering the ethical purposes of Islamic law in response to contemporary realities.

In relation to the SDGs, this study shows that Islamic law has meaningful potential to support Goal 5 on gender equality and Goal 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions. This finding corresponds with Al-Jayyousi et al. [25], who argue that sustainable development can be rethought through Islamic worldviews that emphasize stewardship, justice, balance, and collective welfare. It also supports Awang et al. [26], who demonstrate that Islamic principles, particularly *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*, can be integrated with SDG-oriented frameworks. The contribution of Islamic law, therefore, lies not only in providing moral legitimacy but also in offering culturally grounded ethical resources for development policies. In Muslim societies, development agendas are more likely to be socially accepted when they are framed in ways that resonate with local religious values and moral traditions.

Nevertheless, this study also reveals that the contribution of Islamic law to the SDGs is not automatic. Its effectiveness depends on the extent to which Islamic values are translated into gender-responsive legal reforms, inclusive education, community-based programs, and accountable governance. This finding supports the argument that sustainable development cannot rely solely on global policy language, because development goals must be connected to local social, cultural, and religious contexts [1], [25], [26]. In the context of Goal 5, Islamic law can support women’s empowerment when its principles of equality and dignity are operationalized through access to education, participation in decision-making, protection from violence, and fair legal treatment. In the context of Goal 16, Islamic law can contribute to justice and institutional accountability when principles such as fairness, reconciliation, responsibility, and public welfare are incorporated into governance practices [28], [31], [32].

The study’s findings also show that Islamic law can function as a bridge between universal human rights norms and local religious legitimacy. This aligns with the thought of Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na’im, who emphasizes the need to relate Islamic legal reasoning to modern human rights principles through contextual and socially grounded interpretation [29], [30]. However, this bridge remains contested because debates persist between reformist and conservative approaches to Islamic law [33]. Reformist approaches tend to emphasize contextual interpretation, *maqāṣid*, and human dignity, while conservative approaches often prioritize textual continuity and established legal traditions. This tension explains why Islamic law may function differently across contexts: in some settings, it becomes a source of emancipation and justice, while in others, it may be used to preserve unequal gender relations.

The novelty of this study lies in showing that the relationship between Islamic law, gender equality, human rights, and the SDGs should not be reduced to a simple claim of compatibility. Rather, this study demonstrates that compatibility must be constructed through interpretation, policy translation, institutional reform, and inclusive religious literacy. Previous studies have largely discussed Islamic law and gender from theological, hermeneutical, or legal perspectives [7], [8], [9], [18], [19], while other studies have examined Islamic worldviews in relation to sustainable development [25], [26]. This study contributes by connecting these two bodies of literature and arguing that Islamic law can support the SDGs only when its ethical principles are transformed into measurable social and policy outcomes. Thus, the main contribution of this study is not merely to state that Islamic law supports gender equality and human rights, but to clarify the conditions under which such support becomes socially and institutionally transformative.

Overall, the discussion indicates that Islamic law holds significant potential as a normative, ethical, and socio-cultural resource for advancing gender equality and human rights within the SDGs framework. However, this potential must be critically understood as contingent, not inherent. Without contextual interpretation, inclusive knowledge production, women's participation in religious and social institutions, and stronger integration between religious values and public policy, the contribution of Islamic law will remain largely rhetorical. Therefore, future development agendas in Muslim societies should not treat religion as a barrier to gender equality and human rights, but as a strategic field of interpretation, negotiation, and transformation. In this sense, Islamic law can contribute meaningfully to the SDGs when it is read through justice-oriented, human-centered, and policy-responsive frameworks.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Islamic law possesses strong normative and ethical foundations for advancing gender equality, human rights protection, and the achievement of the SDGs 2030, particularly Goal 5 on gender equality and Goal 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions. The principles of justice (*al-'adl*), equality (*al-musāwah*), human dignity (*karāmah al-insān*), and public welfare (*maṣlahah*) demonstrate that Islamic law is conceptually compatible with contemporary human rights values and inclusive development agendas. However, the findings also reveal that this compatibility is not automatically realized in practice, as patriarchal cultural structures, conservative interpretations, limited gender-responsive legal reforms, and weak institutional implementation continue to create a gap between normative ideals and social realities. Therefore, the main contribution of this study lies in showing that Islamic law can support the SDGs not merely as a theological or moral discourse, but as a transformative framework when interpreted through contextual, maqāṣid-oriented, and justice-based approaches. Its practical relevance depends on the ability of religious scholars, policymakers, and social institutions to translate Islamic values into inclusive legal policies, gender-sensitive education, women's participation, community-based empowerment, and accountable governance. In this sense, Islamic law should be positioned not as an obstacle to gender equality and human rights, but as a strategic ethical resource for building a more just, inclusive, and sustainable society.

LIMITATIONS

This study has several limitations that need to be critically acknowledged. First, its reliance on a literature-based approach means that the findings are primarily conceptual and do not capture how Islamic legal perspectives on gender and human rights are negotiated and practiced in specific social contexts. As a result, the identified alignment between Islamic law and the SDGs remains largely at the level of discourse rather than verified practice. Second, the study depends on selected secondary sources, which may reflect particular scholarly orientations especially reformist and normative perspectives potentially underrepresenting more conservative or practice-based viewpoints. This affects the balance of interpretation, particularly in assessing the extent of real-world applicability. Third, the study focuses on the normative and interpretative dimensions of Islamic law, with limited attention to structural and political

constraints. Consequently, it does not fully explain why the translation of Islamic values into gender-equitable policies and institutional practices remains inconsistent across contexts. Future research should address these gaps by incorporating empirical and context-specific approaches, particularly to examine how competing interpretations, institutional settings, and socio-political factors shape the actual contribution of Islamic law to gender equality and human rights within the SDGs framework.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

M.I. conceptualized the study, designed the methodology, conducted the interviews, analyzed the qualitative data, and led the manuscript drafting process. I.H. supervised the research design, provided methodological guidance, contributed to the refinement of the analytical framework, and critically revised the manuscript for intellectual content.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

"The authors declare no conflict of interest."

DECLARATION OF USE OF AI IN SCIENTIFIC WRITING

The authors utilized various reference sources in the preparation of this work, including printed books (manuals), e-books, and assistance from ChatGPT. All content derived from these sources has been critically reviewed and edited as necessary, and the authors assume full responsibility for the content of this publication.

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