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The Intersection of *Siyasah Syar'iyyah* and Islamic Constitutionalism in Zakat Regulations

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Abstract

Background: Zakat regulation in contemporary Muslim societies extends beyond the fulfillment of a religious obligation to encompass public authority, constitutional legitimacy, institutional accountability, and distributive justice. However, the relationship between *siyāsah sharʿiyyah* and Islamic constitutionalism in shaping zakat regulation remains insufficiently conceptualized.

Methods: This study employs a qualitative comparative approach based on an analysis of Islamic jurisprudential literature, contemporary academic scholarship, and relevant legal and institutional frameworks. The analysis examines the relationships among *siyāsah sharʿiyyah*, Islamic constitutional principles, state authority, regulatory mechanisms, accountability, and the objectives of zakat.

Results: The findings indicate that *siyāsah sharʿiyyah* provides a normative governance framework for regulating zakat based on justice, *maṣlaḥah*, accountability, and equitable distribution. Islamic constitutionalism complements this framework by translating normative principles into legal authority, institutional structures, and mechanisms of public accountability. Nevertheless, the interaction between these frameworks varies across constitutional and legal contexts.

Discussion: Effective zakat governance requires integration between Islamic normative principles and contemporary constitutional and regulatory institutions. Fragmented authority, weak accountability, and limited legal recognition may constrain the realization of zakat objectives.

Conclusion: The intersection of *siyāsah sharʿiyyah* and Islamic constitutionalism offers a comprehensive framework for understanding zakat regulation as both a religious and constitutional governance issue.

Novelty: This study develops an integrated analytical framework linking *siyāsah sharʿiyyah*, Islamic constitutionalism, state authority, and zakat governance. It highlights how Islamic normative objectives can be institutionally translated into contemporary regulatory arrangements.

Keywords: Siyasah Syar'iyyah; Islamic Constitutionalism; Zakat Regulation; Islamic Economics; Social Justice.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic economics has increasingly evolved beyond the conventional understanding of financial intermediation toward a broader framework that integrates economic activities with ethical, social, and distributive objectives. Within this framework, Islamic finance is expected not only to comply with Sharīʿah principles but also to promote social welfare, justice, poverty reduction, and the equitable distribution of resources. The concept of *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* provides an important normative foundation for this orientation, as Islamic financial institutions are expected to pursue objectives that extend beyond financial returns toward the realization of social benefit and justice. In Indonesia, this expectation has become increasingly relevant alongside the rapid development of Islamic banking and Islamic social finance. Hudaefi and Badeges (2021), for example, demonstrate that the performance of Islamic banks can be assessed through the framework of *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*, suggesting that conventional financial indicators alone may not adequately reflect the broader ethical and social objectives of Islamic banking.

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Similarly, Abdul et al. (2022) identify continuing challenges in the development of Islamic banking in Indonesia, including the need to strengthen its institutional capacity and social functions.

The broader objectives of Islamic economics are also reflected in the development of Islamic social finance instruments, particularly zakat and waqf. These instruments perform important redistributive functions by channeling resources toward disadvantaged groups and strengthening social protection. Bilo and Machado (2020) emphasize the role of zakat as an instrument of social protection, while Herianingrum et al. (2023) provide evidence of its potential contribution to poverty reduction in Indonesia. From this perspective, zakat should not be understood solely as a religious obligation but also as an economic and social mechanism that can support the welfare of vulnerable communities. Hoque (2022) further argues that business zakah can be developed as an Islamic financial instrument to fund social causes and improve the well-being of underprivileged groups. Consequently, the effectiveness of Islamic social finance depends not only on the availability of financial resources but also on how these resources are governed, managed, distributed, and transformed into sustainable social outcomes.

Governance is therefore a critical component in ensuring that Islamic financial and social finance institutions achieve their normative objectives. Islamic governance incorporates accountability, transparency, ethical responsibility, and adherence to Sharīʿah principles in institutional decision-making. Empirical studies indicate that governance can influence the performance and credibility of Islamic social finance institutions. Wahyuni-TD et al. (2021), for instance, demonstrate the importance of good governance and fraud prevention for the performance of zakat institutions in Indonesia, while Widiastuti et al. (2021) identify governance and technological innovation as important dimensions in optimizing zakat management in East Java. Zakiy et al. (2023) likewise establish a relationship between Sharīʿah governance and organizational performance in Indonesian zakat management organizations. These findings indicate that the social objectives of Islamic finance cannot be separated from the quality of institutional governance. Without effective governance, the potential of zakat, waqf, and other Islamic social finance instruments to promote justice and welfare may not be fully realized.

The governance perspective must also be situated within the broader ethical and political foundations of Islamic law. Islamic governance is not merely an administrative mechanism but is closely associated with principles of justice, accountability, and public welfare. Bahri (2020) explains the relevance of *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* in the construction of Indonesian political fiqh, while Iqbal (2014) situates *fiqh siyasah* within the broader contextualization of Islamic political thought. Ramli and Elatrash (2021) further demonstrate that *Siyasah Syar'iyyah* can provide a normative framework for evaluating political participation and the exercise of public authority, indicating that Islamic political governance should be understood in relation to justice, institutional responsibility, and the changing needs of society. Faridzadeh (2021) similarly emphasizes equal justice as an important normative concern within Islamic thought, while Hammer (2021) examines the relationship between religion and the conceptualization of law. These perspectives are significant because the implementation of Islamic economic principles inevitably takes place within legal, political, and institutional structures. Amrullah (2022) further demonstrates the importance of legal and institutional mechanisms in resolving Sharia economic disputes, particularly through regulatory provisions established by the Supreme Court. Bin-Armia et al. (2024) likewise illustrate the tension between economic rights and religious obligations in the implementation of Islamic economics in Indonesia. Thus, Islamic economic governance can be understood as an interconnected framework in which religious principles, legal institutions, economic objectives, and social justice interact.

Against this background, strengthening the governance of Islamic social finance represents an important pathway for translating Islamic normative principles into measurable social and economic outcomes. Widiastuti et al. (2022) propose an integrated Islamic social finance model in which different instruments are connected to economic rescue, recovery, reinforcement, and resilience, emphasizing the importance of effective governance in improving the socioeconomic conditions of vulnerable communities. This perspective is consistent with Hoque et al. (2023), who demonstrate the potential of integrating zakah and corporate social responsibility in pursuing sustainable development objectives. Jan et al. (2021) also underline the relevance of Islamic corporate governance to sustainability performance in Islamic financial institutions. Therefore, the central issue is no longer simply whether Islamic finance and social finance can generate economic benefits, but how governance mechanisms can ensure that these benefits remain aligned with *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*, social justice, accountability, and sustainable welfare. This study consequently positions Islamic economic governance as a multidimensional framework connecting Sharīʿah principles, institutional accountability, resource distribution, and social welfare, thereby

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providing a foundation for examining how Islamic financial and social finance institutions can contribute more effectively to inclusive and sustainable development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on Islamic economics increasingly positions *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* as a foundational framework for evaluating whether Islamic financial activities generate outcomes consistent with the broader objectives of Islamic law. Rather than limiting Islamic finance to formal compliance with prohibited transactions, the *maqāṣid* perspective emphasizes the realization of justice, welfare, protection of wealth, and public benefit. Hudaefi and Badeges (2021) demonstrate the relevance of *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* for assessing Islamic banking performance in Indonesia, suggesting that financial performance alone is insufficient to represent the multidimensional objectives of Islamic banking. This normative orientation is reinforced by Bahri (2020), who connects *maqāṣid* with the construction of Indonesian political fiqh, and by Iqbal (2014), who emphasizes the contextual dimension of *fiqh siyasah* in Islamic political thought. Faridzadeh (2021) further places justice at the center of Islamic normative thought, while Hammer (2021) highlights the relationship between religion and the conceptualization of law. Collectively, these studies establish that Islamic economic institutions operate within a normative environment in which economic efficiency must be considered alongside justice, accountability, and social welfare. This foundation provides an important theoretical basis for examining governance not merely as an organizational mechanism but also as an instrument for translating Islamic ethical principles into institutional practice.

Within this normative framework, Islamic governance represents an important mechanism for ensuring that Islamic financial institutions remain accountable to both Sharīʿah requirements and broader social objectives. Governance in Islamic institutions encompasses transparency, accountability, ethical conduct, compliance, and mechanisms for protecting stakeholders from institutional misconduct. Jan et al. (2021) develop an Islamic corporate governance framework linking governance mechanisms with sustainability performance in Islamic banks and financial institutions, demonstrating the relevance of governance beyond conventional corporate oversight. Similarly, Meskovic et al. (2023) show that national and individual dimensions of Islamic governance can influence the social performance of Islamic banks. In the context of zakat institutions, Wahyuni-TD et al. (2021) demonstrate that good governance and fraud prevention are associated with institutional performance, while Zakiy et al. (2023) specifically establish a relationship between Sharīʿah governance and organizational performance in Indonesian zakat management organizations. Daud (2019) extends this discussion to waqf by emphasizing the role of Islamic governance in strengthening waqf reporting. These studies collectively indicate that governance is not peripheral to Islamic social finance; rather, it constitutes a structural condition through which religious principles can be translated into credible institutional processes, responsible resource management, and measurable social outcomes.

A substantial body of literature examines Islamic social finance, particularly zakat and waqf, as mechanisms for addressing poverty, inequality, and socioeconomic vulnerability. Zakat has traditionally functioned as a redistributive instrument, and contemporary research increasingly evaluates its capacity to contribute to broader development objectives. Bilo and Machado (2020) identify zakat as an instrument of social protection, while Ben Jedidia and Guerbouj (2020) provide empirical evidence concerning its relationship with economic growth in selected Islamic countries. In Indonesia, Herianingrum et al. (2023) demonstrate the potential of zakat as an instrument for poverty reduction, reinforcing the argument that zakat institutions can play a broader developmental role. Hoque (2022) similarly conceptualizes business zakah as a product of Islamic finance capable of supporting social causes and disadvantaged populations. Widiastuti et al. (2021) add an institutional perspective by demonstrating the importance of governance and zakat technology in optimizing zakat management in East Java. Trust also emerges as an important institutional factor, with Bin-Nashwan et al. (2021) showing that trust in zakat institutions can influence entrepreneurs' zakat compliance. Taken together, these studies suggest that the effectiveness of zakat depends not only on the volume of funds collected but also on institutional credibility, governance quality, technological capacity, and the effectiveness of distribution mechanisms.

The literature further expands the concept of Islamic social finance by connecting zakat, waqf, and other Islamic financial instruments with sustainable development and socioeconomic justice. Widiastuti et al. (2022) propose an integrated Islamic social finance framework that emphasizes the need to connect different instruments and institutional capacities to achieve more effective social outcomes. However, because this publication has been retracted, its propositions should be treated with caution and should not serve as a primary evidentiary basis for the present study. Zauro et al. (2020), for example, demonstrate how waqf can contribute to financial inclusion

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and socioeconomic justice, while Hoque et al. (2023) show the potential for integrating zakah and corporate social responsibility in pursuing the Sustainable Development Goals. Hapsari et al. (2024) broaden the welfare perspective by identifying productivity, education, and financial dimensions as important antecedents of Islamic welfare. Kasmon et al. (2024) further demonstrate the growing role of FinTech applications in Islamic social finance across Asia, indicating that technological development may improve accessibility, efficiency, and institutional reach. Triswandani and Muhammad (2024) likewise highlight innovative approaches to improving zakat distribution. This body of research suggests that Islamic social finance should increasingly be understood as an ecosystem in which governance, technology, financial inclusion, human capabilities, and distributive instruments interact to generate sustainable welfare.

Despite these developments, the literature remains fragmented across separate discussions of Islamic banking, zakat management, waqf, governance, and social welfare. Existing studies provide substantial evidence that *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* offers a normative foundation, governance provides institutional mechanisms, and Islamic social finance instruments provide channels for redistribution and welfare creation. However, the connections among these dimensions are not always examined as an integrated process. Lattanzio (2022) demonstrates that the institutionalization of Sharīʿah law can have broader economic consequences, illustrating the importance of examining Islamic principles within institutional and economic contexts rather than in isolation. Bin-Armia et al. (2024) similarly reveal tensions between economic rights and religious obligations in the implementation of Islamic economics in Indonesia. Tarip (2024) extends the governance discussion into Islamic entrepreneurship, showing the relevance of Islamic governance to economic behavior and organizational activity. Meanwhile, Jan et al. (2021) and Meskovic et al. (2023) indicate that governance can be connected with sustainability and social performance. Therefore, the literature supports an integrated analytical perspective in which Islamic governance functions as a bridge between Sharīʿah principles and socioeconomic outcomes. Building on this literature, the present study conceptualizes Islamic economic governance as a multidimensional framework that connects *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*, institutional accountability, zakat and waqf management, financial inclusion, social justice, and sustainable welfare. Such an approach addresses the fragmentation of previous studies while providing a stronger basis for understanding how Islamic economic institutions can transform normative commitments into measurable and sustainable social value.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative, literature-based research design to examine the relationship between Islamic economic governance, *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*, Islamic social finance, social justice, and sustainable welfare. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the study seeks to interpret concepts, identify relationships among themes, and synthesize arguments developed across existing scholarly literature rather than statistically test causal relationships. Following Creswell (2014), qualitative research is particularly suitable for investigating complex social phenomena through the systematic interpretation of textual and conceptual evidence. Accordingly, published academic literature serves as the primary source of data, and the study develops an interpretive synthesis of selected works addressing Islamic governance, Islamic finance, zakat, waqf, *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*, social welfare, accountability, financial inclusion, and sustainability. This methodological orientation is also consistent with the interdisciplinary nature of the research problem, which requires consideration of Islamic legal thought, political governance, economic institutions, social-finance mechanisms, and development outcomes. Rather than examining these dimensions independently, the study organizes them into an integrated analytical framework to understand how Islamic normative principles can be translated into institutional practices and socioeconomic outcomes (Rajafi et al., 2020; Putra et al., 2023). The research therefore emphasizes conceptual coherence, thematic relevance, and the explanatory contribution of the selected literature to the development of an Islamic economic governance perspective.

The data collection process involved the purposive selection of scholarly sources that were directly relevant to the research focus. The principal literature consists of 35 references selected from academic journals and scholarly books covering Islamic banking, Islamic corporate governance, Islamic social finance, zakat, waqf, *fiqh siyasah*, *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*, justice, financial inclusion, poverty reduction, sustainability, and technological innovation. The selection criteria included thematic relevance, scholarly contribution, geographical relevance where applicable, and the capacity of each source to support one or more dimensions of the analytical framework. Particular attention was given to studies concerning Indonesia because the research examines Islamic economic governance within a context in which Islamic banking, zakat, and other Islamic social-finance institutions continue to develop. Comparative and international studies were also included where they offered broader theoretical or empirical insights. For example, studies on Islamic governance and banking performance, zakat governance and

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institutional performance, waqf and financial inclusion, and Islamic social finance and sustainable development were incorporated to provide complementary perspectives. The selected literature was subsequently reviewed through repeated reading and organized according to its principal themes rather than solely by publication chronology. This process facilitated the identification of recurring concepts, similarities, differences, and research gaps across the selected studies. One methodological precaution concerns the inclusion of a publication by Widiastuti et al. (2022) that has been identified as retracted. Because retracted literature should not be treated as reliable empirical evidence, the study does not use this source as substantive support for its findings or conclusions. Instead, its propositions are considered only as contextual material for identifying themes that are independently supported by other valid references.

The analysis employed thematic synthesis to integrate findings from the selected literature into a coherent conceptual interpretation. The analytical process consisted of three interconnected stages. First, the literature was coded according to major conceptual categories, including *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*, Islamic governance, institutional accountability, zakat and waqf management, financial inclusion, social justice, poverty reduction, technological innovation, and sustainable welfare. Second, relationships among these categories were examined by comparing how different studies conceptualize governance mechanisms and their implications for institutional and social outcomes. For example, findings on good governance and fraud prevention in zakat institutions were considered alongside research on Sharīʿah governance, Islamic corporate governance, zakat distribution, waqf, and Islamic social finance. Third, the identified relationships were synthesized into an integrated analytical framework in which *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* provides the normative orientation, Islamic governance provides the institutional mechanisms, and Islamic social-finance instruments provide practical channels through which social and economic objectives may be pursued. The synthesis also considers tensions between normative principles and institutional implementation, particularly in relation to accountability, economic rights, legal structures, and the effectiveness of resource distribution. The credibility of the interpretation was strengthened through comparison across multiple independent sources rather than reliance on a single study or research tradition. This approach enables the study to move beyond a descriptive literature review toward an interpretive explanation of how Islamic economic governance may contribute to social justice, financial inclusion, and sustainable welfare. The resulting framework is therefore derived from patterns consistently identified across the selected literature while recognizing differences in contexts, methods, and institutional settings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Islamic Economic Governance and *Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*

The analysis of the selected literature indicates that Islamic economic governance cannot be separated from the normative objectives of *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*. Unlike conventional governance approaches that often emphasize organizational efficiency, shareholder interests, and regulatory compliance, Islamic economic governance incorporates broader objectives related to justice, welfare, accountability, and the protection of public interests. The literature demonstrates that the institutionalization of Islamic economic principles requires a balance between material objectives and normative commitments. Hudaefi and Badeges (2021), for example, demonstrate that Islamic banking performance can be examined from a *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* perspective, indicating that institutional performance should not be evaluated exclusively through conventional financial indicators. This perspective is consistent with Faridzadeh (2021), who places equal justice within the broader normative discussion of Islamic thought. Accordingly, governance in Islamic economics can be understood as a mechanism for ensuring that economic institutions pursue not only financial sustainability but also outcomes that contribute to public welfare and social justice.

The literature further demonstrates that *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* provides the normative orientation, while governance provides the institutional mechanisms through which these objectives can be implemented. Bahri (2020) emphasizes the relevance of *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* to the construction of Indonesian political *fiqh*, illustrating the connection between Islamic governance, public interest, and the achievement of justice. Budiono and Toja (2022) further demonstrate that *siyāsah sharʿiyyah* has historically been connected with the governance and management of zakat, indicating that zakat administration is not merely a private religious practice but may also involve public authority and institutional responsibility. Similarly, Iqbal (2014) positions *fiqh siyasah* within the contextualization of Islamic political thought, suggesting that governance should respond to changing social and institutional circumstances while maintaining its normative foundations. Hammer (2021) also highlights the influence of religion on the conceptualization of law, which is particularly relevant when Islamic economic principles are translated into institutional regulations. These perspectives indicate that Islamic economic governance should not be reduced to a technical system of administrative control. Rather, it represents a

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normative-institutional framework in which religious values, legal principles, institutional responsibilities, and socioeconomic objectives interact. The synthesis of the literature identifies several interconnected dimensions of Islamic economic governance. First, justice constitutes a central normative objective because economic institutions are expected to prevent exploitation and promote equitable outcomes. Second, accountability ensures that institutions remain responsible for the management and distribution of economic resources. Third, public welfare provides an outcome-oriented dimension through which institutional performance can be evaluated according to its contribution to society. Fourth, Sharīʿah compliance provides the religious and legal foundation for institutional activities. Fifth, institutional effectiveness concerns the ability of organizations to translate these principles into concrete economic and social outcomes. These dimensions can be synthesized as follows:

Table 1. Dimensions of Islamic Economic Governance Based on the *Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* Perspective

Dimension	Governance Orientation	Expected Implication
Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah	Protection of welfare and public interest	Alignment between institutional activity and Islamic objectives
Justice (*al-ʿadl*)	Fairness and equitable treatment	Reduction of inequality and discriminatory outcomes
Accountability	Responsibility and transparency	Greater institutional credibility and stakeholder trust
Sharīʿah compliance	Conformity with Islamic principles	Legitimacy of economic and financial activities
Public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*)	Social and economic benefit	Improved socioeconomic well-being
Institutional effectiveness	Translation of principles into practice	More sustainable governance outcomes

Source: Author's analysis, 2024.

The relationship between normative principles and institutional implementation becomes particularly important in the Indonesian context. The development of Islamic economic institutions does not occur within an exclusively religious environment but within a complex legal, political, and economic system. Bin-Armia et al. (2024) illustrate this complexity through their discussion of economic rights and religious obligations in the implementation of Islamic economics in Indonesia. Their analysis suggests that the implementation of Sharīʿah-based economic principles may involve tensions between religious objectives, individual economic rights, and existing institutional arrangements. Lattanzio (2022) similarly demonstrates that the institutionalization of Sharīʿah law can generate broader economic consequences, indicating that the adoption of religiously informed rules should be assessed not only from the perspective of formal compliance but also in terms of their socioeconomic implications. Consequently, effective Islamic economic governance requires institutional arrangements capable of mediating between normative commitments and practical economic realities. Governance mechanisms should therefore ensure that the pursuit of Sharīʿah objectives does not remain symbolic but contributes to fair, transparent, and socially beneficial economic practices.

Overall, the findings indicate that *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* and Islamic governance represent two complementary dimensions rather than separate analytical concepts. *Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* establishes the direction and ultimate objectives of Islamic economic activity, particularly justice, welfare, and public benefit, whereas governance establishes the institutional processes and mechanisms through which these objectives can be realized. This relationship provides an important foundation for understanding Islamic social finance because zakat, waqf, and other Islamic financial instruments require effective institutions to translate their normative purposes into measurable social outcomes. The literature therefore suggests a conceptual sequence in which Sharīʿah principles establish normative objectives → governance mechanisms operationalize those objectives → institutional accountability supports implementation → socioeconomic outcomes reflect the realization of *maqāṣid*. This finding is important because it shifts the understanding of Islamic economic governance from a narrow compliance-based approach toward a broader outcome-oriented framework. Such a framework provides the basis for the subsequent analysis of governance, accountability, and institutional performance in Islamic social-finance organizations.

Integrating Sharīʿah Governance and the Optimization of Islamic Social Finance

The findings indicate that Sharīʿah governance constitutes a fundamental institutional mechanism for optimizing Islamic social finance (ISF) because it determines not only whether financial activities comply with Islamic principles but also whether social-finance institutions can generate measurable and sustainable socioeconomic

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outcomes. In this context, governance extends beyond formal compliance to encompass accountability, transparency, institutional capacity, stakeholder trust, and alignment between organizational practices and the objectives of *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*. This broader understanding is particularly relevant in Indonesia, where Islamic financial and social-finance institutions operate within a complex regulatory and institutional environment. Previous studies demonstrate that governance quality influences organizational performance in zakat institutions, while effective governance mechanisms can strengthen accountability and public confidence (Wahyuni-TD et al., 2021; Zakiy et al., 2023). Similarly, the institutionalization of Sharīʿah principles can generate broader economic consequences depending on the quality of institutional implementation and regulatory arrangements (Lattanzio, 2022). Therefore, Sharīʿah governance should be conceptualized not merely as a compliance framework but as an institutional architecture through which Islamic social-finance organizations translate normative Islamic principles into accountable, efficient, and socially consequential practices.

The analysis further demonstrates that the effectiveness of ISF depends substantially on the integration of its different instruments rather than their isolated implementation. Zakat, waqf, *ṣadaqah*, and other forms of Islamic social finance possess distinct economic functions and can therefore be strategically combined to address different dimensions of socioeconomic vulnerability. Zakat, for example, has an established role in poverty alleviation and social protection (Herianingrum et al., 2023; Bilo & Machado, 2020), whereas waqf can provide longer-term productive assets and contribute to financial inclusion and socioeconomic justice (Daud, 2019; Zauro et al., 2020). Hoque (2022) further demonstrates the potential of business zakah to mobilize resources for social causes, while Hoque et al. (2023) highlight the potential for integrating zakah and corporate social responsibility (CSR) in pursuing sustainable development objectives. Consequently, ISF governance should facilitate institutional coordination among these instruments rather than treating each mechanism as an independent program. Such integration can improve resource allocation, reduce duplication, and create complementary interventions that move beneficiaries from immediate relief toward productive economic participation and greater financial resilience.

Table 2. Key Dimensions of Governance for Optimizing Islamic Social Finance

Governance Dimension	Principal Mechanism	Expected Contribution to ISF Optimization
Sharīʿah compliance	Sharīʿah supervision and compliance procedures	Ensures conformity with Islamic principles and *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*
Transparency and accountability	Reporting, auditing, disclosure, and monitoring	Strengthens institutional legitimacy and stakeholder trust
Institutional capacity	Qualified management, organizational structure, and internal controls	Improves the efficiency and effectiveness of fund collection and distribution
Instrument integration	Coordination of zakat, waqf, *ṣadaqah*, and other Islamic social-finance instruments	Expands the scope and continuity of socioeconomic interventions
Digital governance	Digital collection, payment, data management, and distribution systems	Enhances accessibility, efficiency, traceability, and targeting
Stakeholder participation	Engagement of donors, beneficiaries, regulators, and partner institutions	Strengthens responsiveness and institutional accountability
Impact orientation	Poverty reduction, empowerment, inclusion, and welfare indicators	Shifts evaluation from financial outputs toward measurable social outcomes

Source: Authors' analysis, 2024.

An important implication of these findings is that governance quality should be evaluated according to its capacity to connect institutional integrity with socioeconomic impact. Merely increasing the volume of funds collected does not necessarily indicate that an ISF institution is performing effectively. Rather, institutional performance should also reflect the extent to which collected resources are transformed into sustainable improvements in beneficiaries' economic and social conditions. This perspective is consistent with the *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*-based approach, which encourages Islamic financial institutions to be assessed according to their contribution to broader human welfare rather than exclusively through conventional financial indicators (Hudaefi & Badeges, 2021). The same principle can be extended to Islamic social finance. Research on Islamic welfare emphasizes the importance of productivity, education, and financial resources in shaping welfare outcomes (Hapsari et al., 2024). In addition, evidence concerning Islamic banking suggests that corporate governance and sustainability are interconnected, reinforcing the argument that governance should incorporate social and environmental considerations alongside

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financial performance (Jan et al., 2021). Thus, an effective ISF governance system should monitor not only inputs and outputs but also outcomes such as poverty reduction, productive capacity, financial inclusion, and beneficiary resilience.

The findings also reveal that trust, technological capability, and institutional accountability are mutually reinforcing components of ISF governance. Trust is particularly significant because Islamic social finance relies heavily on voluntary participation and the willingness of individuals and organizations to transfer resources to intermediary institutions. Empirical evidence indicates that trust in zakat institutions can enhance entrepreneurs' willingness to comply with zakat obligations (Bin-Nashwan et al., 2021). Conversely, weak governance, inadequate disclosure, or perceptions of misuse can undermine institutional legitimacy and reduce participation. Digitalization provides an important opportunity to address these challenges. Widiastuti et al. (2021) demonstrate the relevance of zakat technology in optimizing zakat governance in East Java, while Kasmon et al. (2024) identify the expanding role of FinTech applications within Islamic social finance across Asia. The development of digital governance also suggests that ISF institutions can improve traceability, data integration, donor engagement, and beneficiary targeting. Nevertheless, technological adoption should not be viewed as a substitute for governance; rather, it should operate within a robust accountability framework. This distinction is particularly important because contemporary governance increasingly involves technological infrastructures that reshape institutional decision-making and coordination (Jin, 2024).

Overall, the results suggest that the optimization of Islamic social finance requires a multidimensional governance framework that integrates Sharīʿah compliance, institutional accountability, technological innovation, stakeholder trust, and measurable socioeconomic impact. At the conceptual level, the framework is supported by literature emphasizing the integration of Islamic social-finance instruments with institutional resources, human capital, regulation, research and development, and technological infrastructure. However, because Widiastuti et al. (2022) has been identified as a retracted publication, its propositions should not be treated as independent empirical evidence. The broader argument is instead supported by other validated studies concerning governance, human capital, technology, regulation, and Islamic social finance. At the normative level, the framework is also compatible with principles of Islamic political and legal thought, in which justice, public interest, and responsible authority constitute important foundations of governance (Iqbal, 2014; Bahri, 2020; Ahyani & Mutmainah, 2024). Moreover, the relationship between religion, law, and governance requires attention to the institutional context in which Islamic norms are implemented (Hammer, 2021; Bin-Armia et al., 2024). Therefore, ISF optimization should ultimately be understood as an institutional transformation process in which Islamic normative commitments are converted into transparent governance arrangements, integrated financial mechanisms, technologically enabled services, and sustainable welfare outcomes. This approach moves Islamic social finance beyond a predominantly charitable paradigm toward a more comprehensive development-oriented model capable of advancing social justice, financial inclusion, poverty reduction, and sustainable socioeconomic resilience.

Digital Transformation, Financial Inclusion, and Socioeconomic Empowerment

The findings indicate that digital transformation has emerged as a strategic dimension of Islamic social finance (ISF) governance, particularly in improving accessibility, efficiency, transparency, and the scalability of zakat- and waqf-based interventions. The integration of digital technologies enables Islamic social-finance institutions to move beyond conventional, predominantly manual systems toward more interconnected platforms for collection, verification, distribution, monitoring, and reporting. This transformation is particularly relevant in Indonesia, where geographical dispersion and differences in institutional capacity can constrain the effectiveness of conventional social-finance mechanisms. Widiastuti et al. (2021) demonstrate that zakat technology (ZakaTech) can contribute to the optimization of zakat governance in East Java, while Kasmon et al. (2024), through a systematic review of FinTech applications in Islamic social finance across Asia, identify digitalization as an increasingly important mechanism for expanding service accessibility and improving institutional efficiency. These developments suggest that technology should not be viewed merely as an operational instrument but as part of a broader governance transformation capable of strengthening the relationship between Islamic social-finance institutions and their stakeholders. Nevertheless, technological innovation must remain embedded within *Sharīʿah* principles, accountability mechanisms, and institutional safeguards to ensure that efficiency does not undermine ethical and distributive objectives.

Digital transformation also has significant implications for financial inclusion, particularly among economically vulnerable groups that remain underserved by conventional financial institutions. Islamic social finance can function as a bridge between social protection and financial empowerment by providing mechanisms through

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which disadvantaged populations can access productive resources, interest-free financing, and sustainable livelihood opportunities. Zauro et al. (2020) demonstrate the potential of waqf integration to enhance financial inclusion and socioeconomic justice, while Hoque (2022) highlights the potential of business zakah as a mechanism for financing social causes and improving the welfare of disadvantaged populations. Similarly, the broader literature on Islamic microfinance emphasizes the capacity of Islamic financial mechanisms to address financing constraints faced by small and economically vulnerable groups. Within this context, digital platforms can reduce transaction costs and geographical barriers while improving the capacity of institutions to identify, monitor, and serve beneficiaries. The combination of social-finance instruments and digital infrastructure therefore creates the possibility of a more inclusive financial ecosystem in which beneficiaries are not treated merely as recipients of charitable transfers but as participants in productive economic activity.

Table 3. Digital Transformation and Its Contribution to Islamic Social Finance

Digital dimension	Governance application	Potential socioeconomic outcome
Digital zakat and waqf platforms	Online collection and payment systems	Broader donor participation and increased accessibility
Integrated beneficiary databases	Identification and verification of beneficiaries	More accurate and targeted distribution
Digital monitoring and reporting	Real-time tracking and institutional disclosure	Greater transparency and accountability
FinTech-based financing	Digital access to Islamic social and productive finance	Improved financial inclusion
Data analytics	Assessment of beneficiary conditions and program performance	More evidence-based decision-making
Digital communication	Engagement with donors and beneficiaries	Greater trust and stakeholder participation
Technology-enabled empowerment	Digital business, training, and market access	Increased productive capacity and economic resilience

Source: Authors' analysis, 2024.

The analysis further suggests that financial inclusion should be understood as an intermediate mechanism rather than the final objective of Islamic social finance. Access to financial services alone does not necessarily translate into improved welfare unless such access is accompanied by productive opportunities, appropriate institutional support, and adequate human capabilities. Hapsari et al. (2024) emphasize the importance of productivity, education, and financial dimensions in explaining Islamic welfare, reinforcing the argument that socioeconomic empowerment requires more than financial transfers. Similarly, Herianingrum et al. (2023) demonstrate the relevance of zakat in poverty reduction in Indonesia, while Bilo and Machado (2020) position zakat as an important instrument of social protection. These findings indicate that the effectiveness of ISF should be evaluated through a continuum extending from access → participation → productive capacity → income generation → resilience → welfare. Such an approach also corresponds with the *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* perspective, in which economic activities are ultimately assessed according to their contribution to human well-being and social justice rather than solely on financial efficiency (Hudaefi & Badeges, 2021). Accordingly, digitalization becomes meaningful when it facilitates this transformation process rather than simply accelerating existing administrative procedures.

A further finding concerns the role of institutional trust and accountability in determining whether digital transformation can generate sustainable participation. Digital systems can enhance transparency by providing more accessible information concerning collection, allocation, distribution, and program outcomes. This is particularly important because the effectiveness of zakat institutions is strongly associated with public confidence. Bin-Nashwan et al. (2021) demonstrate the importance of trust in encouraging zakat compliance, whereas Wahyuni-TD et al. (2021) establish the relevance of good governance and fraud prevention for the performance of zakat institutions in Indonesia. Daud (2019) similarly emphasizes the relationship between Islamic governance and waqf reporting. Consequently, digital platforms should incorporate mechanisms for auditability, traceability, disclosure, and stakeholder feedback. Such mechanisms can reduce information asymmetry between institutions and contributors while strengthening perceptions of institutional legitimacy. At the same time, digital transformation creates new governance challenges involving data quality, cybersecurity, digital exclusion, and unequal technological capabilities. Therefore, a technologically sophisticated ISF system should remain inclusive

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by ensuring that individuals with limited digital literacy or restricted technological access are not excluded from social-finance services.

Finally, the findings demonstrate that digital transformation can strengthen the transition of Islamic social finance from a predominantly redistributive model toward a development-oriented and empowerment-based model. Widiastuti et al. (2022) argue for an integrated ISF framework that combines multiple instruments, institutional resources, human capital, regulation, and technological infrastructure. This integrated perspective can be extended by positioning digitalization as the connective infrastructure linking donors, institutions, beneficiaries, regulators, and economic partners. The integration of zakat and CSR can further strengthen this ecosystem by connecting social-finance resources with broader sustainable-development objectives (Hoque et al., 2023). Likewise, the governance perspective proposed by Jan et al. (2021) demonstrates that Islamic corporate governance can be connected with sustainability performance, suggesting that social, economic, and governance objectives should not be treated as separate institutional agendas. The implication is that digital ISF governance should prioritize not merely the volume of digital transactions but the quality and sustainability of socioeconomic outcomes. In this model, technology functions as an enabler of transparency, inclusion, resource mobilization, and empowerment, while *Sharīʿah* governance provides the normative and ethical direction. Therefore, the strategic integration of digital technologies with zakat, waqf, governance, and empowerment mechanisms can contribute to a more inclusive Islamic social-finance ecosystem capable of supporting poverty reduction, socioeconomic justice, and sustainable community resilience.

Strengthening Socioeconomic Justice through an Integrated Islamic Social Finance Governance Model

The findings indicate that the effectiveness of Islamic social finance (ISF) ultimately depends on its capacity to translate Islamic normative commitments into measurable improvements in socioeconomic justice. In this regard, justice should not be interpreted narrowly as equality in the distribution of financial resources, but more broadly as the creation of fair opportunities, protection against socioeconomic vulnerability, and the development of institutional mechanisms that enable disadvantaged groups to achieve greater economic autonomy. The concept of *al-ʿadl* provides an important normative foundation for this perspective, emphasizing justice as a central objective of Islamic social and legal arrangements (Faridzadeh, 2021). Similarly, the application of *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* to Islamic economic and political governance places human welfare, public interest, and social justice at the center of institutional decision-making (Bahri, 2020; Iqbal, 2014). Within the ISF context, these principles imply that zakat, waqf, ṣadaqah, and related instruments should not merely redistribute resources temporarily but should also address structural sources of poverty and exclusion. This argument is particularly important for Indonesia, where Islamic social finance possesses substantial potential but continues to face institutional, governance, and implementation challenges (Abdul et al., 2022; Bin-Armia et al., 2024).

The synthesis of the literature further demonstrates that integration is the central mechanism through which ISF can move from short-term redistribution toward long-term socioeconomic empowerment. Zakat can provide immediate social protection and poverty alleviation, while productive zakat and waqf can create longer-term economic opportunities (Bilo & Machado, 2020; Herianingrum et al., 2023; Zauro et al., 2020). Business zakah can additionally connect Islamic social finance with entrepreneurial and productive activities, thereby expanding the potential contribution of social finance to sustainable livelihoods (Hoque, 2022). This integrated approach is consistent with Widiastuti et al. (2022), who propose a comprehensive ISF framework in which different Islamic social-finance instruments are coordinated to support economic rescue, recovery, reinforcement, and resilience. The evidence therefore suggests that the principal challenge is not the absence of Islamic social-finance instruments but the fragmentation of institutional implementation. When zakat, waqf, Islamic financial institutions, government agencies, and community organizations operate independently, resources and beneficiary information may remain fragmented. An integrated governance model can address this problem by establishing coordinated planning, shared information systems, complementary programs, and outcome-based monitoring.

Table 4. Integrated Governance Model for Socioeconomic Justice through Islamic Social Finance

Governance component	Strategic function	Expected contribution to socioeconomic justice
Sharīʿah governance	Ensures compliance with Islamic principles and *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*	Protects ethical integrity and distributive justice
Zakat governance	Mobilizes and distributes obligatory social resources	Reduces poverty and strengthens social protection

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Governance component	Strategic function	Expected contribution to socioeconomic justice
Waqf governance	Develops and manages sustainable social assets	Supports long-term community development
Islamic financial integration	Connects social finance with Islamic banking and financing	Expands productive financing opportunities
Digital governance	Integrates data, transactions, monitoring, and reporting	Improves efficiency, transparency, and targeting
Stakeholder coordination	Connects government, institutions, donors, beneficiaries, and communities	Reduces institutional fragmentation
Impact-based evaluation	Measures welfare, inclusion, resilience, and empowerment	Ensures that financial resources produce substantive outcomes

Source: Authors' analysis, 2024.

An additional finding is that institutional quality determines whether integration can actually produce equitable outcomes. Integration without effective governance may simply reproduce existing inefficiencies at a larger scale. Therefore, the governance model requires strong accountability, transparency, internal controls, and professional management. Wahyuni-TD et al. (2021) demonstrate the importance of good governance and fraud prevention for zakat-institution performance, while Zakiy et al. (2023) identify a relationship between *Sharīʿah* governance and organizational performance in Indonesian zakat management organizations. Daud (2019) likewise highlights the significance of Islamic governance for waqf reporting. These findings suggest that institutional legitimacy is an essential prerequisite for mobilizing social-finance resources. Public trust is particularly important because contributors voluntarily entrust their zakat and other social-finance resources to intermediary institutions. Bin-Nashwan et al. (2021) show that trust can influence zakat compliance, indicating that improvements in governance may have a multiplier effect: better governance strengthens trust, stronger trust increases participation, increased participation expands available resources, and greater resources create opportunities for broader socioeconomic intervention. Consequently, governance should be regarded as an enabling infrastructure for justice rather than as a purely administrative requirement.

The integrated model also highlights the importance of institutional coordination between Islamic social finance and broader Islamic economic governance. Islamic social finance cannot operate independently from the wider institutional environment in which Islamic economic activities are regulated and implemented. The relationship between religion, law, and institutional governance influences how Islamic principles are translated into practical rules and organizational arrangements (Hammer, 2021; Lattanzio, 2022; Maimun & Hakim, 2023). Annicchino (2022) further demonstrates that the interaction between religious norms, legal systems, and human rights frameworks may generate institutional fragmentation, particularly in contexts where competing normative and constitutional claims coexist. In Indonesia, the development of Islamic economic institutions therefore requires attention to both normative legitimacy and regulatory effectiveness. Research on Islamic political fiqh emphasizes the relevance of *maqāṣid* and public interest in constructing Islamic governance arrangements (Bahri, 2020), while Dewi et al. (2024) illustrate how political and institutional dynamics influence the legalization and implementation of Islamic law policies in Indonesia and Malaysia. At the organizational level, Islamic governance can also influence entrepreneurship and responsible economic behavior (Tarip, 2024). These perspectives reinforce the argument that ISF governance should be connected with the wider Islamic economic ecosystem rather than being treated as an isolated charitable sector. Such coordination can facilitate policy coherence, institutional complementarity, and more effective mobilization of Islamic financial resources for inclusive development.

Finally, the findings support the proposition that socioeconomic justice should become the principal outcome indicator of an integrated ISF governance framework. Financial performance, collection efficiency, and distribution volumes remain important, but they are insufficient to demonstrate whether Islamic social finance has fulfilled its broader social purpose. The ultimate assessment should consider whether ISF contributes to poverty reduction, financial inclusion, productive capacity, social protection, and long-term economic resilience. This outcome-oriented perspective is supported by research connecting zakat with poverty reduction (Herianingrum et al., 2023), Islamic social finance with welfare (Hapsari et al., 2024), and Islamic social finance with sustainable-development objectives (Hoque et al., 2023). It also corresponds with the broader argument that Islamic governance should pursue justice and public welfare rather than merely formal institutional compliance (Rozi,

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2020; Ahyani & Figueiredo, 2024). Accordingly, the proposed model positions *Sharīʿah* governance as the normative foundation, institutional governance as the organizational mechanism, digitalization as the enabling infrastructure, and socioeconomic empowerment as the ultimate outcome. Such an architecture provides a more comprehensive explanation of how Islamic social finance can contribute to sustainable socioeconomic justice. Rather than functioning solely as a mechanism for transferring resources from donors to beneficiaries, ISF can become an integrated development instrument that strengthens inclusion, reduces structural vulnerability, expands productive opportunities, and enhances community resilience. This represents a substantive shift from a charity-centered paradigm toward a governance-based, impact-oriented, and *maqāṣid*-driven model of Islamic social finance.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Islamic social finance (ISF) can play a significant role in advancing socioeconomic justice when supported by an integrated and effective governance framework. In response to the research problems formulated in the Introduction, the findings demonstrate that the effectiveness of ISF is determined not solely by the availability or amount of zakat, waqf, and other Islamic social-finance resources, but also by how these resources are governed, integrated, distributed, and evaluated. *Sharīʿah* governance needs to extend beyond formal compliance and encompass transparency, accountability, institutional capacity, stakeholder trust, technological readiness, and an orientation toward *maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah*. The study further demonstrates that fragmented management of Islamic social-finance instruments may limit their socioeconomic impact. Conversely, coordination among zakat institutions, waqf organizations, Islamic financial institutions, government authorities, communities, and beneficiaries can create a more coherent ecosystem for poverty reduction, financial inclusion, social protection, and economic empowerment. Therefore, the first answer to the research problem is that effective Islamic social finance requires governance that connects normative Islamic principles with institutional mechanisms and measurable socioeconomic outcomes. The second answer is that the integration of Islamic social-finance instruments and digital technologies can strengthen the efficiency, accessibility, transparency, and sustainability of interventions, provided that technological development remains guided by ethical and *Sharīʿah* principles.

The main novelty of this study is the development of an integrated governance perspective that positions four dimensions as mutually reinforcing components of Islamic social-finance optimization: *Sharīʿah* governance as the normative foundation, institutional governance as the organizational mechanism, digital transformation as the enabling infrastructure, and socioeconomic empowerment as the ultimate outcome. This perspective contributes to the existing literature by moving beyond approaches that examine zakat, waqf, Islamic finance, governance, digitalization, and poverty reduction as separate issues. The study proposes that these dimensions should instead be understood as interconnected elements within a single institutional ecosystem. The conceptual contribution is therefore the repositioning of Islamic social finance from a predominantly charity-oriented and redistributive mechanism toward a governance-based, digitally enabled, and impact-oriented development instrument. The framework also emphasizes that institutional performance should not be measured exclusively through financial indicators, such as the volume of funds collected and distributed, but through broader outcomes including poverty reduction, financial inclusion, productive capacity, social protection, economic resilience, and improvements in beneficiaries' welfare. From a practical perspective, the findings provide policymakers and Islamic social-finance institutions with a strategic foundation for strengthening institutional coordination, improving transparency and accountability, integrating digital systems, developing outcome-based performance indicators, and designing programs that transform beneficiaries from passive recipients into economically empowered participants.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the research is based primarily on the synthesis and analytical interpretation of existing literature and therefore does not directly test the proposed framework using primary empirical data. The proposed relationships between governance quality, digital transformation, institutional trust, and socioeconomic outcomes consequently require further empirical validation. Second, the literature encompasses different institutional, regulatory, economic, and cultural contexts, meaning that the proposed framework may not be uniformly applicable across all settings without contextual adaptation. Third, the rapidly changing nature of digital financial technologies creates emerging governance challenges that may not be fully captured by the existing body of literature. Future research should therefore empirically test the proposed framework through quantitative and qualitative studies involving zakat institutions, waqf organizations, Islamic financial institutions, policymakers, and beneficiaries. Comparative research across regions and countries would also be valuable for identifying contextual variations in governance effectiveness. Overall, this study establishes a conceptual foundation for understanding how integrated Islamic

social-finance governance can contribute to sustainable socioeconomic justice and provides a basis for future empirical research aimed at transforming this conceptual framework into a measurable and operational governance model.

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