

TREND AND TRAJECTORY ANALYSIS OF ISLAMIC LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL ECONOMY

Syahbudin Senin^{1*}
Dziauddin Sharif²
Hamsidah Abu Hassan³

¹Universiti Teknologi Mara, Melaka, Malaysia.

(syahbudin@uitm.edu.my)

²Universiti Teknologi Mara, Melaka, Malaysia.

(dziau646@uitm.edu.my)

³SMK Sri Pengkalan Alor Gajah, Melaka, Malaysia.

(syahyakin@gmail.com)

*Corresponding author: syahbudin@uitm.edu.my

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Abstract: *This review synthesizes research on trend and trajectory analysis for political economy and Islamic leadership, focusing on the influence of Islamic leadership on political economy, comparative analysis between Islamic and other leadership forms, annual publication trends, adoption and maturity phases, thematic shifts, and key papers per phase to address fragmented understanding and developmental patterns in this interdisciplinary field. The review aimed to evaluate the influence of Islamic leadership on political economy across contexts, benchmark leadership models, identify publication trends and thematic evolutions, and analyze seminal contributions defining research phases. A literature selection encompassing qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method studies from Muslim-majority regions was conducted, applying thematic analyses. Findings reveal that Islamic leadership principles significantly shape governance, economic justice, and sustainability, often emphasizing ethical governance distinct from secular models; comparative analyses highlight the coexistence and tensions between Islamic and secular leadership within pluralistic political economies; publication trends indicate a surge post-2020 with rising themes in innovation, social finance, and sustainability, alongside declining focus on authoritarianism and traditional models; key papers delineate foundational theories and emerging applied research marking the field's maturity. These integrated insights demonstrate evolving scholarly engagement with Islamic leadership's role in political economy, underscoring the need for longitudinal and cross-contextual empirical validation. The findings inform theoretical frameworks and policy discourse on governance and economic development within Islamic contexts.*

Keywords: *Islamic leadership; political economy; trend analysis; trajectory analysis; governance; publication trends; thematic evolution;*

Introduction

Research on trend and trajectory analysis in Islamic political economy and leadership has become a critical area of study due to its significant impact on governance, economic development, and social justice in majority-Muslim countries (Akhtar et al., 2025). The field has evolved from early explorations of Islamic governance principles and economic models in the late 20th century to more nuanced analyses of leadership ethics, political participation, and institutional reforms in the 21st century (Ali, 2009; Weir, 2012). This research has become even more significant as the growing role of Islamic leadership has influenced political economic thinking for over 50% of the global Muslim population living in countries where governance values and economic policies affect them (Pupcenoks, 2012; Zalanga, 2015). Understanding these dynamics is essential for addressing socio-economic disparities and promoting sustainable development within diverse political contexts (Rashid et al., 2025; Javaid, 2024).

The specific problem addressed is the limited integration of comprehensive trend and trajectory analyses that systematically compare Islamic leadership's influence on political economy with other leadership forms (Patel et al., 2019; Almoharby & Neal, 2013). Despite growing literature on Islamic governance and economic models, there remains a knowledge gap concerning the temporal evolution of research themes, adoption phases, and the maturity of Islamic leadership paradigms in political economy (Alibasic, 2023; Samier, 2020). Controversies persist regarding the compatibility of Islamic leadership with democratic governance and economic liberalism, with some scholars emphasizing its potential for ethical governance and others highlighting challenges related to authoritarianism and legal pluralism (Kolawole & H., 2022; Mednicoff, 2019; Ghadbian, 2000). The absence of a consolidated framework to map rising and declining themes hampers policy formulation and academic discourse, potentially limiting the practical application of Islamic leadership principles in political economy (Akhmetova, 2014).

This review adopts a conceptual framework that defines Islamic leadership as a set of ethical, consultative, and justice-oriented practices rooted in Qur'anic and Hadith teachings, which interact with political economy through governance, economic policy, and social welfare mechanisms (Firdausiyah & Sofa, 2024; Ali, 2009; Randeree, 2008). The framework situates Islamic leadership alongside other leadership models by examining their influence on institutional development, economic equity, and political stability, thereby linking leadership ethics with economic outcomes (Journal & Aziz, 2021; Alazmi, n.d.).

The purpose of this review is to analyze the trajectory of research on Islamic leadership's influence on political economy, conduct a comparative analysis with other leadership forms, and identify key publications and thematic shifts over time (Enjelita et al., 2025; Othman & Mohamad, 2023). This study adds value by synthesizing fragmented literature, clarifying adoption and maturity phases, and highlighting emerging and declining research themes, thus informing future scholarship and policy development (Naz & Riaz, 2024; Desky et al., 2025).

The review employs a comprehensive literature synthesis methodology, including qualitative content analysis, focusing on peer-reviewed articles published annually (Yamani, 2025; Gassouma & Benhamed, 2023). Inclusion criteria emphasize studies addressing Islamic leadership and political economy, while exclusion criteria omit non-peer-reviewed sources. Findings are organized to reflect publication trends, thematic evolution, and comparative insights across leadership paradigms (Metcalf & Murfin, 2011).

Methodology of Literature Selection

Transformation of Query

The original research question on trend and trajectory analysis for political economy and Islamic leadership was expanded into multiple, more specific search statements. By systematically expanding a broad research question into several targeted queries, the literature search is both comprehensive and manageable, with each query returning a set of papers tightly aligned with a particular facet of the topic.

The transformed queries included: (1) Trend and trajectory analysis for political economy and Islamic leadership, focusing on influence, comparative analysis, annual publication curve, adoption/maturity phases, rising vs. declining themes, and key papers per phase; (2) Examining the impact of Islamic leadership on socio-economic development across different regions, comparing its principles and outcomes with alternative leadership styles in political economy; (3) Investigating the intersections of Islamic leadership principles with alternative governance models, focusing on their socio-economic impacts in diverse cultural contexts; (4) Examining the impact of Islamic governance principles on the global political economy, contrasting their effectiveness with secular leadership models; and (5) Historical and contemporary case studies illustrating the application of Islamic leadership principles in governance.

Identifying and Applying Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The original research question was analysed to extract multiple inclusion/exclusion criteria. Papers were included from the year 2000 to 2025, focusing on peer-reviewed studies addressing Islamic leadership and political economy. Non-peer-reviewed sources were excluded.

Screening Papers

Each transformed query with the applied Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria was run to retrieve a focused set of candidate papers from a database of over 270 million research papers. During this process, 234 papers were found.

Citation Chaining - Identifying Additional Relevant Works

Backward Citation Chaining examined reference lists of core papers to find earlier foundational studies. Forward Citation Chaining identified newer papers that cited each core paper, tracking how the field has built on those results. A total of 90 additional papers were found during this process.

Relevance Scoring And Sorting

The assembled pool of 324 candidate papers (234 from search queries, 90 from citation chaining) was subjected to a relevance ranking. A total of 316 papers were found relevant to the research query, and out of these, 50 were identified as highly relevant and form the basis of this review.

Results

Descriptive Summary of The Studies

This section maps the research landscape of the literature on trend and trajectory analysis for political economy and Islamic leadership, focusing on the influence of Islamic leadership on political economy, comparative analysis between Islamic leadership and other forms of leadership in political economy, annual publication curve, adoption/maturity phases, rising vs.

declining themes, and key papers per phase, revealing a diverse interdisciplinary field. The studies encompass qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method approaches, with geographic foci spanning Muslim-majority countries in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa. The comparative analysis highlights the distinctiveness of Islamic leadership principles in shaping governance and economic policies relative to secular and other traditional leadership models. The publication trends and thematic evolutions underscore phases of growing scholarly interest, with emerging themes around sustainability, ethical governance, and innovation under Islamic leadership frameworks.

Table 1: Summary of Key Studies on Islamic Leadership and Political Economy

Study	Influence on Political Economy	Leadership Model Comparison	Publication Trend	Thematic Evolution	Key Paper Impact
Akhtar et al. (2025)	Islamic governance shapes justice and accountability in Pakistan and Malaysia	Contrasts procedural formalism vs. adjudicative governance	Recent surge in comparative reform studies post-2023	Rising: neo-Sufi accountability, maqasid public interest	Highly cited for governance reform proposals
Yamani (2025)	Islamic leadership integrated with electoral democracy in Muslim-majority countries	Coexists with democratic systems, facing challenges like vote manipulation	Steady growth in electoral studies since 2020	Declining: money politics; Rising: interfaith cooperation	Influential in electoral law reconstruction debates
Enjelita et al. (2025)	Islamic economic values align with national policies in Indonesia	Advocates Sharia-compliant policies in pluralistic democracy	Increasing publications on Islamic political economy	Rising: digital innovation; Declining: limited commitment	Key reference for policy advocacy in Indonesia
Rashid et al. (2025)	Islamic principles underpin sustainable policy design in Malaysia	Integrates care and public interest in governance	Recent growth in Islamic governance and sustainability	Rising: Islamic finance and environmental stewardship	Influential in sustainability policy frameworks
Naz & Riaz (2024)	Islamic governance proposed to stabilize Pakistan's political economy	Emphasizes ethical leadership over secular models	Moderate publication increase on Islamic frameworks	Rising: trust-building and social justice	Noted for practical governance focus strategies
Ali (2009)	Islamic leadership model distinguishes	Balances idealism and realism in governance	Foundational conceptual studies on Islamic leadership	Rising: leadership typologies; Declining: authoritarianism	Influential in leadership theory

	prophetic and caliphate types				
Pupcenoks (2012)	Islamic parties influence democratic Islamization in Pakistan and Turkey	Contrasts repressive vs. subtle Islamization models	Early 2010s surge in democratic Islamization studies	Rising: Islamic democracy models; Declining: authoritarian Islamism	Seminal in Islamic democracy discourse
Randeree (2008)	Islamic ethical leadership promotes social and organizational justice	Inspired by early scholars for sustainable work ethics	Early 2000s to recent foundational studies	Rising: ethical governance and social justice frameworks	Seminal in ethical leadership frameworks

Source: Author compilation from systematic literature review (2026)

Influence On Political Economy

25 studies found that Islamic leadership principles significantly shape governance, economic policies, and social justice frameworks, often emphasizing justice, consultation, and accountability as core values (Akhtar et al., 2025; Naz & Riaz, 2024; Firdausiyah & Sofa, 2024).

10 studies highlighted the integration of Islamic economic values with national policies, though implementation challenges persist in pluralistic and democratic contexts (Enjelita et al., 2025; Gassouma & Benhamed, 2023).

7 studies emphasized the role of Islamic leadership in promoting sustainable development and social welfare, linking religious principles to contemporary economic challenges (Anggara et al., 2024; Rashid et al., 2025; Desky et al., 2025).

Several studies noted the necessity of democratic frameworks to realize the full potential of Islamic political economy, underscoring the synergy between Islamic governance and democratic institutions (Gassouma & Benhamed, 2023; Pupcenoks, 2012).

Leadership Model Comparison

20 studies compared Islamic leadership models with secular or other traditional forms, revealing distinctions such as prophetic versus caliphate leadership, ethical versus authoritarian governance, and procedural versus adjudicative approaches (Akhtar et al., 2025; Kolawole & H., 2022; Ali, 2009).

12 studies emphasized the compatibility and coexistence of Islamic leadership with democratic and pluralistic systems, highlighting challenges like vote manipulation and human rights tensions (Yamani, 2025; Pupcenoks, 2012; Mednicoff, 2019).

8 studies focused on the infusion of Islamic work ethics and moral values into leadership effectiveness, contrasting with Western managerial paradigms (Patel et al., 2019; Almoharby & Neal, 2013; Randeree, 2008).

Publication Trend Analysis

18 studies documented a recent surge in publications post-2020, particularly in areas of governance reform, sustainability, and innovation under Islamic leadership (Akhtar et al., 2025; Rashid et al., 2025; Othman & Mohamad, 2023).

10 studies showed steady growth in research on Islamic political economy and leadership ethics since the early 2000s, reflecting sustained scholarly interest (Gassouma & Benhamed, 2023; Patel et al., 2019; Randeree, 2008).

Emerging themes such as halal economy, social finance, and climate resilience have driven new research streams since 2022 (Desky et al., 2025; Alibasic, 2023; Fuady et al., 2023).

Thematic Evolution

22 studies identified rising themes including ethical governance, innovation capability, sustainability, social trust, and participatory finance within Islamic leadership discourse (Firdausiyah & Sofa, 2024; Othman & Mohamad, 2023; Rastgar et al., 2023).

9 studies noted declining focus on traditional leadership models, authoritarianism, and money politics, reflecting shifts toward more inclusive and democratic perspectives (Yamani, 2025; Kolawole & H., 2022; Pupcenoks, 2012).

Thematic shifts also include growing attention to the integration of Islamic principles with modern governance challenges such as climate resilience and digital innovation (Anggara et al., 2024; Alibasic, 2023; Othman & Mohamad, 2023).

Critical Analysis And Synthesis

The literature on the influence of Islamic leadership on political economy reveals a rich interdisciplinary engagement, highlighting both theoretical and empirical insights. A prominent theme is the integration of Islamic principles such as justice, consultation, and accountability into governance and economic frameworks, which is often contrasted with secular and other leadership models. However, the body of research exhibits variability in methodological rigor and contextual depth, with some studies offering robust comparative analyses while others remain largely conceptual or case-specific. The trajectory of scholarship shows evolving thematic focuses, from foundational Islamic governance concepts to contemporary challenges in sustainability, innovation, and democratic integration. Despite significant contributions, gaps remain in longitudinal analyses and empirical validation across diverse socio-political contexts, limiting the generalizability of findings.

Table 2: Critical Analysis – Strengths and Weaknesses of the Literature

Aspect	Strengths	Weaknesses
Theoretical Foundations of Islamic Leadership	The literature robustly articulates core Islamic leadership principles such as <i>adl</i> (justice), <i>shura</i> (consultation), and <i>maslahah</i> (public interest), providing strong normative framework for political economy analysis (Akhtar et al., 2025; Ali, 2009).	While normative frameworks are well-developed, there is a tendency toward idealized portrayals that may overlook practical governance challenges and power dynamics in Muslim-majority states (Kolawole & H., 2022; Mednicoff, 2019).

Comparative Analysis of Islamic vs. Other Leadership Forms	Several studies offer comparative insights, highlighting how Islamic leadership emphasizes ethical and moral dimensions often absent in secular models; the contrast between procedural formalism and substantive justice enriches understanding of leadership diversity (Akhtar et al., 2025; Pupcenoks, 2012).	Comparative analyses are often limited by regional focus or case study constraints, with insufficient cross-national empirical data to generalize findings. Some comparisons lack rigorous methodological consistency (Patel et al., 2019).
Methodological Approaches and Data Quality	The literature employs a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods, including systematic reviews, case studies, content analyses, and econometric modeling, which collectively enhance the robustness of findings (Anggara et al., 2024; Gassouma & Benhamed, 2023).	Many studies rely heavily on qualitative or normative analysis with limited longitudinal or large-scale quantitative data, constraining the ability to track trends or causal relationships over time (Enjelita et al., 2025; Othman & Mohamad, 2023).
Publication Trends and Thematic Evolution	The field exhibits clear adoption and maturity phases, with early works focusing on foundational Islamic governance concepts, progressing toward applied themes such as sustainability, innovation, and social financing (Anggara et al., 2024; Othman & Mohamad, 2023).	The annual publication curve suggests uneven scholarly engagement, with some regions and topics underrepresented. Emerging topics like digital innovation in Islamic economics remain nascent (Enjelita et al., 2025; Fuady et al., 2023).
Influence of Islamic Leadership on Political Economy Outcomes	Evidence indicates that Islamic leadership principles contribute positively to governance quality, social trust, and economic justice, as seen in contexts like Malaysia's sustainability policies and Pakistan's political reforms (Akhtar et al., 2025; Naz & Riaz, 2024).	The translation of Islamic leadership principles into effective political economy outcomes is uneven, with challenges including political instability, legal pluralism, and tensions between religious norms and democratic governance (Naz & Riaz, 2024; Kolawole & H., 2022).

Source: Author compilation from systematic literature review (2026)

Thematic Review Of Literature

The literature on Islamic leadership and political economy reveals multifaceted discourse centered on the integration of Islamic principles into governance, economic development, and social justice within Muslim-majority contexts. Key themes include the distinctive features of Islamic leadership models compared to secular and other traditional forms, the evolving role of Islamic governance in fostering sustainable development and social welfare, and the interaction between Islamic ethics and political economy in various national and regional settings. The research also highlights phases of scholarly maturity marked by growth in conceptual modeling, empirical case studies, and comparative analyses, alongside emergent themes on transparency, innovation, and social trust within Islamic frameworks.

Table 3: Thematic Review of Literature on Islamic Leadership and Political Economy

Theme	Appears In	Theme Description
Influence of Islamic Leadership on Political Economy	28/50 Papers	This theme addresses how Islamic leadership principles such as justice (adl), consultation (shura), accountability, and public welfare shape political and economic governance. Studies emphasize the role of Islamic ethics in wealth distribution, economic justice, and governance reforms across diverse contexts such as Malaysia, Pakistan, and Indonesia (Akhtar et al., 2025; Enjelita et al., 2025; Naz & Riaz, 2024; Rashid et al., 2025).
Comparative Analysis of Islamic and Other Leadership Models	22/50 Papers	Scholars compare Islamic leadership with secular, Western, and traditional leadership models, revealing distinctive features rooted in Islamic texts and moral values. Comparative studies show both convergences and divergences in leadership effectiveness across Muslim-majority and non-Muslim contexts, highlighting cultural and institutional influences (Patel et al., 2019; Ali, 2009; Weir, 2012).
Islamic Governance and Sustainable Development	19/50 Papers	This theme explores how Islamic governance frameworks contribute to sustainability, resilience, and socio-economic justice, incorporating concepts such as khalifah (stewardship), maslahah (public interest), and Falah (holistic well-being). Research investigates policy applications in countries like Malaysia and Indonesia, linking Sharia-compliant finance, ethical governance, and environmental responsibility to sustainable development goals (Anggara et al., 2024; Rashid et al., 2025; Desky et al., 2025).
Ethical Leadership and Social Justice in Islamic Contexts	18/50 Papers	Islamic ethical leadership is foregrounded as a model promoting social justice, transparency, and community welfare. Rooted in Qur'anic and Hadith teachings, this theme emphasizes principles such as honesty, integrity, and consultation to address corruption and governance deficits (Firdausiyah & Sofa, 2024; Khotami & Saputra, 2024; Rastgar et al., 2023; Randeree, 2008).
Political Economy under Islamic Leadership in Muslim-Majority States	17/50 Papers	Investigations focus on the political-economic dynamics under Islamic leadership, including the influence of Islamist parties, democratic Islamization, and regime type on economic policy and political stability. Case studies from Pakistan, Turkey, Iran, and Middle Eastern countries reveal models of Islamic democracy and tensions between sharia law and secular governance (Yamani, 2025; Pupcenoks, 2012).
Publication and Scholarly Trajectory Analysis	15/50 Papers	The corpus reveals a steady growth in scholarship since the early 2000s with increasing attention to empirical studies, conceptual modeling, and systematic reviews. Early works focus on foundational Islamic leadership concepts, while recent publications emphasize

		application in governance and economic development. Maturity phases include initial theoretical establishment, expansion into comparative analyses, and current exploration of innovation and transparency (Othman & Mohamad, 2023).
Innovation and Leadership Effectiveness in Islamic Contexts	7/50 Papers	Recent research investigates how Islamic leadership behaviors influence organizational innovation and managerial effectiveness, particularly in public sector and multinational settings. Findings suggest that Islamic work ethics significantly shape leadership perceptions and innovation capabilities (Patel et al., 2019; Journal & Aziz, 2021; Othman & Mohamad, 2023).
Transparency and Social Trust in Islamic Governance	6/50 Papers	Transparency, grounded in Islamic teachings such as those from Nahj al-Balagha, is crucial for building social trust between officials and citizens. Empirical evidence shows positive impacts of transparent governance on trust in Muslim countries (Rastgar et al., 2023).
Islamic Legal and Governance Frameworks	5/50 Papers	The relationship between Islamic law, political authority, and governance is analyzed with emphasis on constitutionalism, rule of law, and human rights in Muslim-majority states. Research assesses the compatibility and tensions between Islamic legal traditions and modern governance (Mednicoff, 2019; Kolawole & H., 2022).

Source: Author compilation from systematic literature review (2026)

Chronological Review Of Literature

The literature on political economy and Islamic leadership has evolved significantly over the past two decades, reflecting broader socio-political transformations in Muslim-majority countries. Early research primarily focused on theoretical foundations and the compatibility of Islamic principles with governance, democracy, and economic development. Over time, the discourse expanded to include empirical studies on governance models, leadership ethics, and the practical application of Islamic principles in diverse political economies. Recent works highlight comparative analyses, contemporary challenges, and thematic trends such as sustainability, innovation, and social trust within Islamic leadership paradigms.

Table 4: Chronological Review of Research on Islamic Leadership and Political Economy

Year Range	Research Direction	Description
2000–2005	Foundations of Islamic Political Economy and Leadership	Initial studies explored the complex relationship between Islam, politics, and economics, addressing ideological debates on violence, governance, and development. This period emphasized the theoretical articulation of Islamic leadership ethics, economic justice, and the role of Islamist movements in political transitions. Key themes included the rise of political Islam, the challenge to Western secular paradigms, and the quest for Islamic models of economic and social governance.

2006–2010	Conceptual Models and Ethical Frameworks in Islamic Leadership	Research began to develop conceptual frameworks for Islamic leadership and business excellence, integrating Islamic work ethics with managerial effectiveness. Scholars examined the influence of Islamic teachings on ethical leadership, social justice, and organizational behavior, emphasizing the humanistic and moral foundations of governance. This phase also included comparative analyses of Islamic and secular leadership practices within political economy contexts.
2011–2015	Comparative Political Economy and Democratic Islamization	This timeframe saw increased focus on democratic Islamization, governance challenges, and the political economy in Muslim societies. Studies contrasted Islamist political parties, governance models, and policy implications, highlighting varying trajectories such as the subtle reforms in Turkey and conflicted approaches in Pakistan. The emergence of Islamic political economy as a discipline was articulated alongside analyses of leadership development and state capacity in Muslim-majority countries.
2016–2020	Institutional and Governance Dynamics in Islamic Contexts	Research emphasis shifted towards institutional frameworks, public administration traditions, and policy development influenced by Islamic principles. This period included systematic literature reviews and comparative policy analyses revealing the interplay of Islamic law, governance legitimacy, and socio-political stability. Studies also investigated leadership ethics and innovation capability within Islamic governance, addressing contemporary global and regional challenges.
2021–2025	Contemporary Applications and Emerging Themes in Islamic Political Economy	Recent literature focuses on applied research examining sustainability, innovation, and social trust underpinned by Islamic leadership values. Empirical studies explore diverse contexts such as Malaysia's ethical governance, Indonesia's halal economy, and the political economy of Pakistan. Thematic trends highlight rising interests in participatory financing, transparency, social welfare, and the influence of Islamic leadership on economic resilience and governance reforms.

Source: Author compilation from systematic literature review (2026)

Agreement and Divergence Across Studies

The reviewed literature broadly agrees on the significant role of Islamic leadership principles in shaping political economy and governance, emphasising justice, consultation, accountability, and social welfare. There is consensus that Islamic leadership can coexist with democratic governance in certain contexts, yet divergences emerge regarding pragmatic implementation challenges and interaction with secular or alternative leadership models. Studies also align on thematic evolution showing rising interest in sustainability, ethical leadership, and socio-economic development under Islamic frameworks, while some debate persists on the degree of political Islam's impact and the balance between religious and secular governance. Differences

across studies often reflect variations in regional focus, methodological approaches, and the socio-political contexts examined.

Table 5: Agreement And Divergence Across Studies

Criterion	Studies In Agreement	Studies In Divergence	Comparison / Explanations
Influence On Political Economy	Most studies agree that Islamic leadership principles (justice, shura, muhasabah, maslahah) significantly influence economic governance, promoting equitable wealth distribution and social responsibility (Akhtar et al., 2025; Gassouma & Benhamed, 2023; Rastgar et al., 2023; Randeree, 2008).	Divergence exists on the extent and effectiveness of these principles in practice, particularly in reconciling Islamic values with pluralistic democratic systems and challenges posed by political instability (Naz & Riaz, 2024; Gassouma & Benhamed, 2023).	Agreements stem from shared recognition of core Islamic governance values; divergences arise from differing political contexts, methodological focus, and levels of institutional maturity.
Leadership Model Comparison	There is agreement that Islamic leadership embodies distinctive ethical and moral foundations, emphasising servant leadership and community welfare, differentiating it from secular models (Ali, 2009; Almoharby & Neal, 2013; Randeree, 2008; Weir, 2012).	Divergences include views on authoritarian tendencies within Islamic leadership and debates about compatibility with democratic governance; conflicts between idealism and realism (Pupcenoks, 2012). Others contrast governance in pluralistic vs. theocratic states (Kolawole & H., 2022).	Differences reflect diversity of Islamic leadership expressions across regions, historical contexts, and governance structures, as well as varying interpretations of Islamic texts and the balance between religious and political authority.
Publication Trend Analysis	Research shows a growing trend in publications on Islamic leadership's impact on political economy in the last decade, with noticeable increase from 2019 to 2025 across governance, sustainability, and ethical leadership themes (Rashid et al., 2025; Othman & Mohamad, 2023; Akhtar et al., 2025).	Some older works focus more on ideological and theoretical aspects (pre-2010), while recent studies emphasise practical governance challenges and innovative frameworks such as Falah-oriented economy and halal economy (Anggara et al., 2024; Desky et al., 2025; Fuady et al., 2023).	Growth patterns correspond to geopolitical events and increasing scholarly interest in applying Islamic principles to contemporary governance challenges. Variations stem from evolving research priorities and regional academic focuses.

Thematic Evolution: Rising Vs. Declining Themes	Rising themes include sustainability, socio-economic justice, innovation capability, and Islamic moral economy in finance (Rashid et al., 2025; Desky et al., 2025; Alibasic, 2023). Ethical leadership and transparency are increasingly emphasised (Rastgar et al., 2023; Randeree, 2008).	Divergences noted in emphasis on secularisation debates and the role of religion in the public sphere (Hatina, 2000; Norris & Inglehart, 2004). Some works highlight tensions between Islamic governance and human rights issues (Kolawole & H., 2022; Mednicoff, 2019).	Thematic shifts reflect changing political realities and scholarly focus on constructive, pragmatic applications. Declining themes include violent political Islam and radicalism as more recent studies favour moderate, participatory governance models (Ghadbian, 2000; Pupcenoks, 2012).
Key Paper Impact And Maturity Phases	Influential papers establish foundational Islamic leadership models (Ali, 2009; Almoharby & Neal, 2013), address governance-democracy relationships (Pupcenoks, 2012; Mednicoff, 2019), and offer systematic reviews (Anggara et al., 2024). Recent key works emphasise sustainability and innovation (Rashid et al., 2025; Othman & Mohamad, 2023).	Divergence on perceived impact of earlier versus later contributions; older seminal works focus on ideological framing and newer studies on practical implementation and empirical validation (Samier, 2020).	Differences in impact assessments arise from publication age, citation practices, and evolving research agendas shifting from theory to applied policy analysis. Regional academic networks and language barriers may also influence dissemination.

Source: Author compilation from systematic literature review (2026)

Theoretical And Practical Implications

Theoretical Implications

The synthesis of literature reveals that Islamic leadership principles, rooted in justice, consultation, accountability, and public welfare, offer a distinctive theoretical framework that challenges conventional secular leadership models by integrating moral and spiritual dimensions into governance and political economy (Akhtar et al., 2025; Firdausiyah & Sofa, 2024; Ali, 2009). This integration supports the notion that leadership effectiveness in Muslim contexts cannot be fully understood without considering Islamic ethical and jurisprudential foundations (Almoharby & Neal, 2013).

Comparative analyses indicate that Islamic leadership models emphasise collective responsibility and social justice more explicitly than many Western leadership theories, which often prioritise individualism and economic rationalism. This divergence suggests a need to expand leadership theories to incorporate culturally and religiously embedded values, particularly in Muslim-majority societies (Patel et al., 2019; Randeree, 2008).

The trajectory of research shows a maturation from descriptive studies of Islamic leadership ethics toward more complex models that link Islamic leadership attributes with organisational outcomes such as innovation capability and business excellence, thereby extending leadership theory into practical organisational domains (Journal & Aziz, 2021; Othman & Mohamad, 2023).

The evolving discourse on Islamic political economy highlights the dynamic interplay between Islamic governance principles and economic development, suggesting that Islamic leadership is not only normative but also instrumental in shaping economic policies that promote equity and sustainability (Enjelita et al., 2025). The literature also challenges the binary opposition between secular and Islamic governance by illustrating hybrid models where Islamic leadership coexists with democratic and pluralistic political systems, thereby enriching theoretical understandings of political economy in Muslim contexts (Yamani, 2025; Gassouma & Benhamed, 2023; Pupcenoks, 2012). The adoption and adaptation of Islamic leadership concepts in public administration and policy studies calls for a re-examination of dominant Western-centric public administration theories (Samier, 2020).

Practical Implications

Policymakers in Muslim-majority countries can leverage Islamic leadership principles such as shura (consultation), adl (justice), and maslahah (public interest) to design governance frameworks that enhance transparency, accountability, and social trust, thereby improving public sector performance and citizen engagement (Akhtar et al., 2025; Rastgar et al., 2023; Naz & Riaz, 2024).

The integration of Islamic ethical values into leadership development programmes can foster more socially responsible and innovative organisational cultures, particularly in public institutions and multinational organisations operating in Islamic contexts (Othman & Mohamad, 2023; Journal & Aziz, 2021; Patel et al., 2019).

Islamic leadership's emphasis on social justice and equitable wealth distribution offers practical pathways for addressing economic inequality and promoting sustainable development, as evidenced by case studies in Malaysia, Indonesia, and Pakistan (Enjelita et al., 2025; Rashid et al., 2025; Fuady et al., 2023).

The comparative findings suggest that Islamic leadership models can complement democratic governance by promoting inclusive decision-making and ethical accountability, which are critical for political stability and economic resilience in Muslim-majority states (Yamani, 2025; Pupcenoks, 2012; Akhmetova, 2014). For international development agencies and investors, understanding the nuances of Islamic leadership and political economy is essential for effective engagement in Muslim-majority regions, particularly in sectors such as Islamic finance, halal economy, and social welfare (Desky et al., 2025; Fuady et al., 2023). The research underscores the importance of contextualising leadership and governance reforms within Islamic cultural and religious frameworks to ensure legitimacy, acceptance, and sustainability of policy interventions in Muslim societies (Ali, 2009; Samier, 2020).

Limitations of The Literature

Table 6: Limitations Of The Literature

Area Of Limitation	Description Of Limitation	Papers With Limitation
Geographic Bias	Many studies focus predominantly on specific Muslim-majority countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Middle Eastern states, limiting the external validity of findings across diverse Islamic contexts. This geographic concentration restricts the generalisability of conclusions to broader Islamic leadership and political economy settings.	Akhtar et al. (2025); Yamani (2025); Enjelita et al. (2025); Rashid et al. (2025); Desky et al. (2025); Alibasic (2023); Gassouma & Benhamed (2023); Kolawole & H. (2022)
Methodological Constraints	A significant number of papers rely on qualitative, case study, or normative approaches with limited empirical or quantitative data, which constrains the robustness and replicability of findings. This methodological limitation affects the strength of causal inferences and the ability to benchmark Islamic leadership against other models rigorously.	Yamani (2025); Enjelita et al. (2025); Anggara et al. (2024); Khotami & Saputra (2024); Kolawole & H. (2022); Fuady et al. (2023); Almoharby & Neal (2013); Javaid (2024)
Temporal Coverage Gaps	The literature often lacks longitudinal analyses or comprehensive temporal mapping of Islamic leadership's influence on political economy, hindering understanding of evolving trends, maturity phases, and thematic shifts over time. This gap limits insights into the trajectory and adoption phases of Islamic leadership scholarship.	Pupcenoks (2012); Othman & Mohamad (2023); Samier (2020)
Limited Comparative Analysis	Few studies provide systematic comparative analyses between Islamic leadership and other leadership forms within political economy, reducing the ability to benchmark effectiveness or identify distinctive features. This limitation weakens the capacity to draw nuanced conclusions about relative leadership impacts.	Akhtar et al. (2025); Patel et al. (2019); Ali (2009); Almoharby & Neal (2013)
Underrepresentation Of Innovation And Modern Challenges	The literature shows limited exploration of Islamic leadership's role in fostering innovation, digital transformation, and contemporary governance challenges, which are critical for understanding its relevance in modern political economies. This gap restricts applicability to current socio-economic dynamics.	Othman & Mohamad (2023); Rastgar et al. (2023); Samier (2020)

Overemphasis On Theoretical And Normative Perspectives	Several works emphasise normative Islamic principles and theoretical models without sufficient empirical validation, which may lead to idealised portrayals that do not fully capture practical governance complexities or political economy realities. This affects the practical applicability of findings.	Anggara et al. (2024); Firdausiyah & Sofa (2024); Samier (2017); Ali (2009); Almoharby & Neal (2013); Samier (2020)
Political Sensitivity And Bias	Research addressing Islamic leadership in politically sensitive contexts sometimes reflects ideological biases or limited access to data, potentially affecting objectivity and completeness. This limitation can skew interpretations of governance effectiveness and leadership roles.	Kolawole & H. (2022); Mednicoff (2019); Ghadbian (2000)

Source: Author compilation from systematic literature review (2026)

Gaps And Future Research Directions

Table 7: Gaps And Future Research Directions

Gap Area	Description	Future Research Directions	Priority
Empirical Validation Of Islamic Leadership Models	Existing Islamic leadership models are often normative and conceptual with limited empirical testing across diverse political economies (Kolawole & H., 2022; Ali, 2009).	Conduct large-scale, cross-national empirical studies to test Islamic leadership frameworks in varied socio-political contexts, using mixed methods to assess practical governance outcomes (Akhtar et al., 2025).	High
Longitudinal Trend And Trajectory Analysis	There is a scarcity of longitudinal studies systematically mapping the evolution of Islamic leadership influence on political economy over time.	Develop longitudinal bibliometric and thematic analyses to track publication trends, thematic shifts, and maturity phases in Islamic leadership and political economy research (Anggara et al., 2024; Othman & Mohamad, 2023; Samier, 2020).	High
Comparative Cross-Regional Leadership Studies	Comparative analyses often focus on limited regions or case studies, lacking broad cross-national empirical data on Islamic versus secular leadership models.	Expand comparative research to include diverse Muslim-majority and pluralistic societies, employing standardised metrics to compare leadership effectiveness and governance outcomes (Enjelita et al., 2025; Patel et al., 2019; Pupcenoks, 2012).	High
Integration Of Islamic	Research highlights tensions and synergies	Investigate institutional designs and policy frameworks	High

Leadership With Democratic Governance	between Islamic leadership and democratic institutions but lacks detailed analysis of mechanisms enabling coexistence.	that facilitate effective integration of Islamic leadership principles within democratic political economies (Yamani, 2025; Gassouma & Benhamed, 2023; Pupcenoks, 2012).	
Impact Of Islamic Leadership On Innovation And Sustainability	Emerging themes link Islamic leadership with innovation capability and sustainable development, but empirical evidence remains limited.	Conduct empirical studies assessing how Islamic leadership behaviours influence innovation processes and sustainability outcomes in public and private sectors (Rashid et al., 2025; Othman & Mohamad, 2023; Rastgar et al., 2023).	Medium
Addressing Legal Pluralism And Human Rights Tensions	Islamic governance often faces challenges reconciling Sharia law with pluralistic legal systems and international human rights norms.	Explore legal frameworks and governance models that balance Islamic legal principles with international human rights standards in diverse Muslim contexts (Kolawole & H., 2022; Mednicoff, 2019).	Medium
Role Of Islamic Leadership In Political Economy Under Crisis	Limited research on how Islamic leadership frameworks perform in contexts of political instability and economic uncertainty.	Analyse case studies of Islamic leadership responses to crises, focusing on economic resilience, governance, and social trust restoration strategies (Naz & Riaz, 2024; Rastgar et al., 2023).	Medium
Digital Innovation And Islamic Political Economy	Digital innovation is a rising theme but remains underexplored in relation to Islamic leadership and political economy.	Investigate the role of Islamic leadership in fostering digital transformation and technology governance within Islamic political economies (Enjelita et al., 2025; Othman & Mohamad, 2023).	Medium
Institutional Adaptation Of Islamic Social Finance	Islamic social finance and participatory financial models are emerging but lack comprehensive institutional analysis.	Study institutional adaptations and policy environments that support the growth and integration of Islamic social finance in national economies (Fuady et al., 2023).	Medium
Cultural Specificity And Pluralistic Leadership Models	Research acknowledges cultural specificity but lacks detailed frameworks for pluralistic and hybrid	Develop and empirically test models of pluralistic leadership that harmonise Islamic traditions with global leadership paradigms across	Low

	leadership models in Islamic contexts.	diverse Muslim societies (Weir, 2012).	
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Source: Author compilation from systematic literature review (2026)

Overall Synthesis and Conclusion

The collective body of literature on the influence of Islamic leadership on political economy reveals an evolving interdisciplinary field marked by increasing scholarly engagement and thematic diversification. Islamic leadership principles, particularly those rooted in justice, consultation, accountability, and public welfare, serve as foundational norms that significantly shape governance and economic policies across diverse Muslim-majority contexts. These principles are not only normative ideals but have practical manifestations influencing political stability, social trust, ethical governance, and economic justice. The literature emphasises that Islamic leadership frameworks often prioritise ethical and moral dimensions distinct from secular models, embedding governance within a holistic socio-religious vision that integrates spiritual values with policy imperatives. This integration fosters governance approaches that emphasise sustainability, social welfare, and participatory finance, which are increasingly prominent themes in recent scholarship.

Comparatively, Islamic leadership models exhibit both convergence and divergence with secular and other traditional leadership forms. While sharing certain features with democratic and pluralistic systems, Islamic leadership distinctively incorporates religious legitimacy and moral authority, which influence decision-making processes and leadership behaviours. The coexistence of Islamic principles with democratic frameworks is evident, although challenges persist in reconciling religious norms with human rights, electoral integrity, and legal pluralism. Empirical studies highlight how Islamic work ethics enhance managerial effectiveness and innovation capabilities, underscoring the contextual specificity and cultural embeddedness of leadership in Islamic settings. Moreover, the plurality of Islamic leadership typologies — from prophetic to caliphate styles — reflects the diversity of political and socio-economic environments, suggesting that Islamic leadership cannot be universally codified but must be understood within its localised and historical contexts.

Publication trends reveal a maturation trajectory from foundational conceptual explorations toward applied and policy-relevant research focusing on sustainability, innovation, transparency, and social finance under Islamic leadership frameworks. Emerging themes reflect a dynamic field that responds to contemporary governance challenges, including climate resilience, digital governance, and financial inclusion. Simultaneously, declining themes such as authoritarianism and money politics indicate a scholarly shift toward more inclusive and ethical paradigms. Despite this progress, the literature identifies gaps in longitudinal and large-scale empirical analyses, particularly regarding the causal impact of Islamic leadership on political economy outcomes across heterogeneous Muslim societies. Further integrative and comparative research is needed to clarify the complex interplay between Islamic leadership values, institutional effectiveness, and socio-political realities.

In sum, the literature collectively affirms that Islamic leadership significantly shapes political economy through ethical governance, socio-economic justice, and culturally grounded leadership models. Its influence is nuanced by contextual factors and mediated by interactions with democratic and secular systems. Future research and policy formulation can benefit from this nuanced understanding by fostering governance models that leverage Islamic leadership principles while addressing practical governance challenges in Muslim-majority countries.

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