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illuminating the Path of Contemporary Islamic Scholarship


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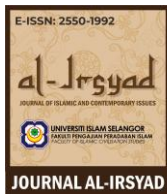
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Illuminating the Path of Contemporary Islamic Scholarship

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In the ever-evolving landscape of our interconnected world, the relevance of Islamic scholarship is more significant than ever (Faris, 2023). Contemporary challenges—whether social, ethical, political, or economic—demand responses that are not only rooted in tradition but also tailored to the complexities of modern life. This duality underscores the need for a profound engagement with Islamic teachings, fostering a dynamic interplay between the timeless principles of faith and the shifting realities of today's global society (Mohiuddin, 2023).

The rich intellectual heritage of Islam offers a framework for addressing pressing issues such as social inequality, environmental degradation, moral decay, and the pursuit of justice (Hasan, 2024; Junaidi, Majid, & Nazri, 2023; Kader, 2021). By revisiting foundational texts like the Quran and Hadith and engaging with classical Islamic jurisprudence, scholars can extract principles that are both universal and adaptable. For instance, the emphasis on *‘adl* (justice) and *ihsān* (excellence) in Islamic ethics serves as a blueprint for equitable governance, sustainable development, and ethical business practices in a world grappling with systemic inequalities and environmental crises (Ghafran & Yasmin, 2020; Shabana & Taiba, 2023). Moreover, Islamic scholarship has the potential to bridge gaps in contemporary discourse, offering a unique perspective on global issues such as globalization, technological advancements, and cultural integration (Althani, 2024; Razzaq, 2023). Islamic teachings on compassion, stewardship, and respect for diversity provide invaluable guidance for fostering coexistence in increasingly pluralistic societies. The Quran's call to “know one another” (Surah al-Ḥujurāt [49]: 13) resonates profoundly in an age where understanding and tolerance are critical for global harmony (Fadhilah & Rha'in, 2023; Taufik, 2021).

The integration of Islamic principles with contemporary contexts also promotes actionable insights that go beyond theoretical deliberations. For example, in areas like bioethics, economic equity, and political justice, Islamic scholarship can offer practical solutions informed by spiritual and moral considerations (Ali & Sule, 2024; Chowdhury, Abd Wahab, Saad, & Roy, 2022; Hashmi, 2021). This approach not only preserves the essence of Islamic values but also ensures their relevance in addressing the multifaceted challenges of modern life (Nasucha & Khozin, 2023; Qorib & Afandi, 2024). Ultimately, the dynamic discourse enabled by this integration reaffirms Islam's role as a guiding force for both individuals and societies. By harmonizing tradition with innovation, Islamic scholarship can illuminate paths toward holistic development, enriching humanity's collective journey through the 21st century and beyond (Faris, 2023).

al-Irsyad: Journal of Islamic and Contemporary Issues (IJICI) serves as a vital platform for critical thought and scholarly engagement, bridging Islamic principles with the complexities of modern society. The journal provides a space for rigorous analysis, meaningful dialogue, and innovative insights, exploring pressing issues such as social justice, environmental stewardship, ethical governance, and economic equity. By emphasizing the application of timeless Islamic teachings to contemporary challenges, IJICI not only preserves their relevance but also promotes practical solutions for today's world. Attracting a diverse international audience, IJICI showcases multidisciplinary research across all topical themes of contemporary Islam, addressing issues that transcend both

intellectual and geographic boundaries. The journal reports empirical results with broad implications, welcoming new insights and directions for study. With guidance from an esteemed editorial board and carefully selected reviewers, IJICI focuses on exploring significant and groundbreaking discussions in the areas of contemporary Islamic issues. By fostering open and critical dialogue, IJICI continues its commitment to advancing Islamic scholarship and shaping a just and harmonious society.

The current issue, Volume 9, Issue 2 (December 2024), brings together six compelling articles from three different countries (Malaysia, Indonesia and Saudi Arabia) that reflect the diversity and depth of contemporary Islamic studies. These works delve into critical areas such as social harmony, spiritual resilience, ethical guidance, mental health, electoral integrity, and Islamic entrepreneurship. Together, they provide a comprehensive look at how Islamic values and principles can be applied to address multifaceted challenges in today's world.

The first article titled “*T’dilū Huwa Aqrab li al-Taqwā: Analysis of Quranic Exegetes’ Discourse on Surah al-Mā’idah [5] verse 8 in Preserving Community Harmony*,” authored by Usman et al., explores the Quranic principle of justice in Surah al-Mā’idah [5]: 8 and its role in fostering societal harmony. Using a qualitative methodology, the authors examine both classical and contemporary interpretations of the verse, focusing on how justice (*‘adl*) and piety (*taqwā*) can promote peace and unity within communities. The study emphasizes that the Quran call for justice is not just a legal or moral principle but a foundational element for social equilibrium (Al-Khatib, 2023). The findings highlight the relevance of justice in addressing modern societal challenges, advocating for its application as a tool for social transformation. The article contributes to both academic discourse and practical insights for applying Islamic principles of justice in contemporary contexts, especially in diverse Muslim societies.

The second article titled “Performing Obligatory Prayer While Hospitalised: Perspectives of Muslim Patients in a Teaching Hospital in Malaysia,” authored by Abdul Halim et al., explores the challenges Muslim patients face in performing their obligatory prayers while hospitalized. This study provides critical insights into the challenges Muslim patients face in performing obligatory prayers during hospitalization, highlighting a gap between existing frameworks and patient engagement (Aris, Rani, Jaafar, Norazmi, & Umar, 2017). It identifies misconceptions about leniency (*Rukhsah*) and cleanliness (*Tahārah*), feelings of uncleanness, and insufficient support as key barriers. The findings emphasize the need to address these misconceptions and enhance support systems, integrating spiritual care into patient-centred practices. By offering a deeper understanding of the interplay between hospital environments, personal perceptions, and spiritual practices, this research informs the development of more effective, culturally sensitive healthcare policies to support patients’ spiritual and holistic needs.

Mental health takes center stage in the third article, “Need Analysis on the Development of a Hadith-Based Depression Prevention Module,” which discusses the pressing need for a prophetic approach to preventing depression. The authors, Mohamad Rusli, et al. focused on the increasing prevalence of depression, especially among the youth in Malaysia, and the urgent need for preventive measures. This paper contributes to the field of knowledge by addressing the rising prevalence of depression and advocating for the integration of Islamic teachings in mental health prevention. By emphasizing the need to develop a Hadith-based depression prevention module, it bridges the gap between existing secular approaches and the spiritual needs of the Muslim community, particularly in Malaysia (Wazir et al., 2019). It highlights the holistic benefits of incorporating spiritual practices like *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah), prayer, and Quranic reflections into therapeutic strategies, aligning mental health solutions with religious values. Furthermore, this research also encourages a paradigm shift towards preventive measures rooted in Islamic traditions, offering a culturally relevant framework for counsellors, healthcare providers, and educators. This interdisciplinary approach enriches both Islamic scholarship and contemporary mental health interventions and, at the same time, fosters a comprehensive understanding of addressing depression through spiritual resilience and practical guidance.

The fourth article “The Quran as a Source of Ethical and Moral Guidance in Contemporary Society,” authored by Jaiyeoba et al., examines the Quranic framework for addressing contemporary ethical dilemmas. This study enriches the body of knowledge on the applicability of the Quran to contemporary issues. It makes a significant contribution to the understanding of ethical and moral guidance derived from the Quran and provides a theoretical framework that integrates Quranic principles with contemporary ethical discourses. By analysing themes such as justice, compassion and mercy, honesty and truthfulness, stewardship, humility and modesty, and generosity and charity, the study offers a robust theoretical lens through which scholars and practitioners can interpret and address modern societal challenges. Notably, these theoretical implications extend across multiple disciplines, including ethics, sociology, environmental studies, leadership, and organisational behaviour.

The fifth article is “*Al-Falāḥ* Entrepreneurship Model for the Asnaf Entrepreneurs Based on the Characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH),” authored by Ahmad et al., examines the influence of the Prophet sunnah on the success of entrepreneurs, particularly those categorized as *asnaf* (individuals who are

recipients of zakat) (Amin, 2022). This study emphasizes the importance of integrating Islamic values into entrepreneurship to achieve not only financial success but also spiritual fulfillment. Their research highlights that adopting the prophetic qualities of *Ṣiddīq* (truthfulness), *Amānah* (trustworthiness), *Faṭānah* (wisdom), and *Tablīgh* (communication) in business practices can guide *asnaf* entrepreneurs towards achieving both worldly and spiritual prosperity. The methodology of this study is qualitative, utilizing literature review and document analysis to gather insights. The findings indicate that the incorporation of these prophetic values into business practices helps *asnaf* entrepreneurs reach the level of *al-Falāh* (success), which is seen as both economic achievement and divine blessing. Furthermore, the study suggests that societal support for these entrepreneurs in applying Islamic principles in their business activities is crucial. The contribution of this research lies in proposing a faith-driven model for *asnaf* entrepreneurship, fostering a framework that not only focuses on material success but also integrates Islamic ethics, aiming to create a holistic approach to entrepreneurship that benefits both the individual and the community in accordance with Islamic teachings.

Finally, the article titled “Electoral Fraud and Its Solutions from the Perspective of Islamic Politics in Indonesia,” authored by Jailani and Shaharuddin, explores the issue of electoral fraud within the framework of Islamic political thought, focusing on the integrity of elections in Indonesia. The study critically analyzes electoral irregularities, particularly those observed in the 2019 elections, and examines the widespread issues of cheating, dishonesty, and data manipulation by election teams from various factions vying for political power (Ghanem & Mustafa, 2011). This research is specifically based in the Wirokerten area of Banguntapan, Bantul, Yogyakarta. This qualitative case study utilised direct interviews and field observations, with data analysis following the Miles and Huberman method: reduction, display, and verification. Data were collected from key subjects, including village heads, election committee members, potential voters, and local residents. The researchers applied Miles and Huberman’s data analysis techniques, which include reduction, display, and verification of data, to assess the legitimacy of election data and to investigate the factors contributing to electoral fraud. The study aims to identify the root causes of election fraud and proposes faith-based solutions inspired by Islamic political thought, emphasizing transparency, justice, and ethical conduct in the election process. By integrating Islamic principles into the electoral system, the authors suggest potential remedies to ensure fair elections and uphold the integrity of democratic processes in Indonesia. The contribution of this research lies in offering a unique perspective on electoral integrity by blending Islamic teachings with modern political issues, providing both theoretical insights and practical recommendations to combat electoral fraud in the context of Indonesian elections.

This edition of IJICI not only reaffirms our commitment to advancing Islamic scholarship but also serves as a beacon for those striving to harmonize tradition with modernity. Through this issue, we hope to enrich the readers’ understanding, encourage critical thinking, and provide guidance in navigating the increasingly complex challenges of today’s world. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the contributors, reviewers, and loyal readers whose continued support has made this publication possible. Without the participation and contributions of all parties, this endeavor would not have come to fruition. May the knowledge shared within these pages inspire thoughtful action, promote societal betterment, and offer widespread benefits to humanity.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

I have no financial or non-financial conflict of interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this foreword.

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