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Shari'ah Teachings Towards Civilization: A Blueprint To Addressing Societal Crimes

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Abstract

Purpose – This study examines how Shari'ah teachings within Islamic civilization provide a comprehensive framework for addressing societal crimes and contemporary social crises. The paper responds to the growing challenges of moral decline, economic inequality, governance failures, and environmental degradation by exploring the relevance of Islamic ethical principles such as *tawhīd* (divine unity), *adl* (justice), *rahmah* (compassion), and *khilāfah* (stewardship). It argues that Islamic civilization offers a timeless model for promoting justice, social harmony, and sustainable development. **Design/methods/approach** – The study adopts a qualitative and analytical research methodology using a descriptive-analytical design. Data were collected through documentary analysis of the Qur'an, classical Islamic scholarship, and contemporary academic literature. Thematic and content analysis were employed to examine the application of Shari'ah teachings to issues relating to societal crimes, governance, welfare, and environmental sustainability. **Findings** – The findings reveal that Islamic civilization integrates spiritual, social, economic, and environmental dimensions into a unified moral framework. Shari'ah teachings promote accountability, moderation, equality, and consultation (*shūrā*) as safeguards against corruption and injustice. Economic institutions such as *zakāt*, *ṣadaqah*, and *waqf* support equitable wealth distribution and social welfare, while Qur'anic environmental ethics discourage wastefulness (*isrāf*) and corruption (*fasād*). The study further finds that Islamic principles provide preventive and transformative approaches to societal crimes through moral reform, social responsibility, and ethical governance. **Research implications/limitations** – The study is limited to qualitative analysis based on documentary sources and does not include empirical fieldwork. Its conclusions are primarily interpretive and focused on Islamic civilizational thought, which may limit broader comparative application. **Originality/value** – This study contributes to contemporary discourse by positioning Islamic civilization as a holistic framework for crisis management, ethical governance, crime prevention, and environmental stewardship. It highlights the enduring relevance of Shari'ah principles in addressing modern societal challenges while offering a value-based alternative to secular approaches to civilization and development.

Keywords: Shari'ah; Teachings; Societal Crimes; Islamic Civilization; Justice; Environmental Stewardship.

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Introduction

The foundation of Islamic civilization lies in the principle of tawhīd, the affirmation of Allah's absolute Oneness, which functions as both its spiritual core and civilizational framework. Tawhīd is not merely a theological claim but a unifying force that informs every aspect of Muslim life and intellectual activity. Through this principle, Islamic civilization gains its unique identity by harmonizing political, social, and cultural structures into a unified moral order. As Al-Faruqi explains, tawhīd serves as the generative principle that integrates different aspects of civilization while preserving their distinct roles, encapsulated in the declaration, "there is no Allah but Allah" [1]. Within this worldview, humanity is recognized as the most honored of Allah's creation, entrusted with the Amanah (Trust) and chosen to act as His Khalīfah (vicegerent) on earth [2]. The Glorious Qur'an underscores this position, where Allah says:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اِنِّيْ جَاعِلٌ فِى الْاَرْضِ خَلِيْفَةً ۗ قَالُوْۤا اَتَجْعَلُ فِيْهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيْهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَآءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۗ قَالَ اِنِّيْۤ اَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۳﴾

And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels: "Verily, I am going to place (mankind) generations after generations on earth." they said: "Will You place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood, - while we glorify You with praises and thanks (Exalted be You above All that they associate with You as partners) and sanctify You." He (Allah) said: "I know that which you do not know [3].

Similarly, it proclaims:

وَهُوَ الَّذِىْ جَعَلَكُمْ خَلِيْفَۗةَ الْاَرْضِ وَّرَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجٰتٍ لِّيَبْلُوْكُمْ فِىۤ مَا اٰتٰكُمْ ۗ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ سَرِيْعُ الْعِقَابِ ۗ وَاِنَّهٗ لَغَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۱۶۵﴾

And it is He Who has made you generations coming after generations, replacing each other on the earth. And He has raised you in ranks, some above others, that He may try you in that which He has bestowed on you. Surely your Lord is Swift in retribution, and certainly He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful [4].

The study of Islamic civilization, therefore, extends beyond a historical review; it provides valuable lessons for addressing present challenges. According to Hifdil, the achievements of Islamic history inspire pride and confidence, while its periods of decline underscore the need for renewal and reform [5]. Such an understanding offers guidance for Muslims navigating contemporary crises.

Today's societies are plagued by moral, social, and ecological problems, including weakened ethical norms, widening economic inequalities, environmental degradation, and the erosion of traditional family structures. Al-Attas attributes this disorder to secular paradigms that have undermined metaphysical and moral foundations, leading to widespread confusion [6]. These challenges are exacerbated by unchecked technological development, cultural fragmentation, and the absence of shared moral purpose.

In contrast, the Islamic civilizational model presents a holistic alternative rooted in ethical leadership, social justice, and environmental responsibility. Historically, Shari'ah teachings informed enduring systems of law, education, and welfare. Zakariya notes that Islamic thought and civilization flourished due to the patronage of caliphs who supported science and scholarship, political stability, and the zeal of Muslim intellectuals who advanced knowledge in religion, humanities, and the sciences through translation, research, and writing. These efforts resulted in both scientific advancement and civilizational artifacts [7].

This paper argues that the ethical and metaphysical foundations of Islamic civilization provide a viable framework for addressing modern crises. By exploring values such as 'adl (justice), raḥmah (compassion), and khilāfah (stewardship), it demonstrates how Shari'ah teachings can guide responses to moral corruption, inequality, and environmental decline.

Conceptual Framework of Islamic Civilization

Islamic civilization is best understood as the product of two interrelated ideas: Islam and civilization. According to Sulaiman, it refers to a civilization formed and guided by Shari'ah principles, manifesting as a comprehensive way of life [8]. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) laid the foundation by leading humanity from the darkness of ignorance toward the light of knowledge and refinement. The Glorious Qur'an highlights this transformative mission:

الرَّءِ كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ
الْحَمِيدِ ١

(This is) a Book which We have revealed unto you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) so that you might lead mankind out of darkness (of disbelief and polytheism) into light (of belief in the Oneness of Allah and Islamic Monotheism) by their Lord's Leave to the Path of the Almighty, the Owner of all Praise [9].

At its heart lies the doctrine of *tawhīd*, which affirms Allah's absolute Oneness as the core principle of Islamic thought and practice. Al-Faruqi stresses that *tawhīd* gives Islamic civilization its identity by binding its diverse elements into a coherent whole [10]. This principle transforms and harmonizes political, social, intellectual, and cultural domains, making them mutually supportive under a unified moral vision.

Civilizations are sustained by a collective vision that organizes institutions and directs people's way of life. In Islam, this vision is not a human invention but divinely revealed through the Qur'an and embodied in the Sunnah of the Prophet. These sources establish moral accountability, the just use of resources, and the recognition of Allah's sovereignty on earth. As Farooqui explains, Islamic civilization represents *thaqāfa* (culture), the intellectual and moral dimensions of life, and *ḥaḍāra* (civilization), the material, institutional, and social dimensions [11]. By merging the spiritual with the material, Islam ensures that knowledge, governance, and social order remain firmly grounded in ethical responsibility and collective well-being.

Sulaiman identifies several unique features of Islamic civilization that distinguish it from other traditions. These include Islam as its foundation, *tawhīd* as its spiritual essence, its ability to foster peace, its value-driven orientation, and its knowledge-centered character [12]. Although it originated in Arabia, Islamic civilization expanded globally while preserving its ethical principles, integrating science, governance, and culture into a holistic framework [13]. The foundation of this civilization is also built on noble religious teachings that honor human dignity, safeguard life, and promote prosperity. Alhashmi highlights five key principles underlying Islamic civilization: pursuit of knowledge, universality of religion, humanity, tolerance, and equality [14].

Historically, this framework produced flourishing cities, influential caliphates, and vibrant centers of learning. Yet beyond political structures, Islamic civilization encompassed the totality of human life, religion, governance, economy, education, science, arts, and literature. Institutions like *zakāt* (almsgiving) and *waqf* (charitable endowment) promoted justice, wealth redistribution, and welfare [15]. Governance was regulated through *Sharī'ah*, emphasizing justice, consultation (*shūrā*), and moral accountability, with rulers held to the same divine laws as their people [16].

Therefore, Islamic civilization presents a timeless paradigm rooted in *tawhīd*, *ʿadl* (justice), and *maṣlaḥa* (public good). Unlike secular systems that compartmentalize religion and governance, Islam integrates them within a unified moral vision. Its principles of universality, moderation, and inclusivity

not only promoted intellectual and cultural growth but also nurtured a just and equitable society. As the Qur'an declares:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable of you with Allah is that (believer) who has At-Taqwa [i.e., he is one of the Muttaqun (the pious. See Q.2:2)]. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware [17].

By embracing the Qur'anic call to knowledge, Allah said:

أَمْ مَنْ هُوَ قَانِتٌ أَنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُوا رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٤﴾

Is one who is obedient to Allah, prostrating himself or standing (in prayer) during the hours of the night, fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the Mercy of his Lord (like one who disbelieves)? Say: "Are those who know equal to those who know not?" It is Only men of understanding who will remember (i.e., get a lesson from Allah's signs and Verses) [18].

Based on this, integrating wisdom from other cultures, Muslim scholars such as Jābir ibn Ḥayyān and Ibn Sīnā advanced science, philosophy, and medicine. Their legacy illustrates how Islamic civilization, firmly rooted in revelation yet open to intellectual exchange, produced a model of moral scholarship and governance that continues to inspire contemporary thought.

Method

The study adopts a qualitative and analytical research methodology, focusing on Shari'ah teachings as a framework for addressing societal crimes and fostering a civilized society. The study employs a descriptive analytical design. It describes key Shari'ah teachings related to tawḥīd (divine unity), 'adl (justice), raḥmah (compassion), and khilāfah (stewardship), and analytically examines their relevance in curbing societal crimes. The design allows for a deep exploration of religious texts and their application to contemporary societal matters. Data were collected through documentary analysis, involving careful review of relevant literature and Islamic texts. A thematic and content analysis approach was used as a means for data analysis. This method helps provide the study with a structured approach in examining how Shari'ah

teachings can aid as a feasible blueprint for addressing societal crimes and upholding a just and civilized society.

Result and Discussion

Islam and the Shaping of Civilizations: A Historical Reflection

The study of Islamic civilization remains central to Islamic scholarship due to its profound historical depth and civilizational breadth. Islamic history encompasses not only the narrative of religious revelation but also the lived experiences of Muslim societies across centuries, spanning diverse domains such as theology, science, politics, education, economics, and the arts [19]. As a civilizational force, Islam offers a comprehensive framework that shaped institutions, ethical norms, and cultural expressions from North Africa to Southeast Asia.

Nasr emphasizes that Islam is both a faith and a civilization, one that has endured for over fourteen centuries and left its imprint across vast geographies and cultures. Far from being confined to spiritual guidance, Islam has shaped societies through a rich tapestry of intellectual, political, and artistic achievements. Nasr underscores that understanding Islam is vital not only for Muslims but also for anyone seeking to comprehend the development of Western thought, interfaith interactions, and the broader history of human civilization [20].

Islamic civilization historically integrated various ethnic and linguistic groups into a shared moral and social order. Its empires fostered scientific innovation, architectural grandeur, and literary excellence. Muslim scientists and philosophers like Al-Khwarizmi, Ibn Sina, and Al-Biruni made enduring contributions to mathematics, medicine, astronomy, and other fields, laying foundational knowledge that would later be absorbed by Europe during the Renaissance [21]. This "Golden Age" between the 7th and 15th centuries exemplifies how faith-inspired pursuits catalyzed civilizational progress.

However, as Ahmed Essa and Othman Ali argue, the Muslim contribution to global civilization, particularly to the European Renaissance, has been significantly underrepresented in contemporary discourse. They attribute this to Eurocentrism in academic frameworks, limited research, and the current geopolitical conditions of Muslim-majority societies [22]. Such marginalization distorts historical reality and overlooks Islam's role in shaping the trajectory of human advancement.

Scholars such as Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and Isma'īl Rajī al-Faruqī view Islamic civilization through the holistic lens of *dīn*, a concept encompassing law, ethics, spirituality, and societal structure. Al-Attas traces the term to the trilateral root D-Y-N, denoting judgment, responsibility, and reciprocity. In this context, Islam is not merely a religion but a full-fledged civilizational project [23]. Al-Faruqī emphasizes the principle of *khilāfah* (vicegerency), which mandates human stewardship over the earth through ethical governance, economic equity via *zakāh* and *ṣadaqah*, and an enduring commitment to justice [24].

Sayyid Qutb furthers this discourse by framing Islam as a liberation force aimed at dismantling *Jāhiliyyah*, not only the pre-Islamic period of ignorance but any system that displaces divine law with human-centered ideologies. For Qutb, genuine Islamic revival requires a deliberate socio-political movement rooted in Qur'anic values and led by sincere leadership, capable of challenging the secular ideologies that commodify human life [25].

Fazlur Rahman introduces a methodological framework for interpreting Islamic teachings within a modern context. He insists that the Qur'an must be read as a morally dynamic guide, addressing changing social realities without compromising ethical universals. Rahman's dual strategy, extracting moral objectives from historical rulings and reapplying them contextually, preserves Islam's transformative potential in contemporary society [26].

A constitutional expression of this civilizational vision is found in the Covenant of Madinah (622 CE), which established the first Muslim polity grounded in pluralism and shared governance. It laid the foundation for an *Ummah* that transcended tribal affiliations and promoted legal and cultural autonomy under Islamic principles [27]. This early social contract exemplifies how Shari'ah governance sought to integrate diversity within a unified moral framework.

Islamic civilization also developed a rich aesthetic culture, particularly in poetry and music. As Nasr notes, poetry has held a uniquely esteemed position in the Islamic world, shaping spiritual expression across languages like Arabic, Persian, Urdu, and Turkish. Sufi poetry, especially that of Rumi, continues to resonate globally is reflecting the deep spiritual undercurrents of the Islamic artistic tradition. Music, though approached cautiously in Islamic thought, evolved in devotional and introspective forms. Sufis employed music as a means of drawing the soul toward divine presence, and Islamic theorists made significant contributions to music theory, notation, and the study of its psychological effects [28]. Islamic civilization presents a unique model of a belief-centered society, rejecting racial or nationalist bases for unity. It envisions

a civilization built upon shared spiritual and moral values, integrating diverse peoples, Arabs, Persians, Romans, Africans into a cohesive, ethical, and dynamic Ummah. Its mission, from the outset, has been to elevate humanity through justice, knowledge, and moral clarity.

Islamic Civilization's Approach to Societal Well-being

Islamic civilization rests on an integrated moral and institutional framework designed to secure social harmony and human flourishing. Its foundations combine spiritual commitments and pragmatic governance in ways that allow individual dignity, social justice, communal responsibility, and ethical rule to reinforce one another. Equally significant is Islam's welfare commitment. Governments are tasked with securing basic needs, protecting life and property, involving citizens in public affairs, and remaining accountable to Allah and society [29]. Beyond obligatory almsgiving, social rights extend to private wealth through sustained support for relatives, neighbors, and the needy, with the state mobilizing resources for wider needs when required [30]. This anticipates modern welfare systems while preserving solidarity and responsibility [31], [32]. Allah said in the Glorious Qur'an:

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا ﴿٧﴾

And indeed we have honoured the Children of Adam, and we have carried them on land and sea, and have provided them with At-Taiyibât (Lawful good things), and have preferred them above many of those whom we have created with a marked preference [33].

Stewardship further strengthens this vision, as people are khalîfah (vicegerents) tasked with aligning conduct and institutions to truth and the public interest. This vocation orients individuals toward Allah's pleasure rather than self-gratification, cultivating inner peace, social harmony, and civic responsibility [34]. With stewardship comes governance, and in Islam, legitimate authority is judged by consultation (shūrā), accountability (muḥāsabah), and the public good (maṣlahah) [35].

Economic ethics within Islamic thought also arise from this recognition of human worth. Al-Faruqî emphasizes Islam's esteem for the self-reliant, hard-working individual while condemning practices such as gambling, fraudulent advertising, and manipulative consumerism that create superficial wealth while eroding social value [36]. Productive and honest labor is prized, while gain obtained through deception, exploitation, or wastefulness is prohibited. These

economic teachings reveal a civilizational commitment to structuring material life in service of justice and dignity rather than greed and exploitation.

The historical example of the Prophet Muhammad illustrates how moral vision was translated into social reform. According to Fazlur Rahman, legislative changes were introduced only after social conditions were prepared. While Qur'anic injunctions against usury and the call to establish zakāt appeared early, their full legal implementation in Medina came only when political authority and communal readiness made enforcement possible [37]. This gradualist approach reflects an important balance between revelation and governance: reforms were staged to preserve moral aims while also ensuring social stability.

Pluralism and moderation complement this socio-economic justice. From the Prophet's Madinah's charter to later polities, Islamic tradition safeguards coexistence with non-Muslims and rejects extremism in belief and conduct. Moderation (*wasatiyyah*) balances conviction and coexistence, creating space for principled openness to diverse contributions [38]. This moderation directly informs contemporary plural democracies, where participatory deliberation and accountability norms resonate with Islamic ideals [39]. These principles underpin a social order where moral responsibility is shared, and dignity is universal [40].

Underlying this measured approach is the conviction that creation is purposeful and that humanity is entrusted with realizing that purpose in history. If the cosmos is meaningful, then human agency must be capable of aligning itself with divine ends, a point Al Faruqi repeatedly stresses [41]. This teleological outlook imposes responsibility on both individuals and societies to reform themselves and their institutions in accordance with Allah's commands. In turn, responsibility becomes the engine of civilizational transformation, calling upon human beings to embody divine values in personal conduct as well as in public order.

The responsibility of moral living is further anchored in the spiritual covenant that binds believers together. Muhammad Naquib al-Attas describes this as a bond of brotherhood (*ukhuwwah*) rooted in the primordial covenant with Allah, one that transcends race, nation, and time [42]. Such covenantal identity preserves individuality while embedding persons within a collective moral project. Civic loyalty is subordinated to fidelity to Allah's covenant, which in turn obliges individuals to reform social orders that deviate from divine guidance. In this way, Islamic civilization sustains a spiritually grounded community oriented toward justice and accountability before Allah.

The concept of human beings as Allah's vicegerents (khalīfah) reinforces this vision by situating human life within a moral vocation. Humanity's task is not limited to personal piety but extends to educating and transforming society and arranging for the fulfillment of each person's potential [43]. To be khalīfah is to carry the burden of universal responsibility to improving every aspect of creation, seeking just solutions to human problems, and striving to realize goodness, truth, and beauty in space and time. This cosmic status grants dignity but also demands active engagement, positioning Muslims as agents responsible for guiding the world toward a moral order that reflects divine purpose.

The pursuit of public interest (maṣlaḥah) complements this framework, underscoring the practical dimensions of Islamic social ethics. The Qur'an instructs believers to

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَجْلُوْا شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَائِدَ وَلَا آمِينَ
الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ أَن
صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ أَن تَعْتَدُوا وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ
وَآتَقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٢٥٠﴾

O you who believe! Violate not the sanctity of the Symbols of Allah, nor of the sacred month, nor of the animals brought for sacrifice, nor the garlanded people or animals, etc. [Marked by the garlands on their necks made from the outer part of the tree-stems (of Makkah) for their security], nor the people coming to the sacred House (Makkah), seeking the Bounty and good pleasure of their Lord. But when you finish the Ihram (of *Hajj* or '*Umrah*'), you may hunt, and let not the Hatred of some people in (once) stopping you from Al-Masjid-al-Haram (at Makkah) lead you to transgression (and hostility on your part). Help you one another In *Al-Birr* and *At-Taqwa* (virtue, righteousness, and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Severe In punishment [44].

While acts of voluntary giving (sadaqah) exemplify how immediate needs and long-term civic virtues are met through mutual assistance. Such mechanisms cultivate a culture of solidarity where individual piety and communal welfare reinforce one another [45]. This balance of compulsory and voluntary contributions creates a dynamic system that sustains the moral and material well-being of society.

Central to sustaining these commitments is spiritual consciousness (taqwā), which shapes conduct in both private and public life. Al Faruqi explains that recognition of Allah's sovereignty transforms ritual devotion into

ethical vigilance, ensuring that belief translates into justice and accountability [46]. The doctrine of *tawhīd* (divine unity) further grounds this humanism, affirming dignity without deification or degradation and encouraging a life-affirming engagement with the natural world. Shari'ah thought views natural resources as divine trusts provided for humanity's collective benefit. While humans have been endowed with intellect and the capacity to harness these resources, their use must remain within ethical limits. Economic activity thus becomes a form of worship when aligned with divine guidance, embedding responsibility into labor, production, and consumption. This perspective contrasts sharply with secular materialism by affirming that no aspect of life is divorced from spirituality [47]. Such ecological responsibility underscores the comprehensive nature of Islamic civilization's concern for societal well-being.

The vision of the *Ummah* (community) completes this framework by situating individuals within a global moral order. Al Faruqi portrays the *Ummah* as a universal brotherhood bound by shared knowledge, ethics, and responsibility. This brotherhood transcends ethnicity and nationhood, embodying a *Pax Islamica* that aspires toward peace, justice, and free exchange of ideas, wealth, and opportunities [48]. In contrast to the limitations of nation-state systems, the *Ummah* represents a universal order open to all who embrace the freedom of truth-seeking and the dignity of cooperation.

Taken together, these moral, institutional, and spiritual dimensions form a comprehensive blueprint for addressing societal ills. By rooting public life in dignity, justice, responsibility, and solidarity, Islamic civilization provides mechanisms-ethical education, redistributive institutions, covenantal brotherhood, environmental stewardship, and global cooperation, which both prevent wrongdoing and reform its causes. In this light, the Shari'ah model is not merely punitive but preventive and transformative: it seeks to restructure the social conditions that generate injustice while cultivating individual character to sustain a just and flourishing society.

Islamic Civilization and the Environmental Crisis

Another area where Islamic civilization remains highly relevant is environmental stewardship. The Qur'an affirms that all creatures must be respected and warns against harmful behavior that disturbs ecological balance. Human greed, indifference, and exploitation of resources without restraint are condemned as destructive practices that ultimately harm society. A growing body of research highlights that Islamic teachings, when properly understood, motivate believers toward environmentally responsible actions by framing care for nature as part of worship and moral accountability. By synthesizing Qur'anic injunctions with contemporary sustainability concerns, scholars argue

that Shari'ah principles offer practical approaches to prevent ecological degradation and to foster long-term environmental management [49].

The environment represents the natural surroundings in which all forms of life exist, while environmental pollution refers to the degradation and contamination of these surroundings. In modern times, the planet is facing unprecedented ecological crises such as polluted air and seas, the depletion of the ozone layer, and the extinction of numerous species. Alongside these physical damages, there are also forms of "social pollution," which manifest in poverty, homelessness, forced migration, racism, child abandonment, drug abuse, and addiction. Increasingly, scholars and scientists highlight the significance of religion in addressing such crises, recognizing its potential to foster an integrated environmental consciousness. Within Islam, the environment is considered a divine creation of Allah, who adorned the skies with the sun, the moon, and the stars; beautified the earth with flowers, trees, gardens, and animals; caused rivers and streams to flow; upheld the skies without visible support; and placed boundaries between night and day. Plants and animals were created in pairs to enable reproduction, further reflecting divine wisdom [50].

Human behavior towards the environment, therefore, needs both ethical and scientific reinforcement. Environmental ethics provides the normative framework for guiding humanity's interaction with ecosystems and resources. Religions, though distinct in doctrines, share a close affinity with nature and promote a positive attitude toward its preservation. Islam, as one of the world's major religions, assigns great importance to environmental stewardship. While it does not establish a separate environmental doctrine, it emphasizes the interconnected relationship between Allah, humanity, and the natural world. Islam views the environment as integral to life and civilization. Unlike the dominant Western secular-scientific approach, Islam builds its environmental outlook on Qur'anic ethics and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The Qur'an enjoins believers to preserve the ecosystem, use resources responsibly, and avoid excessive exploitation. It emphasizes that humans are *khalifah* (guardians) of the earth, entrusted with the duty of safeguarding creation as part of their accountability before Allah [51].

In this framework, the environment is not a backdrop for human activity but a purposeful divine creation. The Qur'an repeatedly presents Allah as the Creator and Sustainer, establishing natural cycles such as rainfall, the alternation of day and night, and the pairing of living beings for reproduction [52]. Islam promotes a holistic environmental ethic in which every natural element is interdependent; harm to one component disrupts the balance of the

whole. Humanity, as khalifah, is therefore responsible for maintaining ecological harmony. The Qur'an declares:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلِيفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَعَلَيْهِ كُفْرُهُ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الْكَافِرِينَ كُفْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا مَقْتًا وَلَا يَزِيدُ الْكَافِرِينَ كُفْرُهُمْ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴿٣٩﴾

He is the one who has made you successors, generation after generation on earth, so whosoever disbelieves (in Islamic Monotheism) in Him will be his disbelief. And the disbelief of the disbelievers adds nothing but hatred of their Lord. And the disbelief of the disbelievers adds nothing but loss [53].

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلِيفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَعَلَيْهِ كُفْرُهُ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الْكَافِرِينَ كُفْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا مَقْتًا وَلَا يَزِيدُ الْكَافِرِينَ كُفْرُهُمْ إِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴿٣٩﴾

Man, like the rest of creation, is subject to universal divine laws governing health, disease, and mortality. Sayyid Qutb explains that humans cannot alter the divine order of nature; rather, they are called to align their moral and social systems with it. This role of stewardship demands accountability, balance, and the recognition that human existence is inseparable from the greater cosmic order [54]. Qur'anic guidance further stresses that harmony in the universe exists only because creation submits to divine will. The verse affirms:

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشَى اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

Indeed, Your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and then He Istawâ (rose over) the Throne (really in a manner that suits His Majesty). He brings the night as a cover over the day, seeking it rapidly, and He created the sun, the moon, the stars, subject to His command. Surely, his is the creation and Commandment. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinns, and all that exists)! [55].

This submission forms the basis of ecological sustainability. Islam also warns against isrâf (wastefulness) and fasâd (corruption). The Qur'an commands moderation in consumption: "Verily, the spendthrifts are brothers of the Shayatin (devils), and the Shaitan (Devil-Satan) is ever ungrateful to his Lord." (Qur'an 17:27), and condemns ecological mismanagement, including pollution and reckless exploitation, as corruption on earth [56]. Bsoul et al observe that Islamic ethics of environmental management revolve around

moderation, sustainability, and the rational use of resources. For instance, water is regarded as both a vital source of life and an instrument of purification, underscoring its sacred role [57].

Historically, Islamic civilization integrated environmental awareness into urban planning and governance. Cities were designed with gardens, water systems, and public cleanliness as central features. Zulkifli, Nuryaman, and Marufah report that the Glorious Qur'an contains more than 300 verses which are related to environment and its themes, thereby highlighting physical, chemical, and biological factors influencing life [58]. This scriptural emphasis demonstrates that environmental preservation is not an isolated concern but an inseparable part of Islamic faith and practice.

Despite these principles, many contemporary Muslim societies appear disconnected from Islamic environmental ethics. Nasr has lamented that neither governments nor most religious scholars sufficiently teach or implement Shari'ah principles of environmental stewardship. Many urbanized Muslims, especially those uprooted from rural traditions, have abandoned the environmentally conscious practices of their ancestors [59]. The primary sources of Shari'ah teaching, the Qur'an, hadith, and Shari'ah clearly emphasize sustainable living. While Islamic law historically did not establish a distinct "environmental law" comparable to Western traditions, it includes injunctions on water, soil, animals, and plants, directly linking human ethics to ecological well-being. Greed, overconsumption, and disregard for nature are condemned as destructive forces.

By integrating environmental ethics into its theological, social, and economic principles, Islamic civilization offers a comprehensive model for addressing ecological crises. It frames sustainability as both a divine command and a moral obligation. Humanity's stewardship of the earth requires balancing resource use with preservation, cultivating a relationship of respect toward creation, and ensuring environmental well-being for future generations. Islam thus provides a vision of harmony in which protecting nature is not only a practical necessity but also a sacred duty entrusted by Allah.

The Role of Civilization in Crisis Management

Harmony between human life and the laws of the universe is essential for the well-being of humanity. When individuals align their actions with the natural and moral order established by Allah, they live in peace with themselves and in balance with the environment. The Shari'ah of Allah facilitates this harmony by ensuring that external conduct corresponds with inner nature, thereby fostering social peace and cooperation under a unified system that mirrors the broader cosmic order. Such integration enables human

beings to discover and ethically use the treasures of nature for collective benefit, guided by divine law rather than destructive competition [60]. The Qur'an warns that deviation from divine truth inevitably leads to disorder and collapse:

وَلَوْ اتَّبَعَ الْحَقُّ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ لَفَسَدَتِ السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ ۗ بَلْ أَتَيْنَهُمْ بِذِكْرِهِمْ فَهُمْ عَنْ
ذِكْرِهِمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

And if the truth had been in accordance with their desires, verily, the heavens and the earth, and whosoever is therein would have been corrupted! Nay, we have brought them their reminder, but they turn away from their reminder [61].

Civilization, therefore, is not a mere social construct but an ideological framework that organizes communities, shapes institutions, and directs individuals toward fulfilling their higher purpose. Islamic civilization exemplifies this principle by providing a comprehensive system of life that integrates spiritual, social, political, and economic dimensions for the overall welfare of humanity. Its foundation lies in the oneness, omnipotence, and omniscience of Allah, which permeate the consciousness of believers and shape their social existence. As Farooqui notes, in this worldview, there is no division between sacred and profane; all aspects of life are united in service to Allah, and every action performed with sincerity is considered worship ('ibādah) [62].

Historically, Islam's social framework transcended barriers of race, color, language, and geography, uniting people through faith and elevating human qualities above material or tribal instincts. This inclusivity gave rise to a vibrant civilization that harnessed diverse talents and advanced knowledge rapidly despite medieval limitations [63]. The Qur'an itself provides principles and rulings adaptable to various circumstances, ensuring flexibility within fundamental laws. Central to this vision is justice, which Islam regards as a divine command. Believers are obligated to uphold justice in every aspect of life, social, economic, and political, extending protection to vulnerable groups such as women, children, and orphans (Q.17:34). The Qur'an even subjects the Prophet to the law, demonstrating that no leader is above divine principles [64]. This insistence on accountability safeguards against tyranny and ensures that justice remains the cornerstone of governance.

Equality and human unity also stand at the heart of Islamic civilization. The Qur'an emphasizes humanity's shared origin and moral worth (Q. 49:13). This doctrine abolished artificial hierarchies based on caste, wealth, or ancestry, replacing them with merit rooted in righteousness [65]. Furthermore, Islam commands fairness and kindness even toward non-Muslims, as long as they are

not hostile. Religious pluralism and tolerance were hallmarks of the Prophet's leadership, as illustrated in his pledges to protect the lives, property, and religious freedom of Christians in Najran, warning that mistreatment of dhimmis (protected non-Muslims) would be tantamount to mistreating him personally [66].

The historical record illustrates how Shari'ah principles guided effective crisis management. For example, during a severe famine, Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb introduced food rationing and aid distribution, averting societal collapse through just and timely intervention [67]. Similarly, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī combined diplomacy, military strategy, and communal solidarity to safeguard the Muslim community during external threats [68]. These precedents reveal Islam's adaptability: while its core principles of monotheism, justice, moral responsibility, and Shari'ah remain constant and its practical applications evolve with changing circumstances [69]. For contemporary governance, these lessons remain profoundly relevant. By applying the principle of *istiṣlāḥ* (public good), modern governments can foster ethical and transparent systems that address pressing global challenges such as pandemics, economic crises, and environmental degradation. In this sense, Islamic civilization offers more than historical insight; it provides a timeless model of resilience rooted in divine guidance, justice, and the unity of humankind. Its framework of crisis management demonstrates that true stability and progress come from harmonizing human conduct with the divine order while ensuring the welfare of all members of society.

Conclusion

Islamic Civilization offers a timeless, holistic model that unites spiritual, moral, and institutional dimensions to promote justice, equity, and sustainability. Factually, it has fostered scientific advancement, social cohesion, and environmental stewardship through an integrated moral vision rooted in divine revelation. Its principles, justice ('adl), compassion (rahmah), stewardship (khilafah), and public interest (maslahah), provide enduring solutions for governance, economics, social order, and ecological balance. In the modern era, these values remain highly relevant, offering a corrective to systemic injustice, economic inequality, moral decline, and environmental crises. The adaptability of Shari'ah principles allows them to be applied across diverse cultural and political contexts without losing their ethical essence.

Not only that, this study has demonstrated that Islamic teachings towards civilization have provided a comprehensive and practical outline for addressing the issues relating to societal crimes and building a civilized society. This is rooted in divine guidance; this is because Islam not only prescribes legal

reprimands but also underlines moral reformation, social responsibility, and spiritual consciousness as preventive mechanisms against crime.

Recommendations

1. To enhance socioeconomic justice, Islamic welfare institutions such as zakat and waqf should be revitalized to combat poverty, reduce inequality, and fund public services. Religious bodies should ensure transparent collection and distribution, while governments, NGOs, and educational institutions strengthen management and outreach capacities.
2. In ethical governance, shura (consultation), muhasabah (accountability), and transparency must be embedded in political systems. Lawmakers should legislate participatory decision-making, civil society should monitor governance, and judicial bodies must enforce accountability and prevent corruption.
3. For economic development, Shari'ah models based on profit-and-loss sharing, ethical investment, and interest-free finance should be promoted. Regulators must create enabling policies, businesses should adopt fair partnerships, and universities should train professionals in Islamic finance and sustainable entrepreneurship.
4. On environmental stewardship, Qur'anic principles of khilafah (stewardship) and mizan (balance) should guide policy and practice. Governments should integrate Islamic ethics into environmental plans, religious leaders should promote conservation, and the private sector should invest in green technologies.
5. There is a need to strengthen education, whereby the curricula should integrate scientific knowledge with Islamic ethics. Educators and scholars should collaborate on values-based teaching, while universities establish research centers on applied Shari'ah ethics.
6. In cross-cultural engagement, knowledge exchange should foster peace and cooperation. International bodies and religious leaders must promote joint projects, while the media highlight positive interfaith collaboration.
7. Finally, crime prevention should target root causes such as poverty and moral decline. Local authorities, community centers, and law enforcement should collaborate on welfare programs, mentorship, and restorative justice initiatives.

Author Contributions

Bello Ali, Lawan Abdullahi Muhammad: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Project administration. **Maunde Muhammad Usman, Abdulmumini Bawuro Manga:** Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Investigation. **Murjanatu Ismail Agwaru:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Investigation.

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Conflict of Interest

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