

Indicators and Elements of Social Justice in the Qur'anic Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Social justice is among the most essential principles in religious thought and a defining feature of the Qur'an's intellectual framework. The Qur'an presents justice not as a mere abstract idea, but as a guiding principle that governs both individual conduct and collective life. Within this framework, justice safeguards human dignity, gives purpose to freedom, and establishes mutual responsibilities between rulers and citizens. Using an analytical-descriptive method and drawing on classical and contemporary exegetical sources, this study examines the main indicators and elements of social justice as reflected in the Qur'an. It first discusses the theoretical foundations of social justice, then explores its key dimensions, including equality, human dignity, freedom, and social responsibility. The research further analyzes the practical manifestations of social justice in the economic, judicial, political, and cultural spheres. The study also compares the interpretations of prominent Shi'a and Sunni commentators—such as al-Ṭabarī, Fakhr al-Rāzī, Ibn Kathīr, Ṭabāṭabā'ī, and Ṭabarsī—to highlight their shared insights and distinctive viewpoints. In addition, the paper connects the Qur'anic vision of social justice with modern discussions on justice, development, and human rights. Based on a library-based and content analysis approach, the findings reveal that the Qur'an offers a comprehensive and dynamic model for realizing a just and humane society—one that can provide a valuable foundation for contemporary social and cultural policymaking.

Key words: Social justice, Qur'an, human dignity, equality, freedom, economic justice, political justice.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, social justice has remained one of humanity's central concerns. Since the emergence of human societies, people have questioned how power, wealth, and social status should be distributed fairly among individuals and groups. Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle each offered their own interpretations of justice, while modern thinkers like John Rawls described it as "fairness" (Rawls, 1971, p. 3). In contrast, within Islamic thought—and especially in the teachings of the Holy Qur'an—social justice holds a distinctive and fundamental place. From the Qur'anic viewpoint, justice is not a human construct but a divine principle that reflects revelation and harmonizes with the innate nature of humankind.

The Holy Qur'an presents justice not merely as a moral value but as a religious and social necessity:

"Indeed, Allah commands justice, goodness, and giving to relatives, and forbids immorality, wrongdoing, and transgression." (Surah al-Nahl, 16:90)

This verse, which is regularly recited during Friday sermons, clearly demonstrates that social justice is a universal and enduring principle guiding both individual and collective human life.

Exegetical sources further elaborate on this understanding. Al-Ṭabarī interprets justice as “*putting things in their proper place*” (Ṭabarī, 1992, vol. 14, p. 230). Fakhr al-Rāzī defines it as “*a balance of rights and moral relations among individuals*”, emphasizing that justice is the foundation of a stable society (Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420 AH, vol. 19, p. 27). Likewise, Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā’ī, in *al-Mīzān*, explains that justice in the Qur’an extends beyond social relations to include intellectual, moral, and political dimensions as well (Ṭabāṭabā’ī, 1417 AH, vol. 12, p. 146).

In today’s world, the Qur’anic concept of social justice has become even more vital, as contemporary societies face growing challenges such as economic inequality, political discrimination, and identity crises. Several modern Muslim scholars, including Kamali (2002, p. 54) and Esack (1997, p. 88), argue that social justice in Islam provides a foundational framework for organizing collective life in the modern age.

Accordingly, the present study seeks to examine Qur’anic verses and interpretive perspectives to identify and analyze the key indicators and components of social justice. Furthermore, by drawing upon contemporary sources, it aims to highlight the potential of Qur’anic thought in addressing the pressing issues of justice in today’s world.

1. Theoretical Foundations of Social Justice in the Qur’an

1.1 Definition of Justice and Social Justice

The term *justice*¹ in Arabic originates from the root ‘*adala*, which conveys meanings such as uprightness, balance, and placing everything in its proper place (Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, under “‘*adl*”). The Qur’an employs this term in various forms, including ‘*adl*, *qist*, and *mīzān*, presenting it as a universal principle.

From an Islamic perspective, social justice is not limited to the distribution of wealth or economic opportunities. Rather, it is a comprehensive concept encompassing all spheres of human life, including economic, political, cultural, and ethical dimensions. Martyr Morteza Motahhari emphasizes in *Divine Justice* that justice is “*the governing principle of the cosmos and human society*” (Motahhari, 1370, p. 35). Accordingly, social justice entails establishing balance and respecting rights in social relations, grounded in divine values.

Contemporary scholars have similarly defined social justice in Islam as “*a system for organizing social relations based on human dignity and equality of rights*” (Siddiqui, 2017, p. 102).

1.2 Etymology of ‘*Adl* and ‘*Qist*

In the Qur’an, the term ‘*n t* and its derivatives appear frequently. ‘*and* generally refers to equality and the observance of rights at both individual and social levels, while *qist* typically denotes *implementing justice in social relations* or fairness. For instance, the Qur’an states:

“*Establish weight with justice and do not diminish the balance.*” (Ar-Rahman, 55:9)

In this verse, *qist* is interpreted as ensuring rights in economic and social relations. Al-Ṭabarī explains: “*It refers to establishing the standard of justice in all transactions*” (Ṭabarī, 1992, vol. 27, p. 115). Likewise, Ṭabāṭabā’ī defines *qist* as “*upholding justice in all aspects of life*” (Ṭabāṭabā’ī, 1417 AH, vol. 19, p. 73).

Fakhr al-Rāzī distinguishes between the two terms: ‘*Adl primarily refers to individual and moral virtue, whereas qist pertains to social and political order* (Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420 AH, vol. 29, p. 21). Ibn Kathīr interprets *qist* as “*equity in judgment and transactions*” (Ibn Kathīr, 2000, vol. 4, p. 278).

1.3 Justice as a Governing Principle in Creation and Legislation

The Qur’an portrays justice not merely as a social command but as a principle governing the entire order of

¹ ‘*adl*

creation:

“And the heaven He raised and imposed the balance, that you may not transgress in the balance.” (Ar-Rahman, 55:7–8)

“Establish weight with justice and do not diminish the balance.” (Ar-Rahman, 55:9)

Al-Ṭabarī interprets *mīzān* in these verses as a symbol of divine justice in creation, which humans are also obliged to uphold in their lives (Ṭabarī, 1992, vol. 27, p. 110). Ṭabāṭabā'ī emphasizes that these verses reflect *“the fixed divine laws in the order of creation”*, inviting humans to follow justice (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1417 AH, vol. 19, p. 70). Contemporary scholars also note that these verses indicate that justice is not a human convention but a *“transcendent and universal principle”* applicable to all social systems (Kamali, 2002, p. 61).

1.4 Justice and Human Dignity

One of the foundational principles of social justice in the Qur'an is the inherent dignity of humans:

“We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on land and sea and provided them with good things and preferred them over many of those We created.” (Al-Isrā', 17:70)

Al-Ṭabarī interprets this verse as *humans' enjoyment of divine blessings*. Fakhr al-Rāzī goes further, emphasizing *the unique capacity of humans for reason and free will*. Ṭabāṭabā'ī also asserts that human dignity forms the basis of all rights and social justice (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1417 AH, vol. 13, p. 146). Contemporary thinkers such as Esack (1997, p. 91) similarly highlight that Qur'anic social justice is inseparable from human dignity and can serve as a foundation for interfaith dialogue on justice and freedom.

From this discussion, it is clear that justice in the Qur'an is a multidimensional and deeply rooted concept, expressed primarily through the terms *‘adl* and *qist*. While *‘adl* emphasizes individual and moral virtue, *qist* pertains to social, economic, and political spheres. Moreover, justice in the Qur'an is presented as a principle governing both creation and legislation and is closely linked to the inherent dignity of human beings. These theoretical foundations provide a robust framework for analyzing the indicators and components of social justice in the Qur'an.

2. Indicators of Social Justice in the Qur'an

2.1 Equality and Equity

One of the fundamental indicators of social justice in the Qur'an is the principle of equality and equity in human rights. The Qur'an affirms that all humans share intrinsic value regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender:

“O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you.” (Al-Hujurat, 49:13)

Al-Ṭabarī emphasizes that the criterion of excellence in this verse is piety, and no tribe or group holds inherent superiority over another (Ṭabarī, 1992, vol. 26, p. 94). Fakhr al-Rāzī considers this verse as evidence against social discrimination (Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420 AH, vol. 28, p. 122), while Ṭabāṭabā'ī argues that piety as a measure of distinction ensures equality among all humans (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1417 AH, vol. 18, p. 327). Contemporary scholars interpret this principle as the foundation of Islamic human rights (Kamali, 2002, p. 75), and Esack highlights its potential for fostering intercultural dialogue on equality (Esack, 1997, p. 112).

2.2 Human Dignity

Social justice in the Qur'an is closely linked to the inherent dignity of human beings. The Qur'an states:

“We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on land and sea and provided them with good things and preferred them over many of those We created.” (Al-Isrā', 17:70)

Exegeses view this dignity as the foundation of all social rights and responsibilities. Ibn Kathīr emphasizes human reason and free will as core aspects of this dignity (Ibn Kathīr, 2000, vol. 3, p. 66), while Ṭabarsī highlights intellectual and linguistic capacities (Ṭabarsī, 1372, vol. 6, p. 421). Ṭabāṭabā'ī asserts that social justice cannot be realized without recognition of human dignity (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1417 AH, vol. 13, p. 146).

Western scholars such as Siddiqui (2017, p. 105) similarly note that Qur'anic justice is grounded in innate human dignity and aligns with modern human rights discussions.

2.3 Freedom and Choice

Freedom is another key indicator of social justice in the Qur'an. Humans are portrayed as beings endowed with choice:

"Say, 'The truth is from your Lord; so, whoever wills—let him believe; and whoever wills—let him disbelieve.'" (Al-Kahf, 18:29)

Al-Ṭabarī interprets this verse as affirming human freedom in matters of belief (Ṭabarī, 1992, vol. 15, p. 146), while Fakhr al-Rāzī argues that such freedom underpins social responsibility (Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420 AH, vol. 21, p. 15). Ṭabāṭabā'ī emphasizes that coerced faith is devoid of value (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1417 AH, vol. 13, p. 89). Contemporary scholars also consider freedom in the Qur'an as not merely an individual right but a prerequisite for the realization of social justice (Ramadan, 2012, p. 44).

2.4 Social Responsibility

The Qur'an underscores the mutual responsibilities of individuals toward one another as a key aspect of social justice:

"The believers are allies of one another; they enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong." (At-Tawba, 9:71)

Al-Ṭabarī interprets this verse as highlighting the *obligation of social participation in achieving justice* (Ṭabarī, 1992, vol. 11, p. 409). Fakhr al-Rāzī stresses that social justice is realized only through enjoining good and forbidding wrong (Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420 AH, vol. 16, p. 121). Ṭabarsī similarly presents this verse as the basis for reciprocal responsibilities among Muslims (Ṭabarsī, 1372, vol. 5, p. 338). Contemporary thought interprets this principle as *active citizenship* in an Islamic society (Voll, 1994, p. 212).

Thus, social justice in the Qur'an encompasses four fundamental indicators: equality and equity, human dignity, freedom and choice, and social responsibility. These indicators are not only elaborated in classical Shī'a and Sunnī exegeses but also have wide applicability in contemporary Islamic and international thought. In this way, the Qur'an provides a comprehensive framework for social justice, offering both theoretical and practical guidance for modern social systems.

3. Practical Components of Social Justice in the Qur'an

Social justice, as one of the most fundamental divine values in the Qur'an, plays a central role in structuring an Islamic society. The Qur'an presents justice not merely as a moral principle but as a comprehensive system for regulating human relations. It establishes a framework for justice in various domains, including judiciary, economy, family, politics, and international relations. From the Qur'anic perspective, justice balances individual rights with collective interests, providing the foundation for societal security, welfare, and spiritual growth. For this reason, many commentators consider social justice the ultimate objective of prophetic missions and revealed scriptures (Al-Hadid: 25; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1417 AH, vol. 19, p. 139).

3.1 Qur'anic Foundations of Social Justice

a. The Concepts of *ʿAdl* and *Qist*

The Qur'an employs two main terms—*‘adl* and *qist*—to express the concept of justice. *‘Adl* generally refers to equality and maintaining balance in individual and social rights, whereas *qist* emphasizes distributive justice, economic fairness, and the prevention of oppression in social relations (Rāghib Isfahānī, 1412 AH, p. 568). Ṭabāṭabā'ī interprets *qist* in this context as establishing proper standards in society and eliminating any form of injustice in economic, political, and social spheres (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1417 AH, vol. 19, p. 139).

b. The Relationship Between Justice, Piety, and Faith

The Qur'an equates justice with piety:

“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice. And do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do.” (Al-Ma'ida, 5:8)

Fakhr al-Rāzī emphasizes that justice is both a prerequisite and a condition for the realization of piety, noting that a society without justice cannot achieve collective righteousness (Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420 AH, vol. 12, p. 57).

3.2 Practical Components of Social Justice in the Qur'an

a. Justice in Judiciary and Judgment

One of the primary domains of social justice is fair judgment:

“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing.” (An-Nisa, 4:58)

Al-Ṭabarī notes that this verse addresses all judges, rulers, and even ordinary individuals in daily disputes (Ṭabarī, 1408 AH, vol. 8, p. 518). Ṭabāṭabā'ī regards justice in judgment as the foundation of public trust, without which society would descend into chaos (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1417 AH, vol. 4, p. 323).

b. Principle of Equality and Rejection of Discrimination

The Qur'an rejects racial, ethnic, and class-based discrimination, placing human dignity at the core:

“O mankind, indeed We have created you from a male and a female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.” (Al-Hujurat, 49:13)

Al-Qurṭubī emphasizes that no tribe or group has superiority over another except through piety and righteous deeds (Al-Qurṭubī, 1413 AH, vol. 16, p. 327).

c. Economic Justice and Wealth Distribution

The Qur'an does not consider wealth as solely belonging to individuals but recognizes the rights of the needy:

“And in their wealth, there is a known right for the beggar and the deprived.” (Adh-Dhariyat, 51:19)

Sayyid Qutb, in *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an*, interprets this verse as linking justice with the economic system, asserting that private property carries social rights as well (Sayyid Qutb, 1423 AH, vol. 6, p. 3478). Furthermore, the systems of *zakah* (At-Tawba: 60) and the distribution of *anfal* (Al-Hashr: 7) aim to prevent wealth concentration.

d. Support for the Vulnerable and Marginalized

The Qur'an emphasizes support for orphans as essential to social justice:

“No! But you do not honor the orphan and you do not encourage one another to feed the poor.” (Al-Fajr, 89:17–18)

Al-Zamakhsharī notes that neglecting orphans reflects moral decay in society, and social justice cannot be achieved without protecting vulnerable groups (Al-Zamakhsharī, 1407 AH, vol. 4, p. 610).

1. Combating Economic Oppression and Corruption
The Qur'an regards any form of economic injustice as oppression:

"Woe to those who give less [than due], who, when they take a measure from people, take it in full, but when they measure or weigh for others, they give less." (Al-Mutaffifin, 83:1–3)

Allameh Ṭabāṭabā'ī interprets these verses as covering various forms of economic corruption, including under-measuring, rent-seeking, and financial discrimination (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1417 AH, vol. 20, p. 215).

2. Social Oversight (*Amr bil-Ma'rūf wa Nahy 'an al-Munkar*)

The realization of social justice requires collective vigilance:

"And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. Those will be successful." (Al-'Imran, 3:104)

Al-Qurṭubī emphasizes that this principle ensures the survival and sustainability of justice in society; neglecting it allows oppressors to dominate (Al-Qurṭubī, 1413 AH, vol. 4, p. 167).

e. Justice in Family and Gender Relations

The Qur'an requires justice within family relations:

"But if you fear that you will not be just, then [marry only] one [wife]." (An-Nisa, 4:3)

Ṭabāṭabā'ī highlights that family justice is foundational for broader social justice; a society that fails to achieve justice within the family cannot realize justice at the macro level (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1417 AH, vol. 4, p. 274).

f. Justice in International Relations

The Qur'an even mandates justice in dealings with non-Muslims:

"Allah does not forbid you from being righteous and just toward those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly." (Al-Mumtahanah, 60:8)

This verse demonstrates that Qur'anic justice is not limited to the Muslim community but is a universal principle (Wahbah al-Zuhailī, 1998, vol. 28, p. 77).

3.3 Outcomes of Social Justice in the Qur'an

- Social Security: Justice ensures peace and stability in society (An-Nahl: 112).
- Economic and Spiritual Growth: Fair wealth distribution brings prosperity and public welfare (Saba': 15).
- Prevention of Political Tyranny: Justice prevents concentration of power and despotism (Qasas: 4).

In conclusion, social justice in the Qur'an constitutes a practical and comprehensive system encompassing all spheres of human life. Its application in judiciary, economy, family, politics, and international relations shows that the Qur'an provides a holistic framework for building a just society. These elements can form the basis for contemporary Islamic social justice theory and contribute to the development of a modern Islamic civilization.

4. Exegetical and Comparative Perspectives (Shī'a and Sunnī)

This section examines the views of prominent Sunni and Shī'a commentators on the concepts of 'adl² and qist³ in the Qur'an, highlighting points of convergence and divergence. The goal is to clarify how jurisprudential interpretations of Qur'anic social justice teachings influence institutional understanding and social policymaking.

4.1 Exegetical Frameworks and Sources

Sunni commentators such as al-Qasbi (Jami' al-Bayān), Fakhr al-Rāzī (Maḥāṣin al-Rāzī), Ibn Kathīr (Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aḥq), and Rashīd Ri al-Tafsīr al-Manār), and Shī'a commentators like Allameh on convergence (Al-Mīzān), Mīzān Shī'a commentators like Allameh interpret verses based on their jurisprudential traditions and methodologies. They use a combination of linguistic, narrational⁴, and rational-principled exegesis. Variations in the use of hadith, attention to historical context, and reliance on reason and objectives of Shari'ah have led to different theoretical and practical understandings of justice.

4.2 Points of Convergence

- Necessity of Justice: All commentators view justice as a fundamental Qur'anic principle for all spheres of life (An-Nahl: 90; An-Nisa: 58).
- Human Dignity: All agree that human dignity (Ikram Bani Adam) is the basis of social rights, linked to social responsibility and access to basic needs.
- Holistic View: Justice is not merely judicial but also ethical, economic, and political; these dimensions are reflected in various interpretations.
- Centrality of Justice: There is consensus on the pervasive role of justice in individual and social life (An-Nahl: 90; An-Nisa: 58).
- Human Dignity as Social Basis: In all views, human dignity (Al-Isra: 70) underpins social rights and responsibilities.

4.3 Points of Divergence

- Political Authority and Legitimacy: Shī'a commentators (especially Ṭabāṭabā'ī and Makārim Shīrāzī) emphasize that governance legitimacy is conditional on justice and conformity to Shari'ah objectives. Sunni commentators focus more on governance mechanisms and consultation⁵.
- Redistributive Mechanisms: Shī'a interpreters emphasize the social and policy aspects of zakah and charity as tools to reduce inequality, while Sunni interpreters stress the ritual dimension more strongly.
- Use of Narrational Sources: Differences in hadith selection and validation lead to different practical and theoretical conclusions.

4.4 Summary

Differences in linguistic, narrational, and rational-principled exegesis, along with source selection and historical contextualization, explain the diversity of understanding social justice across Sunni and Shī'a tafsīr traditions. These methodological differences influence practical applications in governance, economic redistribution, and social policy.

4.5 Case Study Analysis of Qur'anic Verses on Judgment and Justice

² justice

³ equity

⁴ hadith

⁵ shura

“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing.” (An-Nisa, 4:58)

- Al-Ṭabarī: Considers this verse as encompassing all trusts and emphasizes impartiality in judgment.
- Fakhr al-Rāzī: Views justice in judgment as essential for social cohesion, supported by both rational and narrational arguments.
- Ṭabāṭabā’ī: In addition to emphasizing impartiality, links the verse to the theory of authority and legitimacy of governance.

Comparative Analysis: The Shī’a interpretation imposes more institutional and oversight obligations on rulers and judges, whereas the Sunnī perspective emphasizes the moral and legal regulation of judicial behavior.

4.6 Case Study Analysis of Qur’anic Verses on Zakah and Charity

“Zakah expenditures are only for the poor and needy, and those employed to administer it, and those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and for freeing captives, and for those in debt, and for the cause of Allah, and for the wayfarer; an obligation from Allah. And Allah is Knowing and Wise.” (At-Tawbah, 9:60)

- Sunnī perspective: Emphasizes precise observance of zakah as both a religious and social duty.
- Shī’a perspective: Considers zakah not only as an act of worship but also as a tool for social and economic policy of the state or community institution.

Comparative Note: The Shī’a view generally requires a well-defined, centralized institutional structure to manage zakah resources, while Sunnī interpretations focus more on individual observance and ritual compliance.

4.7 Case Study Analysis of Qur’anic Verses on Equality and Minority Rights

“O mankind, indeed We created you from a male and a female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.” (Al-Hujurat, 49:13)

- Sunnī perspective: Superiority is based on piety⁶; no tribe or ethnicity is inherently superior.
- Shī’a perspective: Emphasizes social justice and elimination of institutional discrimination, extending equality to political and legal rights.

4.8 Comparative Analysis of Contemporary Perspectives

- Shī’a: Qur’anic social justice can serve as the basis for regulatory systems, economic policies, and criminal justice.
- Sunnī: Tends to differentiate between the devotional and social dimensions of justice, emphasizing personal ethics and behavior.

Modern Scholars: Researchers such as Kamali (2002) and Esack (1997) highlight the capacity of Qur’anic teachings to expand justice in the modern world and note convergence between Shī’a and Sunnī views on fundamental principles.

The conclusion that can be drawn from this point is as follows:

- Consensus among commentators on the necessity of justice, human dignity, and its comprehensiveness

⁶ taqwa

across social, economic, and political spheres.

- Differences in institutional and policy approaches: Shī'a stress establishing oversight and governmental structures; Sunnī stress individual ethics and law observance without central institutions.
- Comparative analysis shows that Qur'anic teachings offer flexibility for designing contemporary social systems, allowing integration of Shī'a and Sunnī insights for advancing social justice.

5. Linking Qur'anic Social Justice to Contemporary Discourses

The Qur'anic emphasis **on** equity⁷, justice⁸, and human dignity⁹ provides a robust theoretical framework for social justice. In contemporary discourse, social justice is recognized as a foundational principle in the humanities, human rights, and economic policy. This chapter demonstrates how the practical features of social justice in the Qur'an align with modern theories of justice, human rights, and welfare policy.

5.1 Economic Justice in the Qur'an and Contemporary Discourse

The Qur'an, through recommendations on zakah, charity¹⁰, avoidance of usury, and prevention of waste, provides a framework to reduce economic inequality. These teachings align with modern theories of economic justice:

- Resource Distribution: Verses such as At-Tawbah (9:60) emphasize fair distribution of resources to marginalized groups.
- Modern Correlation: This corresponds with contemporary concepts of distributive justice and welfare policies (Rawls, 1971).
- Wealth Accumulation Control: Instructions on honest measurement and weights (Ash-Shu'arā': 181–182) mirror modern approaches to financial transparency and anti-corruption.

5.2 Judicial Justice and Human Rights

Verses like An-Nisa (4:58) and Al-An'am (6:152) present **judicial justice** as impartial and universal. These principles resonate with modern human rights frameworks:

- Impartiality in Judgment: Qur'anic judicial justice aligns with the principle of equal access to justice.
- Responsibility and Accountability: Concepts of social responsibility and accountability for rulers and judges correspond with rule of law and accountability **theories**.

5.3 Political Justice and Governance

- The Qur'an, with its emphasis on shura (consultation, 42:38) and governance based on justice, reflects modern governance principles:
- People's Sovereignty and Consultation: Aligns with participatory democracy and political inclusion theories.
- Justice as a Measure of Legitimacy: Both Shī'a and Sunnī perspectives indicate that the legitimacy of any ruler or state depends directly on the observance of justice and protection of citizens' rights.

5.4 Cultural and Educational Justice

The Qur'an, by emphasizing universal access to knowledge and guidance (*Zumar: 9; Jumu'ah: 2*), guarantees

⁷ qist

⁸ 'adl

⁹ karamah

¹⁰ sadaqah

cultural and educational justice. In contemporary theories, this corresponds to concepts such as the right to equal education, human development, and social justice in education.

✓ Cultural justice means creating equal opportunities for benefiting from knowledge and culture.

✓ These teachings provide contemporary policymakers with theoretical tools for designing a just and equitable educational system.

5.5 Alignment with Modern Social Justice Theories

Contemporary theorists such as John Rawls (1971, p. 52) and Émile Durkheim have emphasized the necessity of maintaining a balance between individual rights and social interests. Similarly, Qur'anic teachings encompass both individual justice¹¹ and social and institutional justice¹².

✓ The principle of difference and the obligation to assist the disadvantaged are aligned with the Qur'anic commands regarding zakat¹³ and infaq¹⁴.

✓ Human dignity and the provision of opportunities for the development of individual capacities correspond to the Qur'anic teachings on dignity and cultural justice.

5.6 Challenges and Opportunities

✓ Challenges: Differences in interpretation between Shia and Sunni traditions, the adaptation of traditional institutions and Qur'anic texts to modern legal and economic systems, and the need to reexamine and further develop the practical indicators of justice.

✓ Opportunities: Qur'anic teachings can provide a foundation for just social policies, equitable distribution of wealth, an accountable judicial system, and sustainable human development.

In any case, the following points can be regarded as the essence of the discussion:

✓ The teachings of social justice in the Qur'an offer clear practical indicators and components for social and economic policymaking.

✓ The adaptation of these teachings to contemporary discourses on justice, human rights, and human development is possible.

✓ The integration of Shia and Sunni teachings on justice can create a comprehensive framework for designing modern and just institutions.

✓ Justice in the Qur'an is a comprehensive and multidimensional concept encompassing economy, judiciary, politics, and culture, and it holds practical applicability in contemporary discourse.

6. Overall Summary

A. Fundamental Features of Social Justice in the Qur'an

- Equality and Fairness: All humans are equal in intrinsic worth; piety¹⁵ is the only criterion of distinction (Al-Hujurat: 13).
- Human Dignity: Inherent human dignity forms the basis of social rights and responsibilities (Al-Isra:

¹¹ 'adl

¹² qist

¹³ almsgiving

¹⁴ charitable spending

¹⁵ taqwa

70).

- **Freedom and Choice:** Individual freedom and responsibility are essential for realizing social justice (Al-Kahf: 29).
- **Social Responsibility:** Cooperation in promoting good and preventing wrongdoing is inseparable from social justice (At-Tawbah: 71).

B. Practical Components of Social Justice

- **Economic Justice:** Zakah, charity, and adherence to fair measures and weights reduce inequality and prevent economic corruption.
- **Judicial Justice:** Impartiality in judgment and protection of individuals' rights.
- **Political Justice:** Consultation¹⁶, advisory processes, and legitimacy of governance based on justice.
- **Cultural and Educational Justice:** Equal access to knowledge and guidance, and promotion of intellectual and cultural justice.

C. Shī'a and Sunnī Interpretive and Comparative Views

- **Consensus:** Fundamental principles of justice, human dignity, and its comprehensiveness.
- **Differences:** Shī'a emphasize institutional structures and management of social resources; Sunnī emphasize personal ethics and adherence to laws.
- **Comparative Insight:** Integrating Shī'a and Sunnī perspectives can provide a comprehensive framework for social justice.

D. Connection with Contemporary Discourses

- Qur'anic teachings can be aligned with modern theories of social justice, economic welfare, and human rights.
- Qur'anic indicators of justice can guide economic, judicial, political, and educational policies in contemporary societies.

7. Practical Recommendations

1. **Develop Equitable Economic Policies:** Utilize zakah and charity to design redistribution mechanisms and reduce poverty.
2. **Strengthen Judicial Justice and Accountability:** Establish transparent oversight institutions to ensure justice in legal and public affairs.
3. **Promote Cultural and Educational Justice:** Guarantee equal access to educational and cultural opportunities based on human dignity and the principle of justice.
4. **Link with Modern Theories:** Apply concepts from Rawls' theory of justice and the Capability Approach to integrate Qur'anic teachings with contemporary social policy.
5. **Foster Inter-sectarian Dialogue:** Use Shī'a and Sunnī perspectives complementarily to enhance social justice systems and reduce societal conflicts.

8. Final Conclusion

Social justice in the Qur'an is comprehensive and multidimensional, encompassing both theoretical and practical aspects. Its features and components include equality, dignity, freedom, responsibility, economic, judicial, political, and cultural justice.

¹⁶ shura

These teachings show principled convergence in Shī'a and Sunnī interpretations and can be connected with contemporary discourses on social justice, human rights, and human development. Thus, the Qur'an provides not only a religious text but also a practical and theoretical framework for achieving social justice in today's society.

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