Zakat, Infaq, and Social Justice in Islamic Political Thought: An Analytical Normative Framework for Foreign Policy Ethics

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Abstract

This study demonstrates at a conceptual level that the fundamental principles of Islamic political thought—zakat, infaq, and social justice—constitute an authentic normative framework for foreign policy ethics. The research argues that states should guide their international behavior not only through calculations of power and interest but also through principles of moral responsibility and distributive justice. The central problematic of the study concerns how the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice in Islamic political thought form the normative foundation of states' foreign policy behaviors, and what theoretical and practical contributions these principles can offer to the construction of a distributive justice-centered foreign policy ethics model in the contemporary international system. Through qualitative research methodology, the study systematically examines classical Islamic sources and contemporary normative international relations literature, conducting data-concept-theory analysis. Findings reveal that Islamic political thought presents a three-layered normative structure extending from individual taqwa consciousness at the micro level to a global justice order at the macro level. It has been determined that zakat constitutes an institutional model for international solidarity and resource sharing, infaq strengthens foreign policy behaviors based on voluntary responsibility consciousness, and social justice ensures internal-external policy coherence through moral consistency. The study demonstrates that states' establishment of social justice internally directly affects their acquisition of normative credibility and legitimacy externally. Administrators' possession of beautiful character, taqwa, and ihsan enables the establishment of strong bonds with the populace, and this bond multiplies the state's success in foreign policy. The research makes an original contribution to international relations literature by building conceptual bridges between Islamic political thought and contemporary normative international relations theories, carrying the potential to develop alternative solutions to global problems. The theoretical contribution of the study lies in making visible the normative richness of different civilizational traditions beyond Western-centered theories.

Keywords: Islamic Political Thought; Zakat; Infaq; Social Justice; Foreign Policy Ethics; Normative International Relations

1. Introduction

A significant portion of contemporary international relations theories focuses on parameters such as power, interest, security, or identity to explain the foreign policy behaviors of states (Hallaq, 2013; March, 2009). While these approaches have undoubtedly made important contributions to understanding state behavior, they have remained distant from systematically addressing the moral foundations of political action, the international reflections of social justice, and the determinative role of the ethics of sharing in foreign policy decisions. However, across different periods and geographies of history, concepts of justice, solidarity, and moral responsibility have occupied a central place among the fundamental principles guiding the foreign relations of states (Afsaruddin, 2013; Sachedina, 2001). In this context, Islamic political thought offers a rich theoretical legacy that defines the moral foundations of state behavior and the normative boundaries of foreign policy through the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice (Ramadan, 2009; Şentürk, 2018).

In Islamic thought, zakat is not merely a form of individual worship but simultaneously an institutionalized redistribution mechanism for maintaining social balances, establishing economic justice, and strengthening political legitimacy (Kamali, 2008). The sixtieth verse of Surah At-Tawbah in the Qur'an explicitly determines the expenditure channels of zakat: "The alms (zakat) are only for the poor, the needy, those employed to administer them, those whose hearts are to be reconciled to Islam, for freeing slaves, for those in debt, for the cause of Allah, and for the wayfarer. This is ordained by Allah. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise" (At-Tawbah 9:60; Presidency of Religious Affairs, 2001). This verse delineates the institutional framework of justice by specifying to which social segments economic resources should be allocated. Thus, zakat constitutes the foundation not only for the state's maintenance of social equilibrium in the internal order but also for an ethical stance based on justice and solidarity in external relations (Ibn Taymiyyah, 2012; Al-Mawardi, 2010).

Infaq, unlike zakat, expresses voluntary sharing, a continuous state of benevolence, and the transfer of resources with an intrinsic sense of responsibility. The one hundred and seventy-seventh verse of Surah Al-Baqarah powerfully emphasizes the connection between faith and morality: "Righteousness and virtue are not merely that you turn your faces to the East and the West. True righteousness and virtue belong to those who believe in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets; who give their wealth out of love for Him to relatives, orphans, the poor, the wayfarer, beggars, and for the liberation of slaves; who establish prayer and give zakat; and who fulfill their promises when they make them. And those who are patient in times of hardship, adversity, and when battle is joined. It is they who are truthful, and it is they who are the God-fearing" (Al-Baqarah 2:177; Presidency of Religious Affairs, 2001). This verse reveals that infaq is not merely an economic action but simultaneously a manifestation of faith and piety (Al-Ghazali, 2004). Consequently, infaq defines the responsibility of the individual and the state vis-à-vis the external world on a moral foundation.

Social justice, meanwhile, is recognized in Islamic political thought as a measure of both social welfare and political legitimacy (An-Na'im, 2008; Rahman, 1982). The Prophet's hadith, "He is not one of us who goes to sleep full while his neighbor is hungry" (Al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak, 2/15), encourages the responsibility of justice and empathy not only at the individual and social levels but also in inter-state relations. This hadith emphasizes that social solidarity cannot be defined merely by geographical or cultural boundaries but is, on the contrary, a universal moral principle (Kamali, 2002; Nasr, 2001). Thus, social justice in Islamic thought becomes the normative foundation of foreign policy just as much as it is a requirement of domestic policy.

The fundamental aim of this study is to propose the transformation of the concepts of zakat, infaq, and social justice—which occupy a central place in Islamic political thought—into an analytical and normative framework for foreign policy ethics. The study aims to reread these concepts as moral principles that shape state behaviors not only in the internal order but also in international relations (Abou El Fadl, 2014; Nasr, 2012). Toward this objective, the study aims to establish a conceptual bridge

between theological and moral references in classical Islamic sources and contemporary normative international relations theories. Thus, it becomes possible to address Islamic political thought not merely as a form of governance but as a civilizational paradigm offering a theory of ethical foreign policy.

The fundamental problematic of the research can be clarified as follows: How do the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice in Islamic political thought constitute the normative and moral foundation of states' foreign policy behaviors, and what theoretical and practical contributions can these principles offer to the construction of a distributive justice-centered foreign policy ethics model in the contemporary international system? This question aims both to reveal the conceptual richness of Islamic political thought and to explain how this richness can be integrated into contemporary foreign policy analysis.

Based on this question, the hypothesis of the study is formulated as follows: The principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice in Islamic political thought construct the normative foundation of states' foreign policy behaviors through moral responsibility and distributive justice; these principles provide authentic theoretical and practical contributions to the development of a foreign policy ethics model centered on sharing and solidarity, beyond interest-based realism in the contemporary international system. The validity of the hypothesis will be tested through both the reinterpretation of classical Islamic sources and comparative analysis with contemporary foreign policy ethics literature.

The subject of the study, beyond being merely a theoretical discussion, also sheds light on the fundamental problems facing today's international system. In an era when global inequalities are deepening, humanitarian crises are becoming widespread, and interest-based foreign policy approaches are creating moral vacuums, the justice and solidarity-centered approach offered by Islamic political thought has the potential to constitute a normative alternative in international relations (Thomas, 2005; An-Na'im, 2008). The institutionalization of the principles of zakat and infaq at the state level can enable foreign policy behaviors to be guided not only by calculations of power and interest but also by a consciousness of moral responsibility (Khan, 2019).

In Islamic political thought, the state is defined not merely as an authority providing security and order but simultaneously as the guardian of social justice and moral values (Ibn Khaldun, 2016). The state's exhibition of successful governance, provision of support to entrepreneurs and investors, and revitalization of economic life brings with it the effective functioning of zakat, sadaqah, and other solidarity mechanisms. The increase in the number of wealthy and prosperous individuals within the country and their balanced distribution across different regions of the country ensures the widespread dissemination of the culture of mutual assistance throughout the nation. Thus, alongside the state's policies for addressing social problems, the zakat, sadaqah, and other mutual assistance activities conducted among the people create an atmosphere of solidarity based on Islamic rules and faith foundations. In societies where this atmosphere is strong, it becomes possible to minimize hunger, poverty, and destitution (Chapra, 1992; Kahf, 2014).

For such practices to succeed at the highest level, the functionality of the state system alone is not sufficient. Simultaneously, the qualifications, characters, moral aspects, levels of taqwa (God-consciousness), and consciousness of ihsan (excellence) of the rulers also play a determining role. The Qur'an commands, "O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak words that are true and upright" (Al-Ahzab 33:70; Presidency of Religious Affairs, 2001), emphasizing the principle of taqwa and truthfulness at both individual and public levels. Furthermore, in Surah An-Nahl, the verse "Allah commands justice, the doing of good (ihsan), and giving to kith and kin, and He forbids all indecent deeds, evil, and rebellion. He admonishes you so that you may take heed" (An-Nahl 16:90; Presidency of Religious Affairs, 2001) defines the normative axis of Islamic political thought. The Prophet's hadith, "I was sent to perfect good character" (Muwatta, Husn al-Khuluq 8; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, 2/381), places moral perfection at the center of all human relations, including politics. Ihsan, with the definition "to worship Allah as if you see Him, for even if you do not see Him, He surely sees you" (Muslim, Iman 1), positions the behavior of political

decision-makers not only within legal but also ontological responsibility consciousness (Al-Ghazali, 2012).

Rulers are required to act with the consciousness that Allah is watching them at all times, to bear the responsibility that they will be held accountable after death if they commit wrongs, to possess good character, taqwa, and ihsan, and to produce policies that are just, lawful, equitable, measured, honest, truthful, and balanced—policies that everyone can accept as reasonable, legitimate, conscientious, and fair. Rulers are expected to prioritize the benefit of the people, not to discriminate, to give everyone their due, to entrust administrative cadres to trustworthy and competent persons, not to betray trusts, not to allow corruption and theft, to act in accordance with all elevated principles such as the rule of law, equality, and the presumption of innocence, and to remain distant from favoritism and self-interest (Al-Mawardi, 2010; Ibn Taymiyyah, 2012). Such a ruler profile gains the support of its people at nearly one hundred percent, and the success in foreign policy of a country that is unified and bonded with its people goes far beyond normal circumstances (Al-Mawardi, 1996; Ibn Taymiyyah, 1982).

Adopting this understanding in light of the Qur'an and hadiths, which are the fundamental sources of Islam, creates a multiplier effect on any country's foreign policy success. The establishment of social justice domestically, the effective functioning of zakat and infaq mechanisms, and rulers' possession of good character, taqwa, and ihsan enable that country to gain credibility, legitimacy, and moral influence in the international arena (Hashmi, 2002; Nardin & Mapel, 1992). This situation makes it possible for the state to possess not only the use of force but also a value-based stance in foreign policy. Consequently, in Islamic political thought, there exists a direct and strong relationship between justice in the internal order and ethical behavior in foreign policy (Hallaq, 2018; Şentürk, 2018).

The theoretical significance of the study lies in Islamic political thought's provision of a new epistemic ground for normative foreign policy analysis. Most modern international relations theories are built upon secular foundations and evaluate religious and moral references as secondary or instrumental factors (March, 2009). However, in Islamic thought, morality is an inseparable component of politics, and the legitimacy of state behavior is directly measured by its conformity to moral principles (Abou El Fadl, 2001; Ramadan, 2009). This study aims to make an original contribution to the foreign policy ethics literature by bringing together the moral framework offered by Islamic political thought with contemporary normative international relations theories.

The practical significance of the study lies in its potential to offer alternative solutions to the problems facing today's international system. In an era intensified by global inequalities, humanitarian crises, migration problems, and conflicts, states need to guide their foreign policy behaviors not only with calculations of interest but also with a consciousness of moral responsibility (Brown, 2001; Pogge, 2002). The adaptation of the principles of zakat and infaq to foreign policy can contribute to the development of more just and sustainable approaches in the areas of international aid, development cooperation, and humanitarian diplomacy (Afsaruddin, 2015). In this sense, the study also presents normative principles that can serve as guidance for policymakers.

When the literature is examined, it is observed that the relationship between Islamic political thought and foreign policy ethics has not been systematically addressed. Existing studies generally examine either the reflections of Islamic law on domestic politics or moral philosophy in a general sense, but do not address in an analytical framework how the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice shape foreign policy behaviors (Kamali, 2011; Sachedina, 2001). This study aims to fill this gap in the literature and to demonstrate that Islamic political thought constitutes a rich resource for normative foreign policy models.

The methodology of the study is based on a conceptual and analytical approach. Classical Islamic sources, particularly Qur'anic and hadith literature, exegetical works, and classics of political thought, will be examined to reveal what the concepts of zakat, infaq, and social justice signify in terms of foreign policy ethics. Subsequently, contemporary normative international relations theories, particularly

approaches to distributive justice, normative responsibility, and ethical foreign policy, will be addressed to create a conceptual synthesis between Islamic principles and these theories (Frost, 1996; Steele & Heinze, 2018). During this process, comparative analysis will be conducted through both theoretical frameworks and historical and contemporary examples.

The scope of the study encompasses the theoretical foundations of the concepts of zakat, infaq, and social justice in Islamic political thought and how these concepts can be adapted to foreign policy ethics. While the study briefly touches upon the historical applications of these principles, it primarily focuses on establishing a normative and analytical framework. Empirical case analyses have been kept outside the scope of the study, with the construction of the theoretical model determined as the priority objective.

The structure of the study is organized as follows: In the literature review section, the historical and theoretical development of the concepts of zakat, infaq, and social justice in Islamic political thought, along with the contemporary normative foreign policy ethics literature, will be addressed. In the theoretical framework section, how Islamic principles constitute a normative model for foreign policy ethics will be analyzed at conceptual and epistemic levels. In the research methodology section, the study's approach, data sources, and analytical techniques will be explained. In the findings section, the contributions that Islamic political thought offers to foreign policy ethics through the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice will be systematically presented. In the discussion section, the comparison of these findings with other approaches in the literature and their original contributions will be evaluated. In the conclusion and recommendations section, the fundamental determinations of the study will be summarized, and recommendations for policymakers and researchers will be presented.

In summary, this study argues that the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice in Islamic political thought constitute an analytical and normative framework for foreign policy ethics. The expected contributions of the study can be summarized as follows: First, a conceptual bridge will be established between Islamic political thought and contemporary foreign policy ethics literature. Second, it will become possible to reread the principles of zakat and infaq as normative principles shaping foreign policy behaviors. Third, how states' establishment of social justice in the internal order strengthens their moral stance in foreign policy will be explained at theoretical and conceptual levels. Fourth, it will be demonstrated that Islamic political thought—relatively understudied in the literature—constitutes a rich resource for normative foreign policy models.

2. Literature Review

The concept of social justice in Islamic political thought has been extensively addressed throughout the historical process by both classical period thinkers and contemporary researchers. Within the Islamic political tradition, where the concept of justice is considered not merely as individual virtue but as the constitutive principle of social order, institutional practices such as zakat and infaq are evaluated as concrete manifestations of this understanding of justice. Orman (2016) draws attention to the central position of the understanding of social responsibility and collective obligation in Ghazali's works, emphasizing the necessity of addressing justice not solely at the individual level but also at the societal and political levels. In this context, justice in Islamic thought emerges as a multidimensional structure that encompasses elements such as equality, equity in resource distribution, and the struggle against poverty, rather than being merely a legal concept. When the concepts of justice, insaf (fairness), and ihsan (benevolence) in the Islamic tradition are evaluated together, it is observed that social justice becomes one of the fundamental responsibilities of state governance. While classical period thinkers such as al-Mawardi and Ibn Khaldun emphasize that the continuity of justice in state administration is the fundamental condition of social stability, they also underline the validity of these principles not only in internal order but also in interstate relations.

The institution of zakat is positioned as a central instrument in ensuring social justice within Islamic political thought. The view that zakat is not merely a religious obligation but also an agent of social reproduction and justice is widespread in classical sources. In the Qur'an, the categories of zakat distribution are explicitly defined, and by specifying the poor, the indebted, the traveler, and other categories, the normative foundation of the principle of distributive responsibility is established (Tawbah 9:60). Ahmed (2004) examines the role of zakat and waqf institutions in combating poverty while underlining not only their financial but also their social integration and solidarity functions. Similarly, Akbulut (2013) addresses the relationship between waqfs and social assistance, revealing how the zakat and waqf system in Islamic societies has historically transformed into an institutional structure and the role this structure plays in establishing social justice. These studies demonstrate that zakat is not merely an individual act of worship but can also be used as an instrument of state social policy. The organization of zakat by the state is regarded in the Islamic political tradition as a manifestation of public responsibility, and this situation carries conceptual parallels with the contemporary social state understanding. Historically, the fact that zakat collection and distribution during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods was carried out through a central state institution called "bayt al-mal" demonstrates the strategic position of this institution within state organization.

Empirical studies conducted on the effectiveness of the zakat institution in the literature reveal that institutional elements such as management, transparency, and trust are critical (Abu Bakar et al., 2014; Sarea, 2020). Findings concerning zakat payment along the axes of income level, religiosity, and trust in institutions bring to the agenda the question of how zakat can be made more effective in the modern period. Fauzia (2017) emphasizes, in the Indonesian case, that aid made in the context of infaq must go beyond the traditional conception of charity to target structural justice. These discussions point to the necessity of reconceptualizing zakat and infaq in Islamic political thought on the basis of justice and taqwa rather than mere charity. Thus, zakat becomes evaluable as an institutional reflection of the principle of distributive justice. Furthermore, in the literature, conceptual models concerning how the transformation process of zakat from individual solidarity at the micro level to state policy at the macro level occurs are observed to be lacking. Chapra (1992), while analyzing the effects of zakat on economic stability and social balance in Islamic economics, leaves open the question of how this institution can be integrated with contemporary social security systems.

The literature on Islamic finance and social public finance emphasizes the role of instruments such as zakat, infaq, sadaqah, and waqf in resource redistribution. Sakai (2014), through his analysis on reducing financial exclusion and strengthening social justice through Islamic savings and credit cooperatives in the Indonesian context, demonstrates the potential of these instruments in reducing socioeconomic inequalities. Widiastuti (2022) discusses how the zakat, infaq, and waqf system can be integrated as a financial system targeted at social justice, seeking answers to the question of how these institutions can be adapted to contemporary financial structures. Baidhawy (2016) highlights three fundamental distribution principles in Islam—participation, redistribution, and state complementarity—demonstrating that social justice is not merely a matter of income distribution but also encompasses dimensions such as participation, capacity development, and inclusion in decision-making processes. This literature, when viewed from the perspective of foreign policy ethics, brings to the forefront questions such as who bears responsibility, which instruments will be used, and how a new justice order will be constructed. Rethinking Islamic financial instruments at the international level gains importance not only at the microeconomic level but also at the macro-political level, and this situation necessitates the development of new approaches based on normative principles in states' foreign aid policies. Asutay and Yıldırım (2017), while addressing the relationship between Islamic finance and moral economy, emphasize that not only the technical but also the ethical and normative dimensions of financial instruments must be taken into account.

It is observed that the triad of zakat, infaq, and social justice, which Islamic political thought addresses at the internal societal level, has not been sufficiently evaluated as an ethical framework in the

foreign policy literature. This situation makes explicit the field of contribution of this study. Although classical sources are influential in the international relations and foreign policy ethics literature, studies that incorporate Islamic political thought into this context have not been sufficiently developed. Assadullayev's (2019) comparative analysis on social justice in Islam and in John Rawls's political philosophy exemplifies efforts to build bridges in this area by addressing the interaction of Islamic and Western justice theories. However, this study has remained more limited to the comparison of theoretical justice concepts and has not systematically examined their reflections on foreign policy behaviors. In the literature, concepts such as political morality, international responsibility, distributive justice, and normative responsibility emerge, but systematic studies conducted toward integrating normative principles derived from Islamic thought into foreign policy decision-making processes remain relatively scarce. Conceptual and methodological discussions on how concepts offered by Islamic thought such as "ummah solidarity," "equity," and "trust" (amanah) can be translated into international relations terminology are particularly insufficient.

The normative foreign policy analysis literature encompasses efforts to evaluate states' foreign policy behaviors with value-based frameworks. Linklater's (1998) work on transformation in international relations from a critical theory perspective argues that states' moral responsibility spheres in foreign policies need to be expanded (Linklater, A. (1998); Linklater, A. (1982)). Frost (2009), while addressing issues of ethics and justice in international relations, emphasizes that states should act not only with national interests but also with universal moral principles (Frost, 1996; Frost, 2009). Wheeler (2000), in his analysis on humanitarian intervention and international society, demonstrates how normative principles shape state behaviors (Wheeler, 2000; Holzgrefe & Keohane, 2003). The question of how the normative frameworks offered by Islamic thought can be integrated remains open in this literature, and this situation points to a conceptual gap. Because contemporary normative theories are mostly based on Western philosophical tradition, the alternative conceptual tools offered by Islamic political thought are not sufficiently evaluated. Nardin (1983), in his work on the moral law in international relations, discusses how different cultural and religious traditions can contribute to universal moral principles but does not provide a systematic analysis of the Islamic tradition.

In the foreign policy ethics literature, ethical principles determining states' behaviors are increasingly being discussed. Concepts such as human rights, social responsibility, and justice are gaining validity not only within states but also in interstate relations. In this context, the concepts of normative responsibility and distributive justice come to the forefront. Approaches to ethicize foreign policy within international relations theory are becoming increasingly widespread, but normative frameworks derived from Islamic thought have not yet been sufficiently incorporated in this area. This deficiency necessitates the transfer of the rich normative accumulation offered by Islamic political thought to the foreign policy ethics literature. While themes such as global justice, resource sharing, the relationship between aid and coercion, and humanitarian responsibility are intensively discussed, the role that institutional Islamic principles such as zakat and infaq can play in foreign policy discourse has not yet been sufficiently analyzed. This situation points to a gap in the literature, and filling this gap requires the establishment of conceptual syntheses between Islamic political thought and contemporary normative theories. Walzer (1977), in his work on just war theory, demonstrates how different moral traditions offer different solutions on matters of war and peace but does not sufficiently establish bridges between Islamic war ethics and contemporary foreign policy ethics.

When the existing literature is evaluated, three fundamental gaps draw attention. First, Islamic political thought and the foreign policy ethics literature have not yet been fully integrated. Second, there is a scarcity of systematic models constructed in the context of foreign policy normativity with concepts such as zakat, infaq, and social justice. Third, how the principles of distributive justice and normative responsibility are reflected in foreign policy decisions from the perspective of Islamic political thought has still not been sufficiently institutionalized. These three gaps clarify the study's position in the literature and make explicit its field of original contribution. In the literature, studies carrying titles such

as normative model, analytical-normative framework, or distributive justice and normative responsibility are encountered, but these have either remained at the level of internal Islamic economics and social policy or their adaptation to foreign policy ethics has remained limited. For this reason, this study carries both interdisciplinary and transformative potential.

Within contemporary normative international relations theories, Beitz (1999) discusses the applicability of justice principles to the international arena, while Brown (1992) examines the position of normative approaches within international relations theory. While these studies emphasize that the moral foundations of states' foreign policy behaviors need to be questioned, they leave open the question of how Islamic thought can contribute to these discussions. An-Na'im (2008), while addressing the relationship between Islam and the secular state, discusses how religious principles can be made functional within the modern state structure, but this discussion remains mostly at the level of internal law and politics. Buchanan (2004), while evaluating concepts such as justice, legitimacy, and the right to self-determination in an international context, questions how universal moral principles can be applied in interstate relations. This literature creates theoretical ground for incorporating the normative principles offered by Islamic political thought into contemporary discussions but does not present concrete models for practical application. Furthermore, methodological discussions in the literature on how the conceptual tools offered by Islamic thought can dialogue with Western-centered frameworks such as Rawlsian distributive justice or Kantian universal ethics remain deficient. Barry (1989), in his comprehensive evaluation on justice theories, discusses how different cultural contexts shape understandings of justice but does not systematically address the reflections of the Islamic understanding of justice at the international level.

Although there are some studies aimed at establishing the connection between Islamic ethics and international relations, it is observed that these studies have concentrated more on general moral philosophy or the reflections of Islamic law on internal politics. Kamali (2011) and Sachedina (2001) provide comprehensive analyses on Islamic law and ethical philosophy but do not develop a systematic framework on how these analyses can be adapted to foreign policy behaviors. Afsaruddin (2008), while examining the history and memory of early Muslim societies, addresses the role of Islamic thought in social and political structuring but does not sufficiently open up the dimensions of this examination extending to foreign policy ethics. Benthall (2016), in his work on Islamic aid organizations and Islamic humanitarianism, demonstrates how humanitarian aid is organized in the contemporary Islamic world and how this organization is shaped by Islamic values but leaves open the question of how these structures can be integrated into state foreign policy. These studies in the literature reveal the rich normative accumulation of Islamic political thought but remain deficient in transforming this accumulation into an analytical model for foreign policy ethics.

In the contemporary period, the fact that some countries refer to Islamic values in their foreign policy practices brings to the agenda the question of how these values shape state behaviors. The recourse to Islamic discourses in the humanitarian aid policies, development cooperation programs, and international solidarity initiatives of countries such as Turkey, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Qatar demonstrates the existence of empirical examples in this area (Leopold & Stears, 2008; Della Porta & Keating, 2008). However, studies in the literature that systematically analyze these practices, relate them to the normative principles of Islamic political thought, and evaluate them with a comparative perspective are limited. This situation makes explicit the gap between theoretical frameworks and practical applications and leaves open the question of how Islamic thought can make concrete contributions to foreign policy ethics. For example, in-depth analyses on how the development aid programs carried out by the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) are framed with the discourse of Islamic solidarity and on which normative principles this discourse is based are lacking. Similarly, questions about the extent to which Islamic values are determinative in Qatar's humanitarian aid diplomacy and through which institutional mechanisms these values are transferred to foreign policy have not been sufficiently answered.

There are a limited number of studies examining the reflections in the contemporary international system of the normative principles that Islamic political thought offers for foreign policy ethics. Davutoğlu (2001), while addressing Turkey's international position with the concept of strategic depth, discusses how the historical accumulation of Islamic civilization can be used in foreign policy making, but this discussion remains mostly at the geopolitical and strategic level and does not sufficiently deepen the ethical and normative dimensions. Dinçer and Kutlay (2018), while evaluating Turkey's position in the context of global power struggle, briefly touch upon value-based foreign policy approaches but do not present a systematic analysis on how these values are nourished by Islamic thought. Clarke and Jennings (2008), while examining the relationships between development, civil society, and faith-based organizations, demonstrate how religious principles play a role in development policies but do not provide sufficient explanation on how this role can be transformed into state-level foreign policy strategies. These studies provide important data regarding the practical applications of Islamic thought but remain deficient in creating a theoretical and analytical framework.

From a methodological perspective, the diversity of analytical methods used in studies that bring Islamic political thought together with contemporary normative theories draws attention. Different approaches such as conceptual analysis, comparative historical method, textual analysis, and normative model construction are used, but studies that systematically combine these approaches are limited (Nair, 1997; Sukma, 2003). Methodological discussions on how normative principles obtained from Islamic sources (Qur'an, hadith, siyasatnames) can be related to the conceptual tools of contemporary international relations theories are particularly insufficient. This situation emerges as a significant obstacle before interdisciplinary studies and makes the integration of Islamic political thought into the foreign policy ethics literature difficult. Similarly, there are insufficient methodological discussions on how concepts that occupy a central position in Islamic thought (such as justice, amanah, ihsan, maslaha) can be translated into contemporary international relations terminology, what kinds of epistemological problems may arise in this translation, and how these problems can be overcome.

In the classical Islamic political thought literature, there is a rich accumulation regarding interstate relations and foreign policy, but there are deficiencies in systematically relating this accumulation to modern international relations theory. For example, the concepts of "dar al-Islam" and "dar al-harb" in the Islamic law literature demonstrate how interstate relations were conceptualized in historical context. However, issues such as how these concepts can be interpreted in the contemporary international system and what kinds of contributions these conceptual tools can offer to today's foreign policy ethics discussions have not been sufficiently addressed. Similarly, it is known how concepts such as "sulh" (peace), "ahd" (treaty), and "aman" (guarantee) in the classical period created normative frameworks in interstate relations, but the issue of how these frameworks can dialogue with contemporary international law and diplomacy understandings remains open.

Finally, the number of studies in the literature that bring together the normative principles of Islamic political thought with contemporary international ethics discussions needs to increase. Chapra (1992, 2000, 2010), while addressing the relationship between Islam and economic development, discusses how Islamic economics principles can be adapted to contemporary economic systems but does not sufficiently process the foreign policy and international relations dimension of this discussion. El-Gamal (2006), in his comprehensive work on Islamic finance, addresses the law, economics, and application dimensions but leaves open the question of how these dimensions can form a normative framework in states' foreign economic policies. Dean and Khan (2017), by examining the relationship between religion, welfare, and social policy, demonstrate how religious principles are effective in social policy making but do not provide sufficient analysis on how this effect can be reflected at the international level. These deficiencies in the literature reveal the necessity of creating an analytical-normative framework for foreign policy ethics through the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice of Islamic political thought. This study aims to fill this gap in the literature and to demonstrate that Islamic political thought can make original contributions to the global ethics literature. In this context, the study

aims both to show Islamic thought experts how they can contribute to contemporary foreign policy ethics discussions and to introduce international relations theorists to the normative accumulation offered by the Islamic tradition.

3. *Theoretical Framework*

In Islamic political thought, moral principles constitute not merely sources of individual virtue but also foundational elements establishing the legitimacy ground of political order and interstate relations. The concepts of zakat, infaq, and social justice form both the epistemological and axiological backbone of this moral order. This framework presupposes that political action must be grounded not solely in power distribution but also in principles of just distribution and moral responsibility (Hallaq, 2013; Ramadan, 2009). Consequently, the ethical nature of foreign policy is conceived in Islamic thought as a universal extension of moral obligations. This perspective necessitates evaluating the state's behavior in the international arena not only through calculations of national interest but also in conjunction with responsibilities of universal justice and human dignity. In the Islamic political tradition, the state is positioned as both responsible for establishing social justice domestically and as the guardian and promoter of this justice in the international system (Mâverdî, 2010; Ibn Taymiyyah, 2012).

While modern international relations theories are generally constructed upon parameters of interest, power, or security, normative foreign policy analysis over the past two decades has expanded this framework by foregrounding the concept of value-based foreign policy (Linklater, 1998; Brown, 1992). This study situates the triumvirate of zakat, infaq, and social justice in Islamic political thought within the conceptual domain of normative foreign policy analysis and reinterprets it as moral obligation-based foreign policy. Considering that Western-centric international relations theories predominantly rest upon secular ethical foundations, the revelation-derived normative framework offered by Islamic political thought possesses the potential to introduce an original and alternative perspective to the literature on foreign policy ethics (Nardin, 1983; Frost, 1996). This alternative perspective not only provides theoretical richness but also carries the capacity to develop practical solutions to contemporary global problems. The empirical testability of the theoretical framework can be realized through states' foreign aid policies, international humanitarian intervention decisions, and global development cooperation practices (Wheeler, 2000).

Zakat in Islam constitutes not merely a financial obligation but an ethical and economic instrument ensuring the sustainability of the political community. Theoretically, while this structure intersects at certain points with John Rawls's concept of distributive justice, justice in the Islamic context is grounded in consciousness of trust (*amanah*) and taqwa rather than secular notions of equality (Kamali, 2008; Ramadan, 2009). Whereas Rawls's theory of justice rests upon assumptions of social contract and rational choice, justice in Islamic political thought is conceived as the direct consequence of divine commandments and moral responsibilities. Thus, zakat presents a normative model for international solidarity, humanitarian assistance, and development cooperation in foreign policy. States' internalization of the principle of zakat in their international relations enables them to possess not merely instrumental but intrinsic moral motivation in resource sharing and combating global inequalities (Chapra, 1992, 2000). The institutionalized structure of zakat possesses the potential to strengthen the ethical foundation of modern development aid and humanitarian diplomacy practices, and this situation bears significant parallels with Beitz's (1999) conception of global distributive justice.

The concept of infaq, while defined in classical jurisprudential literature as an act of individual charity, represents the public visibility of virtue in political thought. In this context, infaq corresponds to an ethics of sharing in foreign policy (Afsaruddin, 2015; Nasr, 2012). Similar to Martha Nussbaum's capabilities approach, infaq defines the objectives of foreign policy not solely through security provision but through human flourishing and social welfare (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2011). The principle of infaq necessitates that states' assistance behaviors displayed in the international arena be shaped not only by

calculations of interest but by an internal sense of responsibility. This approach creates a shift from instrumentalism to essentialism in foreign policy, transforming states' international solidarity mechanisms from being strategic tools into normative obligations. The transference of the conception of infaq to foreign policy enables international aid to be viewed not merely as means for achieving geopolitical gains but as moral actions serving the common good of humanity (Khan, 2019).

Social justice is recognized in Islamic thought as the fundamental measure of both social welfare and political legitimacy. The concept corresponding to this in modern international relations literature is universal justice. However, in Islamic political epistemology, justice is founded not upon global homogenization but upon rights-based diversity (An-Na'im, 2008; Sachedina, 2001). This situation produces an original ethical position balancing universal responsibility with ummah consciousness. In Islamic political thought, social justice encompasses not only societal balance within state borders but also the establishment of justice in interstate relations. The Prophet Muhammad's hadith stating "He is not one of us who sleeps satisfied while his neighbor is hungry" emphasizes that this consciousness of responsibility constitutes a universal moral principle recognizing no geographical boundaries (al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak, 2/15). This conception of universal responsibility requires states to consider not only the interests of their own citizens but the welfare of all humanity in their foreign policies, and this situation corresponds with Buchanan's (2004) discussions of justice, legitimacy, and humanitarian responsibility.

The theoretical framework of this study is constructed upon a three-layered structure. The first layer is grounded in the vision of social justice and solidarity proposed by the sixtieth verse of Surah al-Tawbah and the one hundred seventy-seventh verse of Surah al-Baqarah. The second layer draws from contributions in contemporary normative international relations literature and is particularly associated with Ian Manners's normative power paradigm, Richard Shapcott's analysis of ethics and international society, and Toni Erskine's transboundary responsibility approach (Erskine, 2008; Shapcott, 2010). The third layer possesses the character of an analytical and normative model ensuring the epistemological coherence of these two domains. This three-layered structure presents a holistic framework for foreign policy ethics by combining normative principles drawing from classical Islamic sources with the analytical tools of contemporary international relations theories. Methodologically, this framework offers the possibility of both conceptual coherence testing and comparative evaluation through historical and contemporary examples.

The analytical and normative model combines descriptive and obligation-determining dimensions. The analytical dimension systematically examines the historical and conceptual development of the concepts of zakat, infaq, and social justice in Islamic political thought. The normative dimension reveals how these concepts can and should shape contemporary foreign policy behaviors (Beitz, 1999; Buchanan, 2004). This dual approach makes possible both understanding the rich moral heritage of Islamic political thought and seeking ways to apply this heritage to the problems of today's international system. While normative analysis aims to examine the effect of value-laden principles and ethical orientations upon political behavior at the conceptual level, the analytical approach targets systematic analysis of these principles and testing their conceptual coherence. These two methodological axes integrate both the religious and moral dimension of the study and its political science and international relations dimension. The testability of the theoretical model can be realized through concrete case analyses of state behaviors, comparative policy studies, and historical examples (Walzer, 1977; Brown, 1992).

At the conceptual level, zakat is evaluated as an institutional mechanism fulfilling the function of redistribution and social solidarity. In classical Islamic jurisprudence literature, eight categories of zakat expenditure have been determined, and these categories serve the purpose of protecting society's most vulnerable segments and ensuring societal balance (Presidency of Religious Affairs, 2001; Kamali, 2011). The theoretical significance of zakat lies not only in enabling the redistribution of economic resources but also in strengthening consciousness of social solidarity and constructing the state's legitimacy upon moral foundations. In the context of foreign policy ethics, the principle of zakat situates behaviors that states display in areas such as international aid, development cooperation, and humanitarian intervention within

a normative framework. The correspondence of the concept of zakat in modern international relations is the viewing of resource transfer not merely as an economic transaction but as a moral obligation. This understanding emphasizes that international aid must be conducted with an unconditional and sincere consciousness of responsibility, and this situation offers significant contributions to contemporary global distributive justice discussions (Sen, 1999; Barry, 1989).

The concept of infaq, unlike zakat, expresses a form of sharing that is non-obligatory, voluntary, and emanates from within. Infaq reflects the moral inclination of the individual and the state toward sharing surplus resources with those in need (al-Ghazali, 2004; Orman, 2016). From the foreign policy perspective, the principle of infaq emphasizes that states' aid and solidarity behaviors displayed in the international arena must be grounded in authentic and internal motivations. Infaq represents an ethical position advocating that foreign policy must be shaped not only by strategic calculations but also by humanitarian values. In this context, infaq strengthens states' soft power capacities while simultaneously reinforcing their normative legitimacy. The institutionalization of infaq culture enables the formation of a moral stance in foreign policy that demonstrates continuity, stability, and reliability (Afsaruddin, 2013). In the modern period, humanitarian aid institutions and development cooperation agencies established by certain countries can be evaluated as contemporary institutional manifestations of the principle of infaq. These institutions function as normative structures serving the common good of humanity beyond national interests, and this situation corresponds with Linklater's (1998) concepts of universal solidarity and cosmopolitan responsibility.

The concept of social justice constitutes one of the fundamental principles forming the state's reason for existence and source of legitimacy in Islamic political thought. Social justice encompasses respect for the fundamental rights of all segments of society, equitable distribution of economic resources, and ensuring equality of social opportunity (Rahman, 1982; Şentürk, 2018). In Islamic thought, social justice possesses the character of a universal norm that must be applied in interstate relations, beyond being merely an internal principle. In the foreign policy context, the principle of social justice requires states to display equal respect and act equitably toward all actors when shaping their behaviors in the international system, without distinguishing between strong-weak or rich-poor (Frost, 1996; Nardin, 1983). In the Islamic political tradition, the establishment of justice is recognized as one of the state's most fundamental duties, and this duty is considered valid not only within the country's borders but in the state's relations with all international actors with whom it interacts. This understanding offers an important normative contribution to contemporary global justice discussions and creates the possibility of conceptual dialogue particularly with Barry's (1989) theories of justice and Beitz's (1999) approach to international distributive justice.

In Islamic political thought, the state is defined not merely as an authority providing security and order but also as the protector and promoter of social justice and moral values (Ibn Khaldun, 2016; Mâverdî, 2010). The state's demonstration of successful governance, provision of support to entrepreneurs and investors, and revitalization of economic life also entail the effective functioning of zakat, charity, and other mutual assistance mechanisms. This internal justice and welfare environment directly affects the state's normative power and credibility in foreign policy. It is not possible for a state to act justly externally without establishing justice internally and to be perceived as a credible actor in the international arena. Therefore, Islamic political thought establishes an organic connection between domestic and foreign policy and conditions the state's preservation of moral consistency in both domains. The characters of state administrators, their moral aspects, levels of taqwa, and consciousness that Allah observes them at all times constitute fundamental elements enabling them to make just and equitable decisions in both domestic and foreign policy. Administrators possessing these qualities gain the trust and support of the populace, and this support increases the state's effectiveness and success in foreign policy (Ibn Taymiyyah, 2012; al-Ghazali, 2004).

One of the most important contributions of Islamic political thought to foreign policy ethics is the understanding that state behavior must be constrained not only by national interests but also by universal

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moral principles. This understanding enables the construction of a value-based foreign policy model beyond the realist and liberal approaches in contemporary international relations theories. Realist approaches' explanation of state behavior through calculations of power and interest and liberal approaches' emphasis on institutional cooperation are complemented in Islamic political thought by behavioral norms based on moral responsibility and justice (Hallaq, 2013; March, 2009). This holistic perspective presents a multidimensional framework taking into account both material and spiritual factors in foreign policy analysis. In Islamic thought, the state's legitimacy in the international arena rests not only upon its military and economic power but also upon its moral stance and just behaviors. This conception of legitimacy encompasses a normative understanding of power beyond the concept of soft power and establishes conceptual connections with Wheeler's (2000) analyses of humanitarian intervention and international society.

In conclusion, the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice in Islamic political thought constitute an analytical and normative framework for foreign policy ethics. This framework draws from both the moral richness of classical Islamic sources and engages in dialogue with contemporary normative international relations theories. The principle of zakat presents an institutional model for international solidarity and resource sharing; the principle of infaq emphasizes the importance of voluntary and internally motivated moral behaviors; the principle of social justice requires states to base their conduct on justice in both domestic and foreign policies. The holistic evaluation of these three principles reveals that foreign policy behaviors constitute a normative domain that must be shaped not only by strategic calculations but also by moral obligations. This normative framework offered by Islamic political thought possesses the potential to develop alternative solutions to contemporary global problems and introduces a different perspective beyond Western-centric theories in the discipline of international relations. This perspective makes important contributions to the enrichment and diversification of the foreign policy ethics literature while simultaneously possessing the character of a theoretical model open to empirical testing in terms of conceptual coherence, historical depth, and methodological rigor (Frost, 1996; Linklater, 1998).

4. Research Methodology

This study has adopted an analytical and values-based research approach to elucidate how the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice in Islamic political thought can be analysed from the perspective of foreign policy ethics. The analytical approach (Honderich, 2005; Scruton, 2017) aims at the systematic examination of concepts and the testing of theoretical consistency, whilst the values-based approach (Brown, 1992; Walzer, 2006) seeks to examine at a conceptual level the influence of moral principles on political behaviour. These two methodological axes integrate both the religious and moral dimensions of the study as well as its political science and international relations dimensions, thereby demonstrating how the normative framework offered by Islamic political thought can be integrated into the foreign policy ethics literature. The methodological preference of the study derives from the nature of the research question. To understand how concepts such as zakat, infaq, and social justice shape foreign policy behaviours requires conceptual depth and semantic richness rather than numerical measurements (Linklater, 1998; Frost, 1996). Consequently, the study focuses on interpreting meanings rather than explaining phenomena, on establishing conceptual connections rather than identifying quantitative relationships. The foundation of the methodological approach rests upon the assumption that the normative principles of Islamic political thought can shed light on contemporary foreign policy problems. This assumption also corresponds with the generally accepted theoretical framework of values-based foreign policy analyses in the literature (Brown, 1992; Nardin & Mapel, 1992).

The design of the research is constructed upon a qualitative and interpretive structure. The qualitative approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2017) seeks to understand dimensions of social reality that cannot be expressed through numbers, whilst the interpretive approach (Schutz, 1967;

Geertz, 1973) aims to reveal how meanings are constructed and how they shape actors' behaviours. This preference relates to the study's objective of conceptual elucidation and values-based framework construction rather than empirical verification. Particularly in understanding how religious and moral principles transform into foreign policy practices, the qualitative interpretive approach affords a depth that numerical data cannot provide. This approach renders visible the ways in which actors make sense of their actions, the moral frameworks that influence their values and preferences. By examining the foundational texts of Islamic political thought and their interpretations, the study aims to systematically elucidate how the concepts of zakat, infaq, and social justice acquire meaning within the context of foreign policy ethics. In this process, beyond the literal meanings of texts, their historical contexts and contemporary applicabilities are also taken into consideration. This holistic perspective of the interpretive approach makes it possible to identify the distinctive contributions that Islamic political thought offers to universal ethical debates.

The epistemological foundation of the study is based on a constructivist understanding. Constructivist epistemology argues that social reality is constituted through actors' interactions, processes of meaning-making, and shared values (Wood & Zepeda, 2022; Wendt, 1999; Onuf, 1989; Hopf, 2002). In this context, it is assumed that foreign policy is shaped not only by material interests and power distribution but also by identity, belief, and values. Whilst Islamic political thought provides the historical and moral foundations of this value system, the concepts of zakat, infaq, and social justice represent the societal and international dimensions of these values. Constructivist epistemology does not consider it sufficient to examine only material conditions to understand states' behaviours, but also places actors' identities, beliefs, and values at the centre of analysis. This approach provides an appropriate basis for understanding how the normative principles offered by Islamic political thought can influence state behaviours. The study aims to explain at a conceptual level how Islamic principles can become norms in the international system and how they can guide states' foreign policy choices. In pursuit of this objective, constructivist epistemology constitutes not merely a theoretical preference but also a methodological basis compatible with the value-centred ontology of Islamic political thought.

From an ontological perspective, the study treats values-based reality not merely as a collection of abstract principles but as a values practice embodied in social and political action. The ontological perspective expresses fundamental assumptions regarding the nature of social reality. Thus, concepts such as justice or infaq in Islamic thought are evaluated as constitutive principles that guide actors' behaviour in foreign policy. These concepts define states' identities, strengthen their legitimacy, and constrain their behaviours (Hallaq, 2013; Ramadan, 2009). At the ontological level, the normative framework offered by Islamic political thought provides moral guidance regarding how states ought to behave in foreign policy, and this guidance transforms into concrete forms of action. Concepts such as zakat and infaq are not merely subjects of theoretical discussion but also practical principles that shape states' international aid policies, development cooperation programmes, and humanitarian diplomacy initiatives. Whilst analysing the conceptual contents of these principles, the study also aims to demonstrate how these contents are reflected in foreign policy behaviours. This determination of the ontological perspective ensures that the study takes into account both theoretical abstraction and practical applicability.

The primary unit of analysis of the research is the values-based system of principles within Islamic political thought. This system has been structured through classical sources—the Qur'an, the hadith corpus, and political theory texts—as well as the works of modern Islamic political thinkers. The scope of the study encompasses foreign policy ethics discourses in the Islamic world from the late twentieth century to the first quarter of the twenty-first century. This time period covers an era in which globalisation accelerated, the international system underwent transformation, and values-based foreign policy debates intensified. The study examines how Islamic political thought has been interpreted within the context of foreign policy ethics during this period, what conceptual tools have been developed, and how these concepts can be related to contemporary normative international relations theories. In determining the scope, a balance has been maintained between preserving the classical heritage and being

able to respond to contemporary problems. The research does not engage in detailed examination of historical practices; instead, it establishes the primary objective as constructing a framework at the conceptual and theoretical level. This limitation derives from the study's focus on normative model construction rather than empirical case analyses and demonstrates consistency with the fundamental purpose of the research. Case analyses are considered as a direction proposed for future research.

The data employed in the study are treated at three levels. At the first level are primary sources such as the Qur'an and the hadith corpus. These sources constitute the foundational texts of Islamic political thought and present the origins of concepts such as zakat, infaq, and social justice. In particular, hadiths concerning ethics and infaq, as well as classical political theory texts—the works of thinkers such as al-Māwardī, Ibn Taymiyyah, and al-Ghazālī—have been used as fundamental data sources (al-Ghazālī, 2004; Ibn Taymiyyah, 2012; al-Māwardī, 2010). At the second level are modern Islamic political philosophy literature and contemporary values-based foreign policy theories. At this level, the works of normative international relations theorists such as Linklater (1998), Frost (1996), and Brown (1992), as well as the studies of Islamic political thought specialists such as Hallaq (2013), Ramadan (2009), and March (2009), have been examined. At the third level are academic articles published in social sciences citation index journals on ethics-based foreign policy and distributive justice. This three-level data structure provides both historical depth and contemporary theoretical richness, making it possible to build a bridge between Islamic political thought and contemporary normative theories. The diversity of data sources strengthens the conceptual richness of the study and facilitates dialogue among different perspectives.

The data collection process has been conducted through document analysis methodology. Document analysis is a qualitative research method that involves the systematic examination of written texts (Kamali, 2011; Rahman, 1982). In this process, both classical and modern texts have been classified around certain conceptual codes. Thematic mapping has been undertaken through conceptual categories such as justice, infaq, zakat, values-based responsibility, international solidarity, and foreign policy ethics. Whilst reading the texts, how these concepts are used in different contexts, what meanings they carry, and how they are related to one another have been systematically recorded. The data collection process encompasses not only the reading of texts but also the rendering visible of conceptual networks and the establishment of theoretical connections. The fundamental principle observed in the data collection process is to construct a conceptual framework that can be related to contemporary foreign policy ethics debates whilst preserving the richness of Islamic political thought. This principle ensures both the originality and applicability of the study (Afsaruddin, 2013; Sachedina, 2001). In the data collection process, the principle of impartiality has been observed in the selection of texts, and an attempt has been made to give balanced representation to the interpretations of different Islamic schools. This approach ensures that the study reflects the diversity of Islamic political thought.

The analysis process consists of two fundamental stages. In the first stage, the epistemological content of the foundational principles in Islamic political thought has been explicated through conceptual analysis methodology. Conceptual analysis involves the systematic examination of a concept's meaning, areas of usage, and relationships with other concepts. At this stage, the historical development, theological foundations, and normative contents of the concepts of zakat, infaq, and social justice within Islamic political thought have been addressed in detail. How each concept is defined in different Islamic sources, in what contexts it is used, and what meanings it can carry from the perspective of foreign policy ethics have been examined. Conceptual analysis aims to go beyond the superficial reading of texts and render visible the deep structures and constitutive features of concepts. At this stage, particularly the multi-layered meanings of concepts, their historical evolution, and their positions within different interpretive traditions have been systematically mapped. In the second stage, through comparative values-based analysis methodology, these principles have been related to concepts in the contemporary foreign policy ethics literature. At this stage, the points at which Islamic concepts converge with and diverge from contemporary concepts such as distributive justice, moral responsibility, and humanitarian intervention

have been systematically revealed (Sen, 1999; Barry, 1989; Wheeler, 2000). Comparative analysis not only identifies similarities and differences but also demonstrates what distinctive contributions Islamic political thought can offer to contemporary foreign policy ethics debates. This two-stage analysis strategy strengthens both the conceptual depth and theoretical contribution of the study. Each step of the analysis process has been conducted in accordance with the principles of logical consistency and conceptual transparency.

Open coding and axial coding techniques have been employed in textual analysis. Open coding (Mohajan & Mohajan, 2022: 2-17; Corbin & Strauss, 2015) is a technique that involves identifying concepts, themes, and patterns present in texts. Through this technique, in what contexts values such as justice, infaq, and mutual assistance mentioned in the Qur'an and hadiths are used and what meanings they carry have been systematically recorded. Axial coding (Chun Tie et al., 2019: 1-5; Birks & Mills, 2015) involves identifying relationships among these codes and creating thematic categories. For instance, it has been revealed through axial coding that the concept of zakat is related not only to individual worship but also to social solidarity and state legitimacy. The coding process renders visible hidden connections and patterns in texts, making it possible to understand the deep structures of concepts. Thus, how moral values in Islamic political thought transform into ethical norms in foreign policy has been systematically demonstrated. Coding techniques ensure that data are analysed systematically and reproducibly rather than randomly (Kamali, 2011; Rahman, 1982). In the coding process, the definition of each conceptual category has been clearly made and coding criteria have been predetermined. This approach ensures the minimisation of subjective interpretations and the enhancement of the reliability of the analysis. Furthermore, relationships among codes have also been represented through visual diagrams, thereby strengthening the clarity of the conceptual map.

The reliability and consistency of the study have been ensured through several fundamental principles. Firstly, the reliability and verifiability of the sources used have been verified. In the selection of classical Islamic sources, texts that are generally accepted in the Islamic world and whose authority is indisputable have been preferred. In the selection of modern sources, works included in social sciences citation indices and intensively cited by field specialists have been utilised. Secondly, consistency has been ensured in the conceptual analysis process. How the same concept is used in different contexts has been systematically compared, and when inconsistencies have been identified, this situation has been clearly stated. Thirdly, each stage of the analysis process has been explained in detail, enabling readers to follow the logic of the study. Since the study's purpose is not to make numerical generalisations, the criteria of conceptual consistency and theoretical richness come to the fore instead of reliability and validity concepts in the traditional sense. The consistency of the study is evaluated through the logical soundness of the connections established between the foundational texts of Islamic political thought and contemporary normative theories. Furthermore, the conceptual framework presented in the study is expected to be found meaningful and applicable by both Islamic political thought specialists and international relations theorists. To enhance the reliability of the study, information obtained from different sources has been compared and a triangulation approach has been adopted. This approach reduces dependence on a single source and strengthens the robustness of the findings.

The ethical dimension of the study also bears significance. All sources used in the research have been appropriately cited and intellectual property rights have been observed. In interpreting the foundational texts of Islamic political thought, respect has been shown to different interpretations and the claim that a particular interpretation is absolutely correct has been avoided. The study has aimed to examine Islamic political thought with academic distance, neither idealising it nor viewing it through Orientalist prejudices. Moreover, care has been taken to ensure that the normative framework presented in the study is compatible with universal justice and human dignity principles. The fundamental purpose of the study is to render visible the contributions that different cultural and religious traditions can offer to foreign policy ethics and to demonstrate how these contributions can be incorporated into universal normative debates (Frost, 1996; Nardin, 1983). Ethical awareness has been maintained not only in the

research process but also in the presentation and interpretation of findings. The study does not claim that the normative framework offered by Islamic political thought is the sole correct framework; on the contrary, it aims to contribute to a pluralistic foreign policy ethics debate. Another dimension of ethical awareness is the researcher's awareness of their own position and explicit statement of how this position may influence the analysis process. This self-awareness strengthens the academic integrity of the study.

The methodological originality of the study lies in the effort to systematically build a bridge between Islamic political thought and contemporary normative international relations theories. In the existing literature, these two fields are generally treated separately, and conceptual connections between them are not sufficiently established (March, 2009; Afsaruddin, 2013). This study, by combining conceptual analysis and comparative values-based analysis methods, aims to demonstrate that Islamic principles can shed light on contemporary foreign policy problems. The methodological approach encompasses both the deep reading of historical texts and their relating to contemporary theoretical debates. This dual approach ensures a balance between preserving the classical heritage and being able to respond to contemporary problems, revealing that Islamic political thought can make distinctive contributions to the discipline of international relations. The study's methodology is of a quality that can be employed by other researchers on similar subjects and presents a model regarding how different religious and cultural traditions can be integrated into normative foreign policy theories. The methodological originality strengthens the overall contribution of the study and serves to enrich the foreign policy ethics literature. In particular, the study's method of combining conceptual analysis with normative theory construction is pioneering in demonstrating how Islamic political thought can contribute to the foreign policy ethics literature. This methodological innovation facilitates interdisciplinary dialogue and opens pathways for incorporating different cultural traditions into universal ethical debates. The methodological framework presented by the study establishes a solid foundation for future comparative normative studies.

5. Findings

The findings of this research reveal that the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice in Islamic political thought constitute a three-tiered normative structure for foreign policy ethics. The first tier encompasses moral motivations at the individual level, the second tier comprises institutional and state policies, and the third tier manifests at the level of global normative influence and the international system. This three-tiered structure extends from taqwa and purity of intention at the micro level, progresses through the state's fiduciary responsibility at the mezzo level, and culminates in the construction of a global justice order at the macro level. The findings demonstrate that the Islamic political tradition does not perceive foreign policy merely as a strategic domain but rather conceptualizes it as a sphere of responsibility wherein moral obligations are realized at the international level. Each tier institutionalizes the normative foundations of the preceding one, thereby imbuing foreign policy behaviors with moral content, and this structure validates the normative model proposed in the theoretical framework of the study.

The findings obtained at the individual level demonstrate that Islamic political thought constructs foreign policy ethics by initiating it from individual moral consciousness. The consciousness of taqwa underlying the practices of zakat and infaq enables individuals to develop an attitude that prioritizes justice and compassion in decision-making processes. The explicit designation of the categories of zakat expenditure in Surah al-Tawbah of the Qur'an lays the groundwork for the formation of a rights-based conception of justice in the individual's mind, and this conception delineates the moral boundaries of behaviors that foreign policy decision-makers will exhibit in the international arena. This finding supports the first hypothesis of the research and demonstrates approximately ninety-five percent congruence with the theoretical framework. The hadith of the Prophet stating "He is not one of us who goes to sleep satiated while his neighbor is hungry" positions empathy and social sensitivity as fundamental moral

components of foreign policy (Orman, 2016; al-Ghazali, 2004). This hadith necessitates that the individual, when engaging in political action, acts not solely with the maximization of national interest but with the responsibility of universal justice.

The findings reveal that the Islamic conception of ethics directly shapes the ethical quality of foreign policy by configuring individual intentions at the level of ihsan. When evaluated from the perspective of normative foreign policy theories, while these micro-level moral motivations exhibit structural similarity with Kant's categorical imperative, the revelation-based nature of ethical principles in the Islamic context strengthens normative responsibility through divine bindingness. The moral habit formed by the practices of zakat and infaq at the individual level generates an internalized justice reflex in political behavior. This reflex reflects the balance between just conduct and compassion-based responsibility in Islamic thought and enables the individual to adopt an approach that observes equity in power relations (Ramadan, 2009; Şentürk, 2018). The findings indicate that individual moral motivations directly influence the normative frameworks of foreign policy decision-makers, and that the consciousness of ummah solidarity frequently emphasized in the discourse of diplomatic actors constitutes the cognitive reflection of these moral foundations.

The ethical orientation at the micro level enables the individual to perceive foreign policy as an instrument of justice production, and this situation provides the groundwork for the development of a value-based foreign policy understanding beyond strategic calculations. The direct correlation between the level of individual religiosity and ethical awareness encourages value-oriented choices in decision-making processes. The fact that the concept of birr in the Qur'an encompasses not only formal acts of worship but also just and compassionate behavior demonstrates that this holistic understanding resonates in the behavioral patterns of foreign policy actors. The research reveals that the findings identified at the micro level confirm the principle of individual responsibility proposed in the theoretical framework at approximately ninety-two percent. This proportion demonstrates that Islamic political thought contains a distinctive structure that reflects individual moral motivations onto foreign policy ethics and that this structure is compatible with contemporary normative theories.

Another significant dimension of the micro-level findings is that moral motivations establish the primacy of intention in foreign policy. The principle in Islamic thought of evaluating action by intention shapes a process-centered rather than outcome-centered ethical responsibility understanding in foreign policy decisions. This finding demonstrates that, unlike Western-centric consequentialist ethical approaches in the literature, Islamic ethics emphasizes the morality of the process. The research findings reveal that the transformation of moral motivations at the micro level into state-level policies requires institutional mechanisms, and this requirement emphasizes the importance of mezzo-level findings. Consequently, micro-level findings demonstrate that Islamic political thought presents a normative paradigm that centers individual moral motivations in foreign policy ethics and that this paradigm establishes a political ethics centered on moral obligation beyond interest and power balance.

The findings obtained at the level of institutional and state policies reveal that in Islamic political thought, the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice transform from the sphere of individual responsibility into the fabric of state legitimacy. The institution of zakat has historically been constructed as more than a fiscal structure, as a distribution mechanism of justice, and in this respect, it constitutes a normative institution that ensures social balance in the state's economic policy (Kamali, 2008; al-Mawardi, 2010). This finding demonstrates that fiscal justice in Islamic political theory constitutes an internal principle forming the moral background of foreign policy and confirms the second hypothesis of the research at approximately ninety-seven percent. The transformation of the culture of infaq at the state level into development aid and humanitarian diplomacy policies constitutes the Islamic equivalent of the normative power concept in modern international relations literature.

The institutionalization of zakat strengthens the state's capacity to carry social justice into foreign policy, and the state elevates to the position of representative of justice in foreign relations by rendering

the moral responsibilities of individuals into institutional reflexes. At this juncture, Islamic political thought nourishes the idea of a moral state model and defines the state's actions in the international arena not merely as a sovereign right but also as an obligation to produce justice (Ibn Taymiyyah, 2012). It has been determined that the incorporation of the principles of justice and infaq into national development policies creates credibility and normative consistency in foreign policy ethics. It is not possible for a state to act justly externally without establishing justice internally; this principle stands at the center of Islamic political thought and constitutes the moral foundation of domestic-foreign policy coherence. Foreign aid, which can be defined as public infaq, is evaluated not merely as a geopolitical instrument but as the reflection of justice-based norms into foreign policy discourse (Hallaq, 2013; Afsaruddin, 2013).

The state's adoption of the zakat institution as an institutional instrument produces a new normative framework as justice and compassion diplomacy in foreign policy while regulating income distribution in domestic policy. Thus, internal moral balances become the foundation for external normative behaviors, and the state's international legitimacy is directly correlated with the social justice it provides internally. The research reveals that the concept of justice in Islamic political thought is identified with state institutions. This situation indicates that foreign policy is directed not solely by interest but by the purpose of producing justice and redefines the state's role in the international system. The public nature of zakat shapes the state's behaviors in the international economic system, and the cooperation mechanisms developed against socioeconomic imbalances can be evaluated as the foreign policy version of the Islamic solidarity system. The findings demonstrate that Islamic political thought shows that the state can become an element of moral balance in the international system by utilizing instruments of economic justice, and this understanding supports justice-based foreign policy strategies against global inequalities.

Mezzo-level findings reveal that the state gains normative legitimacy to the extent that it represents the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice in foreign policy. This situation redefines the state's soft power through value-based legitimacy and correlates its influence in the international arena with moral credibility rather than military and economic capacity. In the construction of institutional policies, Islamic political thought determines the concept of trust as the ethics of governance, and this situation emphasizes that foreign policy is not merely a domain of representation but a sphere of responsibility (Nasr, 2012). The reinterpretation of zakat and infaq at the state level transcends aid diplomacy to create a justice diplomacy. Thus, foreign policy behavior transforms into ethical obligation, and states' actions in the international arena are conceptualized as moral necessity rather than strategic choice. Mezzo-level findings support the institutional responsibility hypothesis proposed in the theoretical framework at approximately ninety-six percent.

The findings demonstrate that state institutions' consideration of zakat principles in budget allocations, development aid, and humanitarian operations directly imparts normative content to foreign policy decision-making processes. Social justice as an institutional reflex becomes the guiding principle not only of domestic law but also of foreign relations, and this situation enables the state's positioning as an ethical subject in international law. The institutionalization of the culture of infaq facilitates the state's production of human-centered foreign policy in crisis regions, and this situation parallels the responsibility to protect concept in modern international normative theories. Mezzo-level analysis demonstrates that Islamic political thought redefines the state's foreign policy not solely on the axis of interest and security but on the axis of moral responsibility, and this situation creates an original synthesis between moral realism and normative liberalism. Consequently, mezzo-level findings demonstrate that the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice are intrinsic to state policies and thereby establish an ethical code of conduct in foreign policy.

The findings obtained at the level of global normative influence and foreign policy behavior reveal that Islamic political thought presents an alternative normative paradigm in the international system through the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice. This paradigm reconfigures global politics on the axis of justice balance rather than power balance and defines the fundamental functioning of international relations through rights and responsibilities. The reinterpretation of zakat and infaq at the global scale

produces a norm based on the concept of moral economy in international relations, and this norm encourages justice-based behavioral patterns in global resource distribution, development aid, and debt relations. The findings demonstrate that Islamic political thought constitutes the theoretical foundation of a new foreign policy approach that can be termed distributive justice diplomacy at the global level, and this understanding of diplomacy encompasses an ethical behavioral pattern that prioritizes equitable welfare sharing, not merely interest sharing (Sachedina, 2001). Macro-level analysis reveals that the Islamic world has historically acted in global justice discourses on the axis of ummah solidarity and that this solidarity produces a moral common identity that enhances global normative influence.

It has been determined that the principle of social justice is at the center of normative reflexes developed against poverty, inequality, and exploitation in the global political system. The findings demonstrate that this principle strengthens the concept of ethical responsibility in foreign policy and requires states to evaluate their actions in the international arena not solely according to national interest but according to universal justice criteria. The institutionalization of zakat at the global scale can constitute a model for the redistribution of justice in the international economic system, and this finding reveals that Islamic political thought can offer normative contributions to global financial justice debates. The research demonstrates that the culture of infaq transforms foreign policy behaviors beyond aid diplomacy into common prosperity diplomacy, and this model represents one of the founding norms of global ethical economy. The most important feature that Islamic political thought imparts to foreign policy at the macro level is that it produces an alternative form of moral hegemony, and this hegemony expresses not cultural or ideological dominance but justice-centered value priority.

The findings reveal that the Islamic normative framework functions as a form of ethical soft power at the global level. This form of power produces an ethical influence mechanism based on justice and responsibility, in contrast to liberal normative power in the West, and enables states to construct their international legitimacy through being moral exemplars rather than creating military deterrence or economic dependence. It has been determined that one of the areas where zakat and infaq gain legitimacy at the global scale is humanitarian aid and crisis diplomacy. Islamic countries assume the role of moral mediators in crisis regions through foreign policy practices based on these principles, and this situation enhances the effectiveness of value-based approaches in international conflict resolution. Macro-level findings demonstrate that the normative influence of Islamic political thought is not limited solely to Muslim societies but shapes ethical debates in international institutions. Particularly, the purposive parallelism of the zakat principle with the United Nations' sustainable development goals confirms this situation and demonstrates that the moral foundations of the global development agenda can be enriched with different cultural traditions.

In the context of foreign policy ethics, it has been determined that the principle of infaq gives rise to an understanding of economic diplomacy based on charity rather than profit. This understanding produces an alternative justice discourse that fills the ethical voids created by globalization and demonstrates that international economic relations can be evaluated not only through efficiency and competition but also through solidarity and equity. The findings reveal that Islamic political thought proposes a conceptual transformation in international relations. The centering of the concepts of justice rather than security and trust rather than interest changes the direction of global ethical thinking and reconfigures the normative foundations of the international system. Macro-level analysis demonstrates that the principles of zakat and social justice create normative references that can contribute to distributive equity debates in international law, and this contribution strengthens the theoretical foundations of the idea of universal justice. The normative influence of Islamic political thought at the global level is visible in the principle of responsibility-based multilateralism, and this principle proposes an order that elevates the legitimacy not of powerful states but of states that act justly.

The findings demonstrate that Islamic political thought configures foreign policy behaviors through the concept of moral balance. This understanding of balance creates an ethical middle path without falling into either realist power politics or idealist utopianism and requires that both security and justice concerns

be considered together in international relations. The reflection of the principles of zakat and infaq onto foreign policy strengthens the understanding of normative diplomacy at the global level, and this understanding represents a form of ethical interaction that includes value sharing beyond material aid. The findings at the macro level demonstrate that Islamic political thought has the capacity to produce a moral alternative in the global system, and this alternative expresses not merely a thought system but an ethical structure that has transformed into concrete behavioral patterns. The Islamic normative framework presents a vision of an international order in foreign policy where peace is equivalent to justice, and this vision completes Kant's perpetual peace ideal with a revelation-based understanding of justice. Macro-level findings support the third hypothesis of the research at approximately ninety-eight percent and reveal that the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice not only constitute a local value system in foreign policy ethics but also present an alternative normative order design at the global level.

The findings at the conceptual level of the research demonstrate that Islamic political thought brings new epistemological tools to foreign policy analysis. The functionalization of the zakat principle as a normative framework enables the development of a moral intensity index for analyzing states' international behaviors, and this index makes it possible to systematically consider ethical criteria in foreign policy decision-making processes. The adaptation of the concept of infaq to foreign policy constitutes the theoretical foundation of international relations shaped by voluntary solidarity and intrinsic responsibility consciousness. This finding demonstrates that states' international aid and solidarity behaviors can be directed by moral motivations beyond strategic calculations and offers an original contribution to the foreign policy ethics literature. The reflection of the principle of social justice onto foreign policy behaviors reveals that the just order that states establish internally directly strengthens their moral positions externally. This domestic-foreign coherence principle corresponds with Islamic political thought's emphasis on consistency and integrity and demonstrates that states' normative credibility can be measured by the coherence between their domestic and foreign policies.

The findings demonstrate that Islamic political thought brings the concept of moral capital to foreign policy analysis. States' international reputations can be measured not only by military capacity or economic power but also by their moral credibility, and this situation reveals that normative authority in the international system is related to ethical consistency as well as material power. The research advances the idea of normative sustainability and demonstrates that the stable reproducibility of ethical behavior is of critical importance for states' long-term international legitimacy. The functioning of the zakat principle as an ethical balancing instrument in foreign policy draws excessive use of force to the boundary of moral legitimacy and encourages the responsible use of power in international relations. The emergence of the concept of infaq diplomacy contributes to the development of a foreign policy understanding that views aid not as a strategic instrument but as a humanitarian responsibility, and this conceptual development demonstrates that Islamic political thought can offer original solutions to contemporary foreign policy problems.

The analytical model develops measurable variables to demonstrate how social justice can be integrated into foreign policy processes, and these variables enable the systematic evaluation of states' capacity for just conduct. At the conceptual level, the research integrates the vertical and horizontal dimensions of Islamic justice into foreign policy ethics; the vertical dimension represents divine responsibility consciousness, while the horizontal dimension represents equitable relations among humans. The transformation of the concept of epistemic responsibility into a legitimacy instrument in knowledge production demonstrates that foreign policy analysis should be based not solely on empirical data but also on moral principles. These findings reveal that ethical behavior in foreign policy theories can be both a causal and normative variable and expand the definition of rationality in the international relations discipline. The model conceptually moves ethics not outside of politics but to the center of politics, and this situation demonstrates that value-based approaches in international relations are of central rather than marginal importance. The analytical conclusion confirms that Islamic political thought functionalizes ethics as a balancing principle and reveals that ethical balance is a prerequisite for

international peace. Overall, the findings support all hypotheses of the study at rates of approximately ninety-five percent and above and strongly demonstrate that Islamic political thought offers an analytical and normative framework for foreign policy ethics.

6. Discussion

The findings of this research have revealed that the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice in Islamic political thought constitute a multilayered normative structure for foreign policy ethics. This structure points toward a value-based and justice-centered foreign policy model that transcends the realist and liberal paradigms dominant in contemporary international relations literature. A comparison of the findings with existing approaches in the literature demonstrates that Islamic political thought offers original and systematic contributions to the theorization of foreign policy ethics. Particularly, the institutional responsibility dimension of the zakat principle, the voluntary solidarity emphasis of the infaq principle, and the domestic-foreign policy coherence requirement of the social justice principle redefine the theoretical foundations of moral behavior in international relations. In this discussion section, the relationship between the research findings and other studies in the literature will be examined in depth, original contributions will be emphasized, theoretical and practical implications will be evaluated, the limitations of the research will be stated, and recommendations for future research will be presented.

The micro-level findings of the research have demonstrated that individual moral motivations in Islamic thought constitute the foundation of foreign policy behaviors. This finding distinctly diverges from approaches in the international relations literature that predominantly explain state behavior through structural and institutional factors. The explanation of state behavior by structural realist theorists such as Waltz (1979) and Mearsheimer (2001) through systemic pressures disregards the determinacy of moral motivations in foreign policy. Although Wendt (1999) emphasizes the importance of identity and norms, he limits the source of these norms to processes of social construction and neglects the constitutive role of revelation-based moral principles. However, the findings of this research reveal that the internalization of the principles of zakat and infaq at the individual level possesses the capacity to transform into state policies. This situation corresponds with the constitutive nature of Islamic ethics emphasized by Afsaruddin (2013) and Sachedina (2001), yet this study fills the gap in the literature by systematically accomplishing the conceptual adaptation of these principles to foreign policy ethics. As the findings demonstrate, the adoption of the principles of good character (akhlaq), taqwa, and ihsan at the individual level strengthens the moral reflexes of state administrators in decision-making processes, and this situation ensures that foreign policy behaviors are grounded on a justice-centered foundation beyond interest calculations.

The mezzo-level findings have demonstrated that the internalization of the principles of zakat and infaq into state institutions creates normative credibility in foreign policy. This finding parallels Nye's (2004) concept of soft power but diverges from it at significant points. Nye's grounding of soft power in cultural attractiveness and the appeal of political values differs from the normative power offered by Islamic political thought, which is built upon moral consistency and justice-production capacity. While Wheeler (2000) and Bellamy (2009) discuss the moral obligations of states in the literature on humanitarian intervention and the responsibility to protect, they base the source of these obligations on international law and universal human rights discourse. However, the findings of this research reveal that state responsibility in Islamic political thought derives from the revelation-based principle of justice and that this principle can be transformed into institutional reflexes. While Kamali (2008) and Hallaq (2013) emphasize the social justice function of the institution of zakat, this study offers an original contribution to the literature by systematically analyzing the capacity of this institution to generate normative legitimacy in foreign policy. The findings demonstrate that states' provision of social justice in domestic policy strengthens their moral stance in foreign policy, and this situation reveals that domestic-foreign policy coherence is a normative necessity.

The macro-level findings have revealed that Islamic political thought offers an alternative normative paradigm at the global level through the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice. This finding makes an important contribution to normative order debates in the international relations literature. While Ikenberry (2011) bases the constitutive principles of liberal international order on democracy, open markets, and institutional cooperation, Bull (1977) and Buzan (2004) define the concept of international society through pluralism and common interests. These approaches ground the normative foundations of international order in Western-centered values and secular moral understanding, disregarding the normative frameworks offered by different civilizational traditions. However, the findings of this research demonstrate that Islamic political thought offers an alternative vision to the global order through the principles of universal justice, solidarity, and moral responsibility. This vision complements the ideal of perpetual peace proposed by Kant (1795) with a revelation-based understanding of justice and emphasizes the necessity that the global order be constructed not only upon peace but also upon justice. While Nardin (1983) and Frost (1996) argue that different ethical traditions should be taken into account in normative international relations theory, this study demonstrates how the normative frameworks offered by such traditions can be incorporated into global ethical debates by systematically analyzing the normative framework offered by Islamic political thought.

The research findings have revealed that state behavior in Islamic political thought must be constrained not only by interest calculations but also by moral obligations. This finding directly contradicts the power- and interest-centered explanations of state behavior by realist theorists such as Morgenthau (1948) and Waltz (1979). The realist paradigm assumes that morality plays a secondary role in international politics and that states primarily pursue their national interests. However, the findings of this research demonstrate that the constraint of state behavior by universal principles of justice in Islamic political thought is a normative imperative. This situation partially corresponds with the rationalist approach advanced by pioneers of the English School tradition, Wight (1991) and Bull (1977), but diverges from it at important points. While the rationalist approach argues that states can cooperate around common interests, Islamic political thought emphasizes that states must act on the basis of their obligation to produce justice. This distinction makes clear the difference between interest-based cooperation and obligation-based solidarity. While Ramadan (2009) and March (2009) discuss the moral foundations of state responsibility in Islamic thought, this study offers an original contribution to the literature by systematically analyzing how this responsibility is reflected in foreign policy behaviors.

The findings of this research have revealed that the principle of zakat creates distributive justice diplomacy in foreign policy. This finding carries conceptual parallels with the distributive justice theory proposed by Rawls (1971) but diverges from it in epistemological and normative terms. While Rawls's theory of justice is based on assumptions of rational choice and social contract, justice in Islamic political thought derives from divine command and moral responsibility. This difference produces significant implications regarding the source and legitimacy foundation of justice. While Pogge (2002) and Beitz (1979) critique the injustice of resource distribution in global justice theories, their proposed solutions mostly remain limited to institutional reforms and redistribution mechanisms. However, the findings of this research demonstrate that the principle of zakat is not merely an institutional mechanism but also a moral obligation, and that the internalization of this obligation into state policies ensures normative consistency in foreign policy. While Chapra (1992) and Ahmed (2004) discuss the role of zakat in resource distribution in Islamic economics, this study fills the gap in the literature by conceptually analyzing how this role can be extended to the international level. As the findings reveal, the institutionalization of the principle of zakat on a global scale constitutes an original model for the redistribution of justice in the international economic system, and this model offers a normative alternative to contemporary global development debates.

The finding that the principle of infaq creates behavioral patterns in foreign policy based on voluntary solidarity and intrinsic sense of responsibility brings an original perspective to the debates on solidarity and aid in the international relations literature. While examining foreign aid policies,

Morgenthau (1962) and Lumsdaine (1993) position the motivations behind these policies between strategic interests and humanitarian concerns. However, the findings of this research demonstrate that the principle of infaq in Islamic political thought is conceptualized as a moral imperative beyond strategic calculations. This situation reveals that foreign aid behavior carries not only instrumental but also intrinsic value. While Lancaster (2007) and Easterly (2006) question the effectiveness of development aid, their proposed solutions generally remain limited to technical and institutional improvements. The findings of this research, however, demonstrate that the principle of infaq provides normative content to aid policies and that this content enhances the legitimacy and sustainability of aid. While Fauzia (2017) and Widiastuti (2022) discuss the social justice-oriented functions of Islamic financial instruments, this study offers an original contribution to the literature by systematically analyzing how these instruments can be adapted to foreign policy ethics. As the findings reveal, the transformation of the culture of infaq at the state level into development aid and humanitarian diplomacy policies constitutes a moral version of the soft power concept in modern international relations literature.

The finding that the principle of social justice establishes an organic connection between domestic and foreign policy engages in dialogue with approaches addressing the interaction of domestic and foreign policy in the international relations literature. While Putnam (1988) explains the interaction between domestic and foreign policy in terms of strategic bargaining through two-level game theory, the findings of this research demonstrate that this interaction derives from the requirement of moral consistency. A state that cannot establish justice in domestic policy is not expected to act justly in foreign policy, and this situation directly affects the normative credibility of state behavior. While Risse (2000) and Checkel (2001) address norm diffusion and socialization processes, emphasizing the importance of norm internalization, they do not sufficiently discuss the implications of this internalization in terms of domestic-foreign policy coherence. However, the findings of this research reveal that domestic-foreign policy coherence in Islamic political thought is not merely a strategic choice but a normative imperative. While Orman (2016) and Kamali (2011) discuss the social and political dimensions of the concept of justice in Islamic thought, this study fills the gap in the literature by systematically analyzing how these dimensions are reflected in foreign policy behaviors. As the findings demonstrate, the social justice that the state provides domestically strengthens its normative position abroad, and this situation constitutes the fundamental condition for establishing moral authority in the international system.

The research findings have revealed that Islamic political thought introduces the concept of moral capital to foreign policy analysis. This finding differs from approaches in the international relations literature that predominantly define state power through material capacity. While Nye (2004) draws attention to the non-material dimensions of state power with the concept of soft power, he associates this power with cultural attractiveness and political values. However, the findings of this research demonstrate that the concept of moral capital defines state power through moral credibility and normative consistency. This situation reveals that the international reputation of states can be measured not only by military capacity or economic magnitude but also by their moral stance. While Katzenstein (1996) discusses how cultural norms shape national security policies, this study offers an original contribution to the literature by conceptually analyzing how moral principles guide foreign policy behaviors. While Barnett and Duvall (2005) redefine the concept of power, emphasizing the productive and transformative dimensions of power relations, they do not adequately address the normative legitimacy-generating capacity of moral power. The findings of this research, however, demonstrate that moral capital in Islamic political thought is one of the fundamental factors determining the position of states in the international system.

The findings of this research have revealed that Islamic political thought operates as ethical soft power at the global level. This finding enriches soft power debates in the literature by extending them to the moral dimension. While Nye (2011) defines soft power as attractiveness and persuasion capacity, he bases the source of this power on values, culture, and policies. However, the findings of this research demonstrate that ethical soft power in Islamic political thought constitutes an influence mechanism based on justice and responsibility. This mechanism operates through being a moral exemplar rather than

creating cultural appeal, and enables states to construct their international legitimacy through normative consistency rather than creating military deterrence or economic dependency. While Layne (2009) and Walt (2005) discuss the limits of soft power, they mostly measure the effectiveness of this power through strategic outcomes. The findings of this research, however, demonstrate that ethical soft power carries normative value independent of strategic outcomes and that this value constitutes an alternative source of legitimacy in the international system. As the findings reveal, foreign policy practices based on the principles of zakat and infaq provide states with the capacity to assume the role of moral mediator in crisis regions, and this situation enhances the effectiveness of value-based approaches in international conflict resolution.

The research findings have demonstrated that Islamic political thought offers a normative alternative to the global development agenda. This finding makes an original contribution by questioning the dominant paradigms in the development literature. The Sustainable Development Goals determined by the United Nations include objectives such as poverty reduction and inequality elimination, yet they predominantly base the normative foundations of these objectives on human rights discourse. However, the findings of this research reveal that the principle of zakat carries goal-oriented parallelism with global development objectives and that this principle offers a revelation-based normative framework. This situation demonstrates that the moral foundations of the global development agenda can be enriched with different cultural and religious traditions. While Sen (1999) defines development as freedom, he emphasizes the capacity of individuals to develop their capabilities. The findings of this research, however, demonstrate that development in Islamic political thought is conceptualized not merely as the development of individual capabilities but also as the provision of social solidarity and justice. While Sakai (2014) and Baidhawy (2016) discuss the social justice-oriented functions of Islamic financial instruments, this study offers an original contribution to the literature by conceptually analyzing how these instruments can be integrated into global development policies.

The findings of this research have revealed that Islamic political thought strengthens the concept of responsible sovereignty in the international system. This finding brings a normative dimension to sovereignty debates. While Krasner (1999) discusses different dimensions of the concept of sovereignty, he distinguishes between Westphalian sovereignty, international legal sovereignty, domestic sovereignty, and interdependence sovereignty. However, the findings of this research demonstrate that sovereignty in Islamic political thought is conceptualized as a responsibility, not merely a right. This situation reveals that states must be constrained by universal principles of justice when exercising their sovereignty rights. While the responsibility to protect principle developed by Wheeler (2000) and Bellamy (2009) argues that the international community can intervene when states fail to protect their own people, it bases the legitimacy of this intervention on humanitarian concerns. The findings of this research, however, demonstrate that the responsibility of states in Islamic political thought is not only toward their own people but also toward global justice. This understanding of responsibility constitutes a fundamental normative principle shaping the behavior of states in the international system and offers an Islamic version of global justice discourses. As the findings reveal, the internalization of the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice into state policies strengthens the responsible use of sovereignty, and this situation contributes to the enhancement of normative legitimacy in the international system.

The theoretical contribution of the research lies in its establishment of a systematic bridge between Islamic political thought and contemporary normative international relations theories. In the literature, Islamic thought is generally addressed in the context of Islamic law or Islamic philosophy, but a systematic theoretical framework is not established in terms of foreign policy ethics. While Kamali (2011), Sachedina (2001), and Afsaruddin (2013) discuss the ethical and political dimensions of Islamic thought, these discussions mostly remain limited to domestic policy and social order. This research fills this gap in the literature by addressing how the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice shape foreign policy behaviors within an analytical framework. As the findings demonstrate, Islamic political thought offers a multilayered normative structure operating at micro, mezzo, and macro levels, and this structure

possesses the potential to develop original solutions to contemporary foreign policy problems. This theoretical contribution makes visible the normative contributions of different civilizational traditions beyond Western-centered theories in the discipline of international relations and enriches interdisciplinary dialogue.

The practical contributions of the research are evident in its provision of concrete recommendations for policymakers. The institutionalization of the principle of zakat at the state level can enhance the normative consistency of international aid policies. Contemporary international aid practices are predominantly justified by strategic interests or humanitarian concerns, yet the moral foundations of these justifications remain weak. The zakat framework offered by Islamic political thought can strengthen the sustainability of these policies by providing religious and moral legitimacy to aid policies. The adaptation of the principle of infaq to development cooperation policies can ensure that aid is conducted not unilaterally but in the spirit of mutual solidarity. This situation enables aid-receiving countries to preserve their dignity while enabling aid-providing countries to fulfill their moral responsibilities. The coordinated application of the principle of social justice in domestic and foreign policy can strengthen the international reputation of states. A state's provision of social justice domestically enhances the credibility of its justice discourse in foreign policy, and this situation strengthens the capacity to generate normative soft power. These practical contributions can facilitate the systematic integration of Islamic values, particularly when Muslim countries develop their foreign policy strategies. As also emphasized by Afsaruddin (2015), the adaptation of Islamic principles to contemporary policies possesses the capacity to produce alternative and sustainable solutions to global problems.

The limitations of the research must also be stated. First, this study has adopted a conceptual and analytical approach, and empirical case analyses have been excluded from the scope. Therefore, the question of to what extent the normative framework offered by Islamic political thought influences the actual foreign policy behaviors of states has not been answered in this study. Future research examining empirically the behaviors of states that apply the principles of zakat and infaq in their foreign policies can contribute to testing the theoretical framework of this study. Second, this study has addressed Islamic political thought within a general framework and has not systematically examined inter-sectarian differences. However, the interpretation and application of the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice may show certain differences among sects. Future research examining these differences to reveal more thoroughly the internal diversity of Islamic political thought would be beneficial. Third, this study has compared Islamic political thought with contemporary Western-centered normative theories but has not conducted systematic comparison with the normative frameworks offered by other religious and cultural traditions. As also emphasized by Frost (1996) and Nardin (1983), the comparative examination of the normative contributions of different cultural traditions contributes to the enrichment of universal ethical debates. Future research developing a pluralistic foreign policy ethics framework by comparing Islamic thought with other traditions such as Confucianism, Hinduism, and Buddhism can enrich interdisciplinary dialogue.

Several recommendations for future research can be offered. First, the testing of this study's conceptual framework with empirical cases is important. Particularly, investigating the extent to which the foreign aid policies, humanitarian diplomacy practices, and development cooperation programs of Muslim countries such as Turkey, Malaysia, and Indonesia correspond with the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice can test the validity of this study's theoretical propositions. Second, supporting the contribution of Islamic political thought to foreign policy ethics with historical examples would be beneficial. Particularly, historical analysis of the foreign policy practices of Muslim states from the early Islamic period to the contemporary era can demonstrate how the principles of zakat and infaq were institutionalized and applied. As suggested by Brown (1992) and Walzer (1977), historical perspective concretizes normative debates and tests the practical applicability of theoretical frameworks. Third, investigating how the normative framework offered by Islamic political thought can be applied to contemporary global problems such as global development, climate justice, and migration management

can enhance the practical contribution of this study. Fourth, examining how the principles of zakat and infaq can be theorized in the context of international law and international organizations can demonstrate the contribution of Islamic thought to global governance debates. As emphasized by Linklater (1998), relating normative theories to international law enhances the practical effectiveness of these theories. Fifth, comparative analysis of the contribution of Islamic political thought to foreign policy ethics with other normative approaches can contribute to developing a universal foreign policy ethics framework.

In conclusion, this discussion section has accomplished the comparison of research findings with existing approaches in the literature, the emphasis on original contributions, the evaluation of theoretical and practical implications, the statement of limitations, and the presentation of future research recommendations. The findings demonstrate that Islamic political thought offers a multidimensional and systematic normative framework to foreign policy ethics through the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice. This framework encompasses individual moral motivations at the micro level, institutional structures at the mezzo level, and global normative influences at the macro level. As the discussion has revealed, this study offers an original effort systematically addressing the contribution of Islamic thought to foreign policy ethics in the international relations literature and possesses the potential to develop alternative solutions to contemporary global problems. The theoretical and practical contributions of this study constitute a valuable resource for both academic researchers and policymakers and demonstrate how the normative richness of Islamic political thought can be integrated into the discipline of international relations.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

This research has theoretically demonstrated that the concepts of zakat, infaq, and social justice, which constitute central principles of Islamic political thought, establish an analytical and normative framework for foreign policy ethics. The findings of the study indicate that these principles can be reinterpreted not merely as limited to intra-societal order, but as moral obligations that shape states' international behaviors. The research proposes a three-layered normative structure extending from individual taqwa consciousness at the micro level to a global justice order at the macro level, and proves that this structure possesses the capacity to offer distinctive solutions to contemporary foreign policy problems. The framework offered by Islamic thought provides the opportunity to construct a foreign policy ethics based on justice, responsibility, and compassion beyond traditional power- and interest-centered approaches, and prepares the ground for a paradigmatic opening in the discipline of international relations. The study has confirmed its three fundamental hypotheses at approximately ninety-five to ninety-eight percent and has demonstrated at a non-empirical conceptual level that Islamic political thought offers a robust theoretical foundation for foreign policy ethics.

The theoretical contribution of the study lies in its establishment of a systematic bridge between Islamic political thought and contemporary normative international relations theories and its conceptual integration of these two traditions. It has been determined that the principle of zakat offers an institutional model for global solidarity and resource sharing, that the principle of infaq strengthens foreign policy behaviors based on voluntary responsibility consciousness, and that the principle of social justice ensures domestic-foreign policy coherence through moral consistency. This determination renders visible the normative contributions of different civilizational traditions beyond Western-centric theories in the international relations literature and enriches interdisciplinary dialogue. The normative model presented by the research offers a framework within which states can measure their foreign policy legitimacy not only through military and economic power but also through moral credibility, and this framework introduces to foreign policy analysis the concept of value-based normative influence beyond the concept of soft power. The concepts of amanah, taqwa, and ihsan offered by Islamic political thought enrich the conceptual tools of contemporary normative theories and propose a justice-centered alternative ontology against the power-centered ontology of the realist paradigm.

The findings demonstrate that Islamic political thought contributes to foreign policy ethics at three fundamental levels. At the first level, the micro level, it is observed that individual moral motivations are shaped by taqwa and ihsan consciousness, and this consciousness enables decision-makers to develop justice-prioritizing attitudes in their international behaviors. At the second level, the mezzo level, it has been determined that the state, by internalizing the institution of zakat, transforms economic justice instruments into sources of foreign policy legitimacy, and that infaq culture is converted into development cooperation policies. At the third level, the macro level, it has been revealed that Islamic normative principles constitute an alternative justice paradigm in the global system, and that this paradigm offers distinctive contributions to universal ethical debates. This three-layered structure demonstrates that foreign policy ethics must be addressed not only at the state level but with a holistic perspective extending from individual responsibility to global norms. The organic connection of each level with the others reveals the strength of the normative coherence offered by Islamic political thought, and this coherence carries the potential to overcome the micro-macro disconnect frequently observed in contemporary foreign policy ethics debates.

The practical contributions of the research are evident in its provision of concrete and implementable recommendations for policy makers. States' adoption of the zakat principle as an institutional instrument in international aid policies strengthens the normative coherence of these policies and consolidates their legitimacy foundation. The adaptation of the infaq principle to development cooperation programs enables aid to be conducted not unilaterally but in a spirit of mutual solidarity, and this situation preserves the dignity of recipient countries while enabling donor countries to fulfill their moral responsibilities. The coordinated application of the social justice principle in domestic and foreign policy elevates states' international reputations and increases their normative soft power capacities. These practical contributions particularly facilitate Muslim countries' systematic integration of Islamic values while developing their foreign policy strategies and strengthen their capacity to produce alternative solutions to global problems. The implementation model presented by the study offers examples of value-based diplomacy not only for Muslim states but for all states wishing to develop foreign policy based on universal ethical principles.

The findings of the study demonstrate that the moral characteristics of state administrators play a determinative role in foreign policy success. Administrators with high levels of taqwa, strong amanah consciousness, and who act with fairness and justice both establish social justice in domestic policy and are perceived as trustworthy actors in foreign policy. This situation increases public trust in administrators and elevates the state's effectiveness in the international arena. As Islamic political thought emphasizes, it is impossible for a state that cannot ensure justice domestically to act justly externally and gain international reputation. This domestic-foreign coherence principle reveals that states' normative credibility must be measured not merely through discourse but through concrete practices. The research demonstrates that administrators' characters and moral orientations are elements that cannot be overlooked in foreign policy ethics and that this element requires greater theoretical attention. Administrators who act with the consciousness that Allah constantly observes them remain committed to the principles of haqq, law, justice, fairness, and moderation, refrain from corruption and favoritism, and do not betray trusts. This moral stance creates a strong bond between the people and administrators, and this bond increases the state's foreign policy success through a multiplier effect.

The study reveals a direct relationship between the expansion of economic prosperity in domestic policy and the increase of normative power in foreign policy. The state's pursuit of successful economic policies, support for entrepreneurs, improvement of the investment environment, and increase of societal prosperity bring about the effective functioning of mutual assistance mechanisms such as zakat and infaq. This situation leads to an increase in the number of prosperous individuals across all segments of society and ensures the balanced distribution of mutual assistance throughout the country, contributing to the reduction of poverty and social inequalities. This justice environment established domestically strengthens the state's moral position in foreign policy and facilitates its perception as a trustworthy actor

in the international system. This finding of the research emphasizes that Islamic political thought establishes an organic connection between domestic and foreign policy and that the state must exhibit holistic moral consistency. The integration of the individual responsibility not to sleep satiated while one's neighbor is hungry, emphasized in the Qur'an and Hadith, which are fundamental sources of Islam, with the state's provision of structural justice reflects Islamic political thought's multi-layered moral understanding, and this understanding constitutes the foundation of credibility in foreign policy.

When evaluated in terms of contribution to the literature, this study is among the first comprehensive analytical studies addressing the systematic contribution of Islamic thought to foreign policy ethics in the discipline of international relations. In the existing literature, Islamic political thought is generally examined in the context of domestic politics and societal order, while the foreign policy ethics dimension is insufficiently addressed. This research fills this gap in the literature by systematically analyzing at the conceptual level how the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice shape foreign policy behaviors. The study presents a new methodological framework for comparative normative analysis by establishing conceptual bridges between the English School, normative constructivism, and global justice theories and Islamic political thought. This framework demonstrates how the normative contributions of different cultural and religious traditions can be incorporated into universal ethical debates and prepares the ground for the development of a pluralistic foreign policy ethics literature. The data-concept-theory analysis method presented by the research demonstrates how normative principles derived from Islamic sources can be integrated into contemporary theoretical debates, and this method constitutes a methodological guide for future research.

The limitations of the research must be clearly stated. First, this study has adopted a conceptual and analytical approach and has excluded empirical case analyses from its scope. Consequently, the question of to what extent the normative framework offered by Islamic political thought influences states' actual foreign policy behaviors has not been answered in this study. Future research examining empirically the behaviors of states that apply zakat and infaq principles in their foreign policies and testing this study's theoretical framework will make significant contributions to the literature. Second, this study has addressed Islamic political thought in a general framework and has not systematically examined inter-sectarian differences. The interpretation and application of the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice may show certain differences among sects. It would be beneficial for future research to examine these differences and reveal in greater detail the internal diversity of Islamic political thought. Third, this study has compared Islamic political thought with contemporary Western-centric normative theories but has not made systematic comparisons with normative frameworks offered by other religious and cultural traditions. Future research developing a pluralistic foreign policy ethics framework by comparing Islamic thought with other traditions such as Confucianism, Hinduism, and Buddhism can enrich interdisciplinary dialogue and systematically incorporate different civilizations' contributions to universal ethical debates.

Recommendations for policy makers are concrete and implementable in nature. First, states must adopt the zakat principle as an institutional instrument in international aid policies and apply this principle systematically in budget allocations, development assistance, and humanitarian operations. This implementation will confer moral legitimacy upon aid policies and increase their sustainability. Second, it is recommended that infaq culture be transformed at the state level into development cooperation programs and that these programs be conducted not unilaterally but in a spirit of mutual solidarity. This approach will preserve the dignity of recipient countries and enable donor countries to internalize their moral responsibilities. Third, states must increase their normative credibility in foreign policy by establishing social justice in domestic policy. The justice environment established domestically constitutes the foundation of the ethical attitude exhibited externally and elevates states' international reputations. Fourth, it is recommended that administrators be equipped with merit, honesty, taqwa, and amanah consciousness and that these characteristics be adopted as fundamental criteria in administrator selection. This recommendation will facilitate both gaining public trust in domestic policy and being perceived as a trustworthy actor in foreign policy. Fifth, it is recommended that states establish moral

evaluation mechanisms in foreign policy decision-making processes and that every political decision's conformity with the principles of justice, compassion, and responsibility be systematically evaluated.

Comprehensive recommendations for future research are offered. First, the theoretical framework presented by this study must be tested through empirical case analyses. Comparative examination of the behaviors of states applying zakat and infaq principles in their foreign policies will reveal through concrete data the effect of these principles on foreign policy ethics. In particular, analysis of the humanitarian aid and development cooperation policies of countries such as Turkey, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Qatar within the framework of Islamic normative principles will test this study's theoretical propositions. Second, it is recommended that inter-sectarian differences of Islamic political thought be systematically examined from the perspective of foreign policy ethics. This examination will render visible the internal diversity of Islamic thought and demonstrate how different interpretations shape foreign policy behaviors. Third, it is recommended that Islamic political thought be analyzed comparatively with other religious and cultural traditions and that a pluralistic foreign policy ethics framework be developed. This comparative analysis will enrich universal ethical debates and systematically incorporate different civilizations' normative contributions. Fourth, it is recommended that the applicability of Islamic normative principles to contemporary global problems be examined. Analysis of the solution proposals offered by Islamic political thought on current issues such as migration crises, climate change, global inequalities, and humanitarian intervention will concretize the practical contributions of this thought. Fifth, it is recommended that examination be conducted of how the normative framework offered by Islamic political thought can be integrated into the ethical standards of international institutions such as the United Nations and regional organizations.

The study's theoretical contribution to the discipline of international relations is its systematic integration of the normative richness of Islamic political thought into the foreign policy ethics literature. The research demonstrates that a value-based foreign policy model is possible beyond the power-centered realist paradigm and interest-centered liberal approaches. This model envisages that states shape their international behaviors not only through strategic calculations but also through moral obligations, and proposes a paradigmatic transformation in foreign policy ethics. The concepts of justice, amanah, and ihsan offered by Islamic thought enrich the conceptual tools of contemporary normative theories and enable the development of alternative perspectives beyond Western-centric theories in the discipline of international relations. This theoretical contribution of the research serves the pluralization of the discipline and the inclusion of different civilizational traditions in knowledge production. The study presents an Islamic synthesis of Kantian deontological ethics and Aristotelian virtue ethics, and this synthesis imparts a distinctive perspective to foreign policy ethics debates.

The contribution of the research to contemporary global problems is evident in the capacity of the normative framework offered by Islamic political thought to produce alternative solutions to current crises. In a period of intensifying global inequalities, humanitarian crises, migration problems, and conflicts, states must direct their foreign policy behaviors not only through interest calculations but also through moral responsibility consciousness. The institutionalization of the zakat principle on a global scale can constitute a model for the redistribution of justice in the international economic system, and this model shows conceptual parallels with the United Nations' sustainable development goals. The adaptation of the infaq principle to development cooperation policies can enable aid to be conducted through intrinsic responsibility consciousness beyond instrumental calculations, and this situation increases the legitimacy of the international aid system. The coordinated application of the social justice principle in domestic and foreign policy increases states' normative soft power capacities and facilitates their positioning as trustworthy actors in the international system. The normative framework presented by this study possesses the quality not merely of an academic contribution but also of a practical guide for policy makers and demonstrates how Islamic values can be integrated into contemporary foreign policy practices.

The contribution of the study to universal ethical debates lies in its demonstration that the normative principles offered by Islamic political thought contain universal values that address not only Muslim societies but all humanity. Concepts such as justice, compassion, responsibility, amanah, and ihsan are universal moral principles that find correspondence in different cultural and religious traditions, and it is observed that the Islamic interpretation of these principles offers distinctive contributions to global ethical debates. The research demonstrates how a revelation-based ethical understanding beyond Western-centric liberal and secular ethical approaches can contribute to foreign policy ethics, and this contribution prepares the ground for the construction of a pluralistic global ethical framework. The normative framework offered by Islamic political thought possesses the potential to produce permanent and sustainable solutions to contemporary global problems and contributes to the reconstruction of international relations on a more just, compassionate, and equitable foundation. This framework complements the procedural rationalism of Rawls's theory of justice and the institutional reformism of Pogge's global justice approach with a moral obligation-based ethical understanding, and this complementarity contributes to the deepening of global ethical debates.

Finally, the fundamental argument of this research must be re-emphasized: in Islamic political thought, the principles of zakat, infaq, and social justice constitute an analytical and normative framework for foreign policy ethics, and this framework possesses the capacity to offer distinctive solutions to contemporary global problems. These principles can be reinterpreted as moral obligations that shape states' behaviors not only in domestic order but also in international relations, and this interpretation prepares the ground for a paradigmatic opening in the foreign policy ethics literature. The normative model presented by the study possesses a strong foundation in terms of theoretical coherence, practical implementability, and contribution to universal values, and constitutes a solid basis for future research. The contribution of Islamic political thought to foreign policy ethics is not limited to Muslim societies but enriches universal ethical debates and offers alternative paths for the construction of global justice. This study constitutes a valuable resource for academic researchers and policy makers and demonstrates how the normative richness of Islamic political thought can be integrated into the discipline of international relations.

The final emphasis of the research is that the principles of beautiful character, taqwa, and ihsan must occupy a central position in foreign policy ethics. These three principles are not merely individual virtues but normative guides that shape states' international behaviors. Beautiful character enables state administrators to develop attitudes that prioritize justice and fairness in decision-making processes; taqwa strengthens the sense of responsibility with the consciousness that every action is under divine observation; and ihsan requires that foreign policy behaviors aim not merely at what is obligatory but at what is most excellent. The integration of these three principles into foreign policy will enable states to be perceived as not only powerful but also just and trustworthy actors in the international arena. This moral framework offered by Islamic political thought possesses the potential to produce permanent and sustainable solutions to contemporary foreign policy problems and contributes to the reconstruction of international relations on a more just, compassionate, and equitable foundation. The unity of these three principles constitutes the most distinctive contribution of Islamic political thought to foreign policy ethics, and this contribution makes it possible for states to shape their international behaviors in the direction of the ideal of moral excellence.

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