

Reconstructing the Theory of Production within the Islamic Economic Paradigm: A Normative and Applied Study

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Abstract

Islamic economics refers to an economic system founded on the principles and structure of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, with the ultimate aim of achieving *maslahah* (public benefit) for humanity. Conceptually and in principle, Islamic economics is fixed; however, in practice, it can be flexible and adaptive depending on specific circumstances and conditions. The fundamental principles of Islamic economics can be summarized into four key values: *tawhid* (monotheism), balance, free will, and responsibility. Production in Islamic economics is not merely the physical creation of something new, but also the process of adding utility to goods through various productive activities. The ultimate goal of production is to achieve happiness in both this world and the hereafter, in line with the objectives of *maqasid al-shari'ah*. These objectives dictate that production activities must be based on Islamic values, ensuring that the goods or services produced do not contradict the preservation of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and wealth. Production priorities should align with the hierarchy of needs: *dharuriyyat* (essentials), *hajiyyat* (complementary needs), and *tahsiniyyat* (refinements). Moreover, production must account for aspects such as justice, social welfare, *zakat*, charity (*sadaqah*), *almsgiving* (*infak*), and endowments (*waqf*). It should also ensure optimal management of natural resources, avoid waste and excess, and prevent environmental degradation. A fair distribution of profits among owners, managers, and employees must also be maintained. Production cannot be separated from the factors of production, which include natural resources (land), labor, capital, management, technology, and raw materials.

1. Introduction

The economy consists of three interrelated components: production, distribution, and consumption. Production is the earliest and most fundamental stage of economic activity, as distribution and consumption can only occur after goods or services are produced. In general, production refers to the process of transforming raw materials into semi-finished or finished goods through several stages, including the provision of inputs, processing, and final output. These three components form an inseparable sequence of economic activities that influence one another; however, production remains the starting point of all economic processes (Kholil & Muhdi, 2016).

Production is therefore the primary activity through which goods and services are created. Without production, subsequent economic activities such as distribution and consumption cannot take place. Once

production has been completed, other activities can proceed according to their respective roles. For this reason, production holds a central and strategic position in economic activities (Lailatis Syarifah, 2021).

In practice, many producers who lack an understanding of Islamic law fail to recognize the boundaries between *halal* and *haram*. They tend to prioritize material gain by producing anything that can generate profit, regardless of whether their products bring benefit or harm, align with moral values, or violate ethical norms. This approach reflects the principles of a capitalist economy that emphasize maximum profit as the ultimate goal. Recently, there has been a rapid growth of businesses claiming to be *sharia*-based; however, many of them do not fully implement Islamic principles in their production processes (Muhammad M. Suyanto, 2020).

Such practices lead producers to focus solely on profit maximization without

considering the welfare of other parties, particularly consumers. In Islamic teachings, it is strictly prohibited to produce goods or services that can damage faith, morality, social identity, religious values, or ethical norms, or that prioritize worldly gains while neglecting the hereafter. Umar ibn Khattab's economic jurisprudence outlines several principles of production ethics, including: (1) the aspect of faith, which views economic activity as a form of worship; (2) the aspect of knowledge, requiring Muslims to understand sharia laws related to economic activities to distinguish between what is lawful and unlawful; and (3) the aspect of action, which represents the application of faith and knowledge in producing goods ethically, thereby influencing fair distribution (Moh Idil Ghufon, 2020).

To implement ethical production activities in accordance with Islamic teachings, ethical values must be instilled from the very beginning of the production process. Islamic production ethics should be applied primarily at the production stage, as it serves as the core of all subsequent economic activities. Economists generally define production as the creation of wealth through human utilization of environmental resources.

The application of Islamic production ethics begins with the production process and extends to distribution and buying-selling activities. A fundamental question arises: do production activities require ethics? If ethics are understood as moral principles that distinguish right from wrong, then ethics are indispensable in production activities. Production involves various actors who may justify unethical means in pursuit of maximum profit, leading to domination by stronger actors while marginalizing weaker ones. Such conditions often result in injustice and exploitation within production systems (Lailatis Syarifah, 2021).

Increasing ethical awareness among producers encourages a shift from a purely capitalist economic mindset toward a sharia-based economic system that prohibits elements of *MAGRIB*—*maysir* (gambling), *gharar*

(uncertainty), and *riba* (usury)—in production activities. Numerous studies indicate a positive relationship between ethical production practices and business success. Conversely, dishonest production practices that prioritize profit while harming others often lead to the downfall of companies, including large corporations. Islamic regulations on production ethics provide clear guidance to ensure that production activities develop sustainably and receive blessings from Allah SWT, ultimately benefiting both producers and consumers (Kholil & Muhdi, 2020).

Islamic production ethics represent moral principles that distinguish good from bad in production activities. By adhering to these principles, Muslim producers become aware of the presence of God in every aspect of their economic activities. Production in Islam is not solely oriented toward worldly outcomes but must also consider accountability in the hereafter. Therefore, ethical considerations in production hold a central position in Islamic economic thought (Buhari Alma, 1997).

Economic and production activities are inherently linked to ethics and cannot be separated from the socio-cultural context in which they occur. As with other aspects of human life, economic activities are always associated with ethical values, giving rise to the concept of ethical production practices.

Islam provides comprehensive sharia regulations governing all aspects of life, including *muamalah* (economic and business activities). The primary objective of implementing sharia principles in production behavior is to achieve blessed and dignified income (*rizki*), promote equitable development, fulfill societal needs, create employment opportunities, and ensure fair income distribution without causing prolonged social imbalance (Gitosudarmo & Indriyo, 2022).

However, contemporary realities often contradict these ideals. Unjust and unethical practices in *muamalah*—such as dishonest production, unfair bargaining, and transactions involving *MAGRIB* elements—are increasingly

prevalent. Despite numerous warnings in the Qur'an regarding ethical economic conduct, many individuals continue to disregard these teachings (Ika Yunia Fauzia & Abdul Kadir Riyadi, 2023).

In essence, the implementation of sharia principles in production activities aims to create a just, ethical, and balanced economic system. With growing awareness of production ethics, greater emphasis is placed on the relationship between ethical values and production performance. Islamic production ethics should therefore be applied comprehensively across all economic activities, including production, consumption, and distribution.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Production in Conventional Economic Theory

In conventional economic theory, production is generally defined as the process of transforming inputs—such as land, labor, capital, and technology—into outputs in the form of goods and services. Classical and neoclassical economists emphasize efficiency, profit maximization, and cost minimization as the primary objectives of production. The success of production activities is measured mainly by financial performance, productivity levels, and market competitiveness.

This profit-oriented paradigm often treats production as a value-neutral activity, detached from ethical and moral considerations. As long as production increases output and profitability, the means and social consequences tend to be overlooked. Consequently, conventional production theory frequently justifies exploitative labor practices, environmental degradation, and the production of goods that may harm moral, social, or spiritual values, provided that they generate economic gains.

Critics argue that such an approach leads to structural inequality, excessive resource exploitation, and moral degradation. These weaknesses highlight the need for an alternative production framework that

integrates ethical values, social justice, and sustainability—an aspect fundamentally addressed within the Islamic economic paradigm.

2.2 Concept of Production in Islamic Economics

Islamic economics conceptualizes production not merely as a technical process of output creation, but as a value-laden activity grounded in divine guidance. According to Yusuf Qardawi, production is the creation of wealth through human utilization of natural resources, while Muhammad Abdul Mannan defines production as the creation of utility that enhances overall welfare. These definitions emphasize that production serves human well-being rather than material accumulation alone (Nasution & Setyanto, 2020).

Unlike conventional economics, Islamic production theory is inseparable from the objectives of **maqāṣid al-sharī'ah**, namely the preservation of religion (dīn), life (nafs), intellect ('aql), lineage (nasl), and wealth (māl). Production activities must therefore generate halal and ṭayyib goods and services that contribute positively to both material and spiritual welfare.

Islam views production as a form of worship ('ibādah) when conducted in accordance with sharia principles. This perspective elevates production from a purely economic function to a moral and spiritual responsibility, aligning worldly efforts with accountability in the hereafter (Buhari Alma, 1997).

2.3 Ethical Foundations of Islamic Production

Ethics constitute the core foundation of production in Islamic economics. Islamic production ethics distinguish clearly between what is permissible (halal) and impermissible (haram), ensuring that production activities do not harm individuals, society, or the environment. Producers are prohibited from engaging in activities involving **maysir**

(gambling), **gharar** (uncertainty), and **riba** (usury), collectively known as *MAGRIB* elements.

According to Umar ibn Khattab's economic jurisprudence, production ethics rest on three pillars: faith, knowledge, and action. Faith ensures awareness of divine supervision; knowledge equips producers with an understanding of sharia law; and action represents the ethical implementation of both faith and knowledge in economic behavior (al-Haritsi, 2003; Ghufon, 2020).

Islamic ethics also require producers to uphold justice (*'adl*), honesty (*ṣidq*), trustworthiness (*amānah*), and social responsibility. Profit-seeking is permissible, but it must be balanced with fairness, moderation, and concern for societal welfare.

2.4 Factors of Production in Islamic Perspective

Islamic economics recognizes factors of production such as land, labor, capital, management, technology, and raw materials. However, these factors are not viewed as absolute private possessions; rather, they are considered trusts (*amānah*) from Allah SWT that must be utilized responsibly.

Human labor occupies a central position as humans are regarded as **khalīfah fī al-arḍ** (vicegerents on earth). This role implies responsibility for sustainable resource management, environmental preservation, and equitable distribution of production outcomes. Capital is permitted but must be free from exploitative elements, while natural resources must be used efficiently without causing environmental harm (Turmudi, 2020).

Efficiency in Islamic production does not solely refer to minimizing costs but rather to optimizing the use of resources in compliance with sharia principles. Production is deemed efficient when it achieves lawful output, social benefit, and ethical integrity simultaneously (Bertens, 2020).

2.5 Objectives of Production in Islamic Economics

The objectives of production in Islam extend beyond profit maximization. The primary goal is **falah**, encompassing success and well-being in both worldly life and the hereafter. Production aims to fulfill human needs based on a hierarchy: **dharuriyyat** (essential needs), **hajiyyat** (complementary needs), and **tahsiniyyat** (refinement needs).

Islamic production also emphasizes future-oriented responsibility by safeguarding resources for future generations. Producers are encouraged to innovate, improve quality, and increase productivity while maintaining sustainability. Social instruments such as zakat, infaq, sadaqah, and waqf function as integral components that redistribute production benefits and reduce inequality (Zaki Fuad, 2020; Lukman Hakim, 2022).

2.6 Reconstruction of Production Theory within the Islamic Economic Paradigm

The reconstruction of production theory within the Islamic economic paradigm requires integrating normative principles with applied economic practices. Normatively, production must adhere to sharia ethics, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, and moral accountability. Applied reconstruction involves developing production systems that are efficient, innovative, and competitive while remaining socially just and environmentally sustainable. This reconstructed framework challenges the dominance of capitalist profit-centered production by positioning ethics, social welfare, and spiritual values as core determinants of economic success. Thus, Islamic production theory offers a holistic alternative capable of addressing contemporary economic challenges such as inequality, environmental degradation, and moral erosion.

3. Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative research design with a normative-analytical and conceptual approach, focusing on the

reconstruction of production theory within the Islamic economic paradigm. The research is categorized as library-based research, emphasizing systematic analysis of authoritative textual sources to develop a theoretically grounded and contextually relevant framework of Islamic production.

3.1 Research Approach and Design

The research adopts a descriptive-analytical qualitative approach, integrating normative Islamic economic principles with applied economic analysis. Normatively, the study examines production concepts derived from the Qur'an, Hadith, classical Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh al-mu'āmalāt), and maqāṣid al-sharī'ah. Analytically, these principles are compared with conventional production theory to identify conceptual gaps and formulate a reconstructed production framework aligned with Islamic values.

This approach enables the study to bridge theoretical ideals and practical economic realities, ensuring that the reconstructed production theory is not only doctrinally valid but also applicable in contemporary economic systems.

3.2 Data Sources

The study relies exclusively on secondary data, obtained from credible and academically recognized sources, including:

1. Primary sources, such as the Qur'an, Hadith, and classical Islamic economic and jurisprudential texts (e.g., works by al-Ghazali, Umar ibn al-Khattab's economic jurisprudence, and Yusuf al-Qaradawi);
2. Secondary sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, policy documents, and contemporary studies on Islamic economics, production theory, and business ethics indexed in reputable academic databases.

3.3 Data Collection Technique

Data were collected through a systematic literature review, involving identification, selection, and classification of

relevant literature based on thematic relevance to:

1. production theory in conventional economics,
2. Islamic production principles and ethics,
3. maqāṣid al-sharī'ah-based economic objectives, and
4. normative and applied dimensions of Islamic economic reconstruction.

3.4 Data Analysis Method

The data analysis was conducted using qualitative content analysis and comparative conceptual analysis. Textual materials were analyzed by:

1. interpreting normative Islamic principles related to production;
2. comparing these principles with conventional production theories;
3. synthesizing ethical, social, and spiritual dimensions into an integrated Islamic production framework; and
4. reconstructing production theory by aligning efficiency, innovation, and sustainability with Islamic ethical values.

This analytical process ensures theoretical coherence and strengthens the academic contribution of the study.

3.5 Research Validity and Reliability

To enhance academic rigor, the study applies theoretical triangulation by comparing multiple scholarly perspectives across classical and contemporary Islamic economic literature. Source credibility is ensured by prioritizing peer-reviewed journals, established academic publishers, and authoritative Islamic economic references. Consistency of interpretation is maintained through repeated cross-reading and thematic validation.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Understanding Production

In conventional economics, production is commonly defined as the process of transforming basic resources into finished goods or services, whereby inputs are converted into outputs. Production represents

an activity of wealth creation through the utilization of natural resources by humans (Effendi, 2023). Similarly, Richard G. Lipsey, as cited by Effendi, defines production as the act of creating commodities, goods, and services.

Contemporary Muslim economists offer definitions of production that, although articulated from different perspectives, share a common substance. Adiwarman Karim argues that production has existed since the early presence of humans on earth and is inseparably linked to human survival and civilization. Production emerged from the interaction between humans and nature and continues to evolve alongside human development. Yusuf al-Qaradawi defines production as the creation of wealth through human exploitation of environmental resources, while Muhammad Abdul Mannan views production as the creation of utility that enhances overall economic welfare (Nasution & Setyanto, 2020).

These definitions indicate that production in Islamic economics fundamentally centers on human existence and welfare. The primary objective of production is not merely material accumulation but the creation of benefit (*maslahah*). Humans manage material resources to fulfill various needs so that these resources acquire meaningful utility. Through productive work, individuals can meet personal and family needs, support relatives, and contribute to society. Such efforts are highly valued in Islam and cannot be realized without wealth, which in turn can only be obtained through work and production. Therefore, the Qur'an frequently encourages productive activity and labor (Effendi, 2023).

In Islam, production is understood as a form of diligent effort to develop resources permitted by sharia, increase income, promote social welfare, sustain human existence, and uphold human dignity. This understanding is closely related to the concept of efficiency, although Islamic efficiency differs fundamentally from the conventional notion that focuses primarily on minimizing costs, including labor costs. In Islamic economics,

efficiency is associated with compliance with sharia principles; production is considered efficient when it adheres to Islamic legal and ethical standards (Bertens, 2020).

The production system in Islam constitutes an integrated framework of production principles and production factors. Islamic production principles require that all goods and services produced be halal, encompassing every stage of production from raw material sourcing to final output. Production factors include natural resources, labor, capital, and management, all of which must be utilized responsibly. Production is inseparable from human needs, as its primary purpose is to fulfill those needs in a manner consistent with Islamic values (Muhammad, 2022).

In the Islamic economic perspective, production activities must generate halal and *ṭayyib* (lawful and wholesome) goods and services. This principle is reinforced by the Qur'anic injunction:

"Eat of what Allah has provided for you, lawful and good, and be grateful for the favor of Allah, if it is Him that you worship" (Qur'an 16:114).

This verse emphasizes that consumption—and by extension production—must be both lawful and beneficial. *Halal* signifies permissibility under Islamic law, while *ṭayyib* refers to quality, safety, and benefit. Thus, production in Islam seeks not only material prosperity but also moral and physical well-being (Muhammad, 2022).

Ultimately, Islamic production aims to improve both material conditions and moral character, seeking happiness in this world and the hereafter. Production involves discovering, processing, and managing resources to enhance human welfare. Accordingly, production in Islamic economics plays a vital role in achieving individual well-being and overall societal balance (Sutanto et al., 2024).

4.2 Principles of Production in Islam

Many contemporary business practices prioritize profit maximization without adequate consideration for consumer safety or

social welfare. In contrast, the fundamental principle of Islamic production is economic welfare (*falāḥ*), which encompasses moral, social, and spiritual dimensions. While even capitalist systems acknowledge welfare considerations, the Islamic concept of welfare is distinctive in that it integrates morality, education, religion, and social responsibility (Muhammad, 2022).

Islam views humans as key factors of production who function as *khalīfah* (vicegerents) on earth. As such, humans bear responsibility for utilizing resources ethically and sustainably. The Qur'an and Sunnah provide several guiding principles for production: (1) humans are entrusted to prosper the earth with knowledge and righteous action; (2) Islam encourages progress and innovation through scientific methods while remaining guided by divine revelation; (3) production techniques are left to human creativity and capability, as reflected in the Prophet's statement, "*You know better your worldly affairs*"; and (4) innovation must prioritize ease, benefit, and harm prevention (Syarifah, 2021).

Islamic production rules include producing halal goods and services at every stage, preventing environmental damage, prioritizing essential human needs, fostering economic independence, and improving human resource quality—spiritually, intellectually, and physically. Spiritual quality, in particular, is regarded as the foundation that strengthens other human capacities (Turmudi, 2020). Thus, Islamic production fundamentally differs from conventional production. While conventional systems emphasize efficiency and profit maximization, Islamic production balances profit orientation with worship orientation, prioritizing societal welfare and aiming to achieve *falāḥ* rather than maximum profit alone.

4.3 The Concept of Production in the Islamic Economic Perspective

In Islamic economics, production is intrinsically linked to consumption objectives.

Muslims consume to attain *falāḥ*, and production serves to provide goods and services that support this goal. Consequently, all production activities are bound by Islamic moral and technical values, encompassing production processes, marketing, and consumer services. Goods and services that harm morality or undermine religious values are prohibited.

Islam recognizes five essential needs—life, wealth, intellect, lineage, and religion—and establishes a hierarchy of priorities (*ḍarūriyyāt*, *ḥājīyyāt*, and *taḥsīniyyāt*). Excessive behavior is discouraged throughout the production process (Turmudi, 2023). Furthermore, production must account for social harmony and equitable benefit distribution, ensuring that production outcomes serve society as a whole rather than merely private interests.

Economic problems in Islam are viewed not only as issues of scarcity but also as consequences of mismanagement, laziness, and failure to utilize God-given resources optimally. Such attitudes are considered forms of injustice and ingratitude toward divine blessings (Turmudi, 2023).

4.4 Principles and Objectives of Production in Islamic Economics

The overarching objective of production in Islam is to enhance welfare through several means: fulfilling human needs moderately, identifying and meeting genuine needs proactively, preparing for future demand through innovation and research, safeguarding the interests of future generations, and fulfilling social responsibilities through zakat, infaq, and charity (Fuad, 2020; Hakim, 2022). Islam encourages continuous innovation and productivity, even after basic needs are met, so that producers can contribute more significantly to social welfare.

4.5 Production in the Islamic Economic Perspective

Islam recognizes profit-seeking as permissible (*jā'iz*), provided it adheres to

ethical standards. Historical narrations indicate that significant profit margins were tolerated, yet scholars such as al-Ghazali emphasized *ihsān*—reasonable profit-taking that fosters blessing and sustainability (Fuad, 2020).

Production activities are inseparable from ethical norms and partnerships. Ethical conduct in partnerships, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad SAW, underscores honesty, trust, and mutual respect as foundations of Islamic production (Ridwan, 2020). Islam, therefore, integrates moral values into all economic activities, affirming that production is not merely a commercial endeavor but a moral and spiritual pursuit guided by the Qur'an and Sunnah.

5. Closing

5.1 Conclusion

This study concludes that conventional production theory predominantly emphasizes efficiency maximization and profit optimization as its core objectives. While such an approach may enhance productivity, it often neglects ethical, social, and spiritual dimensions. In contrast, Islamic production theory integrates profit orientation with worship orientation, positioning production activities not merely as economic transactions but also as acts of moral and spiritual responsibility.

Islamic production principles require producers to adhere to ethical foundations derived from sharia, including the obligation to produce halal and *ṭayyib* goods, the protection of natural resources, and the alignment of production outputs with the objectives of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. This framework ensures that production activities contribute not only to economic growth but also to social welfare, environmental sustainability, and spiritual well-being.

Overall, the reconstruction of production theory within the Islamic economic paradigm demonstrates that ethical production is not a constraint on economic performance,

but rather a strategic foundation for achieving sustainable and inclusive development.

5.2 Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study contribute to the development of Islamic economic thought by strengthening the conceptual foundation of production theory based on sharia principles. This research reinforces the view that Islamic economics offers a comprehensive alternative to conventional economic models by integrating ethical norms, social justice, and spiritual accountability into production activities.

The study also enriches the discourse on production ethics by positioning *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as a central analytical framework, enabling a more holistic understanding of production outcomes beyond material profit.

5.3 Practical Implications

From a practical perspective, this study provides guidance for producers, policymakers, and Islamic business practitioners to design production systems that are ethically compliant, socially responsible, and environmentally sustainable. The application of Islamic production ethics can enhance consumer trust, ensure long-term business sustainability, and contribute to equitable economic development.

For policymakers, the findings suggest the importance of incorporating sharia-based ethical standards into regulations governing production activities, particularly within Islamic financial and business institutions.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to a qualitative and conceptual analysis based on secondary data and normative sources. As such, it does not empirically measure the impact of Islamic production ethics on firm performance or economic indicators. Additionally, the discussion focuses on general Islamic production principles without examining sector-specific applications.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies are encouraged to conduct empirical research examining the relationship between Islamic production ethics and business performance across various industries and regions. Quantitative or mixed-method approaches may provide deeper insights into the practical effectiveness of Islamic production principles. Further research may also explore the integration of Islamic production ethics with emerging issues such as digitalization, green economy, and global supply chains.

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