

How to Cite:

Belbia, M. (2024). The phenomenon of poverty between the Islamic economic system and the socialist economic system: A comparative analytical study. *International Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 18(11), 2324–2339. Retrieved from <https://ijeponline.org/index.php/journal/article/view/722>

The phenomenon of poverty between the Islamic economic system and the socialist economic system: A comparative analytical study


Mohamed Belbia

University Batna 01, Laboratory of Public Governance and Social Economy
Research Informant (GPES) (Algeria)

Email: mohamed.belbia@univ-batna.dz

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-7589-0533>

Abstract--This research aims to extract the differences that exist between the Islamic economic system and the socialist economic system in the interpretation and conceptualisation of the phenomenon of poverty in societies, as well as the solutions proposed by both systems, Islamic and socialist, to reduce, alleviate or eliminate the phenomenon. These differences are based on the specificity of each system, its principles, its composition and the sources from which it derives its perspectives and concepts on which its visions of economic and social phenomena are built. The study examines whether these visions and concepts correspond to reality or remain in the realm of imagination. The study concludes that there is a major difference between the Islamic economic system and the socialist system in the perception of poverty. The Islamic economy sees it as a universal divine law that cannot be eliminated from the creation of Allah, as it is unchangeable and immutable. It does not specifically target the individual, but rather the existence of poverty as a general phenomenon in a society. Poverty is seen as an essential part of society that cannot be completely eradicated but can be partially controlled through legitimate means such as Zakat (obligatory charity), voluntary charity, social solidarity, endowments and other methods. The Islamic economic system is comprehensive in both theory and practice, as it derives its principles from Islamic law. On the other hand, the socialist economic system views poverty from a particular perspective, a materialistic human perspective that is opposed to the owners of the means of production and capital in society. It aims to eliminate inequalities, which socialist economists

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Corresponding author: Belbia, M., Email: mohamed.belbia@univ-batna.dz

Submitted: 27 September 2024, Revised: 09 October 2024, Accepted: 18 November 2024

regard as the highest form of economic injustice. Trade unions play an important role in ensuring that the wealth that circulates in society belongs to everyone according to their individual efforts and contributions. Governments and states control it by abolishing economic freedom and absolute property in order to control wealth and distribute it among members of society.

Keywords---poverty, universal laws, Islamic economy, socialist economy.

Introduction

The field of economics has always sought to address a range of diverse phenomena related to the behaviour and characteristics of individuals, both natural and moral, which have troubled countries and governments worldwide. Economic systems, with their different scientific and practical orientations, try to find solutions to these phenomena by proposing programmes and strategic plans based on their economic theories as well as their political, cultural and ideological backgrounds. This is done in order to contribute to the economic orientation of nations.

Among these phenomena that have exhausted economists of various affiliations is the phenomenon of poverty in societies that have suffered and continue to suffer from it in all ages and continents. Each economic system has its own view of this phenomenon in terms of its causes and solutions. The problem lies in the views of capitalist and socialist economists on ownership and private property. Capitalism advocates individual ownership, even at the expense of the community, on the principle of "let him work, let him pass". On the other hand, socialist ideology, also known as collective ideology, completely denies the existence of private property. Instead, it emphasises collective ownership and its distribution among all types of the working class. As for the Islamic economy, it is based on the principle of moderation, avoiding extremes and excesses in individual ownership. It allows individuals to own property as long as it does not harm the community, under the principle of "no harm and no foul". In this study, we compare the phenomenon of poverty between the socialist system and the Islamic system.

Problem Statement:

Poverty is a phenomenon that has received considerable attention from researchers, scholars and theorists. Each of these individuals has their own perspective on the phenomenon, based on their different approaches, sources of knowledge, societies and beliefs. Economists of different ideologies have considered poverty on the basis of these factors. The socialist economic system, for example, attempted to combat poverty by championing the oppressed class and targeting the wealthy class with the aim of eliminating poverty. This perspective was shaped by the anti-capitalist views of its thinkers. On the other hand, the Islamic economic system perceives poverty as a social phenomenon that is inherently linked to society as a whole, rather than being attributed solely to the individual. Therefore, the research problem seeks to uncover the differences

between the two systems in their approaches to poverty and can be summarised as follows: What are the perspectives of the Islamic economic system and the socialist economic system on the phenomenon of poverty? What solutions do they propose to alleviate it?

Previous studies:

1. Several previous studies have been conducted on the topic of "Poverty in Islamic Economics and Socialist Economics - A Comparative Analytical Study". However, I couldn't find any studies that specifically addressed the research gap addressed in this study. One such study is entitled "The Problem of Poverty from the Perspective of Islamic Economics" by Mustafa Boushama and Mouloud Maalja.

The aim of the study was to highlight the various phenomena and problems faced by nations and societies in their civilisational and humanistic journey. These phenomena and problems affect their reality, their way of life, and create obstacles and difficulties. Among these negative phenomena is the phenomenon of poverty, which continues to increase and spread rapidly with the cultural, industrial and technological progress of mankind. This phenomenon runs counter to the expected outcome of progress, which should be the eradication of poverty rather than its increase.

Through this research, the study aims to address the phenomenon of poverty from an Islamic perspective, using the economic theory of Islam, which allows for the elimination of poverty when it occurs. Furthermore, this theory, if applied literally, could have eradicated poverty in the past. Historical evidence supports this claim, as by the time of Caliph Umar ibn Abdul Aziz, there were no longer any individuals in need of zakat (charity) because people were self-sufficient.

2. A study entitled "Social Justice (Poverty: Islamic Economic Perspective)" by Meirison, Tuti Unani and Kasmidin (2021).

The aim of this paper was to describe the social and economic conditions within the framework of social and economic justice derived from Islamic Sharia. It highlights that Islamic economics is based on collective action, and therefore it is not surprising that the assumption of social and economic justice in Islam has a similar principle to the socialist system. The paper also discusses the economic principle of socialism, which rejects private property and seeks a distribution of income that differs from the economic principles of Islam. The study concludes that Islamic economics is based on the enforcement of social and economic justice and promotes a sense of brotherhood, mutual love and shoulder-to-shoulder support through mutual cooperation and solidarity, whether between the rich and the poor or between the rulers and the people.

3. A study entitled "Poverty in the Light of the Islamic Economic System: A Comparative Study with Contemporary Economic Systems" by Mado Gui Ben Sidi Sela.

The study aimed to address the phenomenon of poverty in the light of the Islamic economic system in comparison with contemporary economic systems, highlighting the characteristics of the Islamic economic system in comparison with other economic systems. It examined each system's perspective on poverty

and the resulting implications for the Islamic economic system and contemporary economic systems.

The study concluded that the Islamic economic system does not overlook or disregard the plight of the poor, as does the capitalist economic system. Nor does it antagonise the rich and engage in struggle with them, as is the case with socialist economic systems. The Islamic economic system is based on moderation and justice, recognising the existence of disparities in wealth and sustenance, while ensuring a minimum standard of living for every individual in society.

4. Study by Mohamed Mustafa Ahmed Shuaib entitled "Poverty and its treatment: Between Contemporary Economics and Islam".

The study aims to highlight the greatness, legislation and perfection of Islam in dealing with poverty compared to contemporary economics and its limited perspective that fails to achieve justice and mercy for the poor and needy. It emphasises that Islamic economics is different from other economic systems in dealing with poverty. One of the key findings of the study is that the root cause of poverty lies within man himself, as is evident in the concept of "subsistence level" or unequal distribution. Islam addresses the problem of poverty through the pursuit of sufficiency and aims to raise and improve the standard of living through two main approaches: empowerment of the individual through his or her own efforts and work, with Islam considering the provision of employment opportunities for those who are able as a duty of both the state and society. The second approach is to provide for those who are unable to earn a livelihood because of age, illness, womanhood, youth or orphanhood, with the Muslim community and the Islamic state taking responsibility for their welfare.

The difference between the research and the previous studies:

The difference between my research study entitled "The Phenomenon of Poverty between the Islamic Economic System and the Socialist Economic System: A Comparative Analytical Study" and the aforementioned studies lies in the fact that the previous studies have focused on examining the phenomenon of poverty within the Islamic economic system and economic systems as a whole from an economic perspective. They diagnose the problem by analysing its causes and suggesting solutions. On the other hand, my study includes not only the analysis and diagnosis of causes and solutions, but also the hidden cosmic reason, which is the cosmic laws of Allah in the distribution of wealth and poverty among communities and individuals. The Islamic economic system recognises this and builds on it, reaching the understanding that poverty is a universal phenomenon that can be treated but not completely eliminated. It must be addressed from a religious perspective, in accordance with solutions that are consistent with the divine laws established by Allah in His creation. This is in contrast to the approach of the socialist economic system, which combats poverty by targeting the rich, confiscating their property and depriving them of their livelihoods in an attempt to achieve equality among people. This approach contradicts the cosmic laws established by Allah in His creation. Through this, we come to recognise the perfection of Islamic Sharia law, which serves as the source of the Islamic economic system, and we understand the integration between Allah's cosmic decree and His legislative decree, as stated in the Qur'an: "And the Word of your

Lord is fulfilled in truth and justice. No one can change His words" (Qur'an 6:115).

The importance of the research

lies in highlighting the differences between the Islamic economic system and the socialist economic system in the phenomenon of poverty in terms of their conceptualisation, diagnosis, causes and solutions. The comprehensive nature of economic systems includes various economic, social and political phenomena as well as other aspects of life that reflect the behaviour of individuals, communities and nations. It is important to determine which system is more adaptable and suitable for framing, interpreting and addressing these phenomena. This research will demonstrate the inherent differences between the Islamic and socialist economic systems in addressing the issue of poverty that has plagued societies and governments throughout history.

One aspect of this is the efforts of socialist economists to oppose the concentration of wealth and to communalise these assets for the benefit of society as a whole, attempting to distribute wealth equally among individuals based on their work. Here the research highlights the importance of distinguishing between the socialist approach and the Islamic economic system. The Islamic economic system recognises that poverty is an inherent phenomenon that exists in every society. It is linked to the cosmic laws established by Allah and therefore cannot be effectively addressed by excluding the rich. Wealth and poverty are in the hands of Allah, who bestows them on whom He pleases from among His servants.

The research methodology:

The research methodology used in this study is descriptive in nature. It is used to describe the phenomenon of poverty and to illustrate its manifestations. In addition, a comparative approach is used to highlight the differences between the Islamic economic system and the socialist economic system in relation to the phenomenon under study. Finally, an analysis is carried out in order to uncover the reasons behind the observed differences.

1. Definition of poverty:

1.1 Linguistic definition: The word "faqir" in the Arabic language refers to a poor person who has some means of subsistence, while "miskeen" refers to someone who has nothing. Ibn al-Sikkit said: "Al-faqir is the one who has some means of subsistence, and al-miskeen is the one who has nothing". Al-Asma'i said: "Al-miskeen is in a better condition than al-faqir. Yunus said: "Al-faqir is in a better condition than al-miskeen. I asked a Bedouin, "Are you Faqir?" He replied: "No, by Allah, I am miskeen". Ibn al-A'rabi said: "Al-faqir is the one who has nothing, and al-miskeen is like him". "Al-fuqra" (with a "damma") in the Arabic language is similar to "al-du'f" (weakness) and "al-da'f" (feebleness). "Afaqarah" Allah (may He be praised) "faftaqara" (He made him faqir). "Al-faqir" also refers to a person with a hunchback. "Mafaqirah" refers to those whom Allah has enriched and for whom He has closed the doors of poverty. The expression "ma aghnaha wa ma afqaraha"

(neither enriched nor impoverished) is irregular because it is used in their actions, such as "faftaqara" and "istaghna", so it is not surprising.¹

1.2 Islamic terminology: Al-Raghib al-Asfahani, in his book "Mafatih al-Ghayb", mentioned four aspects of the use of the term "faqir". The first aspect is the presence of an essential need, which is a general condition for human beings as long as they are in this worldly life. Allah says: "And man is always inclined to be greedy" [Surah Al-Isra: 15].

2. Second Aspect: Lack of Possessions

The second aspect of poverty is characterized by a lack of material possessions, as mentioned in the following verse: "For the poor who have been restricted in the cause of Allah, unable to move about in the land. An ignorant person would think them self-sufficient because of their restraint, but you will know them by their characteristic sign. They do not persistently ask people [for help]. And whatever good you spend - indeed, Allah is Knowing of it" [Surah Al-Baqarah: 273]. Additionally, Allah states, "If they are in need, Allah will enrich them from His bounty" [Surah An-Nur: 32].

3. Third Aspect: Spiritual Poverty

The third aspect of poverty pertains to spiritual poverty, which signifies contentment and freedom from excessive desires. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized this aspect by saying, "True richness lies in the richness of the soul"².

4. Fourth Aspect: Poverty towards Allah

The fourth aspect of poverty is the concept of being impoverished before Allah. This is expressed in the verse: "My Lord, indeed I am in need of whatever good You would send down to me" [Surah Al-Qasas: 24]³.

The aspect most relevant to the economic understanding of poverty is the fourth aspect, which the Asfahani referred to as "lack of possessions." It denotes the inability to attain the necessary means for a decent standard of living, including food, drink, shelter, and clothing. This aligns with the concept of poverty in the field of economics, which refers to the inability to meet basic living standards.

1.3 Poverty in economic terms:

Before discussing poverty in the context of Islamic and socialist systems, it is important to address the economic problem in both systems in order to understand the proximity of the concept of poverty to the concept of the economic problem. Each economic system has given a concept and dimension to the economic problem, which has contributed to the construction of its doctrine. This is done in order to solve the perceived problem within the system.

The economic problem in both Islamic and socialist systems is considered a problem of scarcity, which is referred to in order to understand the origin of the need to study economics.⁴ The explanation of this problem and its solutions remains dependent on each system, whether it is a capitalist system based on human ownership of resources, a socialist system based on collective ownership, or an Islamic system based on divine guidance. The fundamental difference between the capitalist and socialist systems lies in the issue of private ownership and ownership of the means of production. The capitalist system emphasises

private ownership to such an extent that it can be at the expense of society as a whole. On the other hand, the socialist system limits private ownership and makes it communal. The Islamic system strikes a balance by allowing individual ownership as long as it does not harm the community.

1.3.1 The economic problem in the socialist system:

The socialist system addresses the economic problem and proposes solutions to it. The economic problem in this system is different from the Islamic and capitalist systems. It is conceptualised on the basis of the idea of the collective and its right to wealth and the value produced, which should be fairly distributed among all workers (according to their individual efforts). In this system, the means of production are collectively owned. This perspective emerged as a result of the conflict that existed in the West between the bourgeoisie class and the working class.

1.3.2 The economic problem in the Islamic system:

The economic problem in the Islamic economic system lies in human beings themselves and their actions that contradict the divine law. It arises from the mismanagement of the resources that Allah has made available on earth for the benefit of human beings to fulfil what Allah has commanded them and to engage in worship, as Allah says: "I have not created jinns and men except to worship Me". (Quran 51:56)

The Islamic system aims to establish the earth according to Sharia (divine law), as Allah says: "Allah has promised those who believe among you and do righteous deeds that He will certainly grant them a succession on the earth as He granted to those before them, and that He will certainly establish for them their religion which He has preferred for them, and that He will certainly provide for them, after their fear, security, [for] they worship Me and associate nothing with Me". (Quran 24:55)

According to Al-Raghib Al-Isfahani, the term "Khalifa" (successor) in the Qur'an refers not only to Adam (peace be upon him), but also to Adam and his righteous offspring. They are his successors and his party (followers), as Allah says: "The party (Hizb) of Allah" (Quran 5:56). They are the supporters of the prophets and messengers, as Allah says: "And that Allah may know who supports Him and His messengers invisibly. For Allah is Mighty and Exalted in Power. (Quran 57:27). They are His servants, as Allah says: "I have not created jinns and men except to worship Me. (Quran 51:56). They are the ones who build up the earth, as Allah says: "And He has made you successors on the earth. (Quran 11:61).⁵

2. Poverty in Islamic Sharia:

Poverty in the Islamic concept, whether it is an individual or a state, refers to those who live in a significantly lower standard of living compared to the prevailing standard in the local or global society. In other words, it refers to those who do not have a decent standard of living for the time and place. In the terminology of Islamic economic thought, it refers to those who do not have the "threshold of sufficiency" or the "threshold of wealth", not just the "threshold of subsistence".

The "threshold of subsistence" represents the minimum level of living in terms of food, clothing and shelter without which a person cannot sustain his life and productivity. It is not decreasing and varies only with purchasing power at different times and places. On the other hand, the "threshold of sufficiency" or "threshold of well-being" represents a higher level of living, which is subject to improvement and varies with the level of progress in different times and places.⁶ From this we can deduce the important fact that the economic problem in Islam has not been primarily concerned with providing the basic necessities of life, but rather with raising and improving the standard of living. This is something that modern economic thought has also arrived at after fourteen centuries, expressed in terms such as "economic well-being" or "material prosperity".⁷

3. Poverty in Islamic Economics:

In Islamic economics, poverty is defined as not achieving an adequate standard of living according to the prevailing standards in society, which vary according to time and place. This has been expressed by early Muslim jurists using the term "threshold of sufficiency" in relation to the requirements of a dignified life, and sometimes using the term "threshold of wealth", meaning that an individual is considered poor if his needs are not met to the extent that he can live comfortably and without depending on others.⁸

Economic policy in Islam is based on ensuring a decent standard of living for each individual. When each person in the Islamic society has his or her basic needs adequately met, which is considered the basis for a dignified life, Islam allows wealth and prosperity for individuals according to their efforts and work, which is considered an ornament in worldly life.⁹

4. Poverty in socialist economics:

Economists of the socialist system base their economics on the material interpretation of history. They interpret class struggle in life as a result of the economic conditions of individuals and groups that human beings need. They give examples such as securing food, drink, shelter and sex. When people participate collectively in these matters, equality is achieved among them, and there is no place for conflict and misery in their view¹⁰.

Because the socialist economic system aims to satisfy public needs, protect the interests of the majority and address the problem of wealth inequality, it regards poverty as an evil, a calamity and a problem that requires a solution. In their interpretation of the existence of poverty as a problem, they see the unrestricted freedom that characterises the capitalist system as one of the main factors that deepen the gap between the rich and the poor. This has led to the disappearance of the middle class of farmers, artisans and small traders and their transformation into a wage-earning working class.¹¹

5. The Universal Sunnah Approach to Understanding the Phenomenon of Poverty in the Islamic Economic System

Before discussing poverty and its relationship to the Universal Sunnah (divine laws) of Allah in the Islamic economic system, it is necessary to delve into the concept of Universal Sunnah in the Islamic Shari'ah and clarify its nature and principles. These principles are rooted in one of the fundamental principles of the faith, which is the sixth principle known as the "Decree and Destiny of Allah". Briefly, this principle is mentioned in order to establish the interconnectedness of various aspects and to highlight the perfection of the Islamic Sharia, which explains the meaning of man, life and the universe in a remarkable harmony that does not contradict even in the smallest details.

5.1 Definition of Cosmic Laws:

The issue of divine cosmic laws falls within the fundamentals of belief in Allah, specifically the sixth principle, which is Divine Decree and Predestination. This principle encompasses Allah's arrangement of affairs for His creation and His determination of everything. It can be divided into two categories: first, legislative decree, which refers to the specific legislation of worship-related rulings such as commandments and prohibitions; and second, cosmic decree, which refers to Allah's universal commandments and the ongoing processes He has established in His creation and existence. Allah, the Exalted, says: "The precedent of Allah for those who passed away before is His Sunnah, in which there is no change. And the command of Allah is always a determined fate". [Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:38]. He also says: "The precedent of Allah concerning those who passed away before is His Sunnah, and you will never find any change in the Sunnah of Allah. [Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:62]. At-Tabari said in his commentary: "Allah, may He be praised, says to His Prophet Muhammad 'alaihis-salâm': 'O Muhammad, you will find no change in the divine decree that Allah has ordained for His creation.'"¹².

Ibn Abi Zayd Al-Qayrawani, in the introduction to his treatise, stated: "Faith in the divine decree includes its goodness and its evil, its sweetness and its bitterness. All this has been ordained by our Lord Allah, and the measures of affairs are in His hands, and come from His decrees. He knew everything before it was created, and it has come about according to His Decree. There is no utterance or act of His servants except that He decreed it, and His knowledge of it preceded it". [Surah Al-Mulk, 67:14].¹³

Indeed, Allah Almighty has established immutable laws and principles in His creation that do not change or alter. These laws apply to all His creations without favouring anyone, whether groups or individuals, Muslims or non-Muslims. Allah says: "The precedent of Allah concerning those who passed away before is His Sunnah [rule], and you will never find any change in the Sunnah of Allah". [Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:62]. At-Tabari commented on this verse and said: "When Allah says, 'And you will never find any change in the Sunnah of Allah,' He is informing His Prophet Muhammad 'alaihis-salâm' that you will not find any change in the divine laws that Allah has ordained in His creation"¹⁴.

Ibn al-Qayyim, in his work "A'lam al-Muwaqqi'in", stated: "Allah indeed has the power of creation and command, and there is no change in Allah's creation, nor is there any change in His decrees. Just as He does not violate the causal means and executes them according to their respective causes and purposes, so the legislative means are not separated from their causes and the purposes for which they have been legislated. Rather, this is His Legislative and Commanding Sunnah, and this is His Decreeing and Predetermining Sunnah. His Legislative Sunnah can change and vary because it can be disobeyed and violated. But His Decree and Predestination Sunnah remains unchangeable and unaffected". [Surah Fatir, 35:43].¹⁵

When we consider the laws of Allah Almighty in His creation, they are the "way of His governance".¹⁶ These laws do not differentiate between a Muslim and a non-Muslim, as they apply to everyone regardless of status or gender. These laws take different forms. Ibn Taymiyyah stated in Al-Majmu': "Allah has made it clear that His Sunnah does not change or take its place. And the Sunnah refers to the customary practice of doing the same thing in the second instance as was done in the first instance. That is why Allah commanded reflection and said: "There is certainly a lesson in their stories for those who understand. [Surah Yusuf, 12:111].¹⁷

5.2 Compatibility of the Islamic Economic System with the Universal Laws of Allah in Addressing the Poverty Phenomenon

One of the most distinctive features of the Islamic economic system is that it is a realistic economy, not an imaginary one. It is based on the reality of subsistence, not on illusions and mental fantasies that are not practised in the real world. This is not surprising because the primary source of the Islamic economic system is Islamic law, from which it derives its principles, mechanisms and concepts. It perceives phenomena - whatever their nature - as Islamic law perceives them, and treats them as Islamic law treats them. This leads to complete harmony and coherence between all aspects of life and Islamic law and the actions of the individual. There is no contradiction between these three aspects, such as the conflict between human nature and Islamic law, such as the natural inclination to love wealth and possessions and the desire to increase them. Allah says: "Glorious for people is the love of what they desire - wives and sons, accumulated sums of gold and silver, fine branded horses and cattle, and cultivated land. This is the enjoyment of the worldly life, but Allah has with Him the best return. [Surah Al-Imran, 3:14]

"And unlike many economic doctrines that tend towards an idealism that sometimes reaches the realm of fantasy in its aims and objectives, such as communism's attempt to eliminate the innate selfishness inherent in human nature in order to establish a new humanitarian society without property, the Islamic economy is realistic in its aims, objectives and means of achieving them. It observes human nature, its motives and needs, and seeks to fulfil them in the best and simplest way. In the light of this realism, its legislation becomes a guarantee for the implementation and achievement of goals.¹⁸

One of these issues is the question of property and freedom of acquisition, which are considered inherent in human nature and embedded in Allah's cosmic decree. "Islam has set limits to both private and public property. When it recognises and protects private property, it does so on the basis of man's natural inclinations towards the love of property and freedom of acquisition, and considers them as motivations to encourage individual initiative and creativity. Allah says: 'What is beautiful for people is the love of what they desire - wives and sons, accumulated sums of gold and silver, fine branded horses and cattle, and cultivated land. This is the enjoyment of the worldly life, but Allah has with Him the best return' (Surah Al-Imran, 3:14) (Qahf, 1991, p. 39).

It is important to note that interpreting the phenomenon of poverty and linking it to the universal laws of Allah is not a reason to confine individuals to it or to claim that it is predestined. Rather, it is necessary to strive for sustenance and livelihood, relying on Allah Almighty and not being complacent. The purpose of this is to explain the apparent reality of poverty, not to justify the perpetuation of poverty and to use fate as an excuse where individuals do not work or strive.

6. Poverty from the perspective of the socialist economic system based on its principles:

The socialist economic system adopts a distinct approach in dealing with individuals and communities, rooted in the general principle of eliminating differences and establishing the principle of equality among all individuals. It aims to abolish private property and economic freedom, both in terms of investment and consumption. This has led to the idea that it is inconceivable for wealth and poverty to coexist in the same society. This perspective has been adopted by economies around the world, especially in light of the intensification of the Cold War between the Eastern and Western camps.

"Marx interpreted poverty as the basis of class conflict in capitalist society. The capitalist class owns and controls the means of production and thus exploits the subordinate working class. Consequently, the material security of the poor depends primarily on their class affiliation... and this situation cannot be changed without eliminating the class structure itself".¹⁹

Moreover, the path taken by the socialist system to solve the economic problems it has created and is trying to solve through this idea is in reality contrary to the just divine methodology, universal laws and sound human nature²⁰. In the socialist system, there are no social classes; all individuals are considered workers and employees. They receive a wage for their work, which guarantees their livelihood, and society is considered the owner of the means of production, with the state supervising these productive institutions. In terms of production, it does not rely on the market system as in capitalism, but rather follows a planned approach determined by the producers themselves, with the aim of achieving welfare in society and providing for all needs equally.²¹

Therefore, they decided the following:

1. The denial of the existence of the individual in society and the suppression of incentives within society are necessary to change the social system.

2. Abolition of private ownership of all means of production.

It is well known that the abolition of private property, the destruction of individual existence and the removal of incentives for individuals and communities leads to the deterioration of their economic condition. In the end, this gives the State primary authority, making it the dominant force in the country's economic situation under the guise of class equality.²²

7. Proposed solutions to alleviate poverty:

After presenting the economic perspectives of the Islamic and socialist systems on the phenomenon of poverty, it is necessary to discuss the proposed solutions from both systems in order to understand each system's point of view on this matter.

7.1 Solutions in the Islamic Economic System:

The Islamic economic system addresses the issue of poverty and need in society through several mechanisms derived from the Islamic Shari'a. Allah, the Exalted, says in the Qur'an: "So that there is not a perpetual distribution among you of the rich" (Surah Al-Hashr 59:7). The tools used by the Islamic economic system to reduce and combat poverty in society include the following:

7.1.1 Encouraging work and discouraging begging: Islamic Sharia encourages individuals to work diligently to earn a living and maintain their dignity, and discourages them from asking others for assistance. It is narrated by Hakim ibn Hizam (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "The upper hand is better than the lower hand. Begin with those under your care. The best charity is that which is given in secret, and whoever refrains from asking others, Allah will make him self-sufficient, and whoever seeks self-sufficiency, Allah will enrich him".²³

Ibn 'Uthaymeen commented in his explanation of Riyad as-Salihin: "The upper hand refers to the hand that gives and the lower hand refers to the hand that receives. The hand of the giver is better than the hand of the receiver because the giver is above the receiver. This is what the Prophet (peace be upon him) meant when he swore by the One who sent him with the truth that Hakim bin Hizam would not ask anyone for anything after him. Hakim said, "O Messenger of Allah! By the One who sent you with the truth, I will never ask anyone for anything until I leave this world".²⁴

7.1.2 Zakat and Sadaqah: Allah has imposed on the wealthy members of the community a compulsory charity called Zakat, which is taken from their wealth and distributed to the poor. Allah says in the Qur'an: "The expenditure of Zakat is only for the poor and the needy, and for those who are engaged in collecting [Zakat], and for uniting hearts [to Islam], and for freeing captives [or slaves], and for those who are in debt, and for the Cause of Allah, and for the [stranded] traveller - a duty imposed by Allah. And Allah is Knowing and Wise" (Surah At-Tawbah 9:60).

In addition, Islamic Sharia encourages spending and voluntary charity (sadaqah) to meet the needs of individuals and society as a whole. It is not enough for a person to be satisfied with his own well-being, but he should also take care of his brothers and sisters.

7.1.3 Social Solidarity: Here the most important feature of the Islamic economy as part of a comprehensive heavenly vision of life is its existence within a general religious framework that incorporates positive factors to achieve harmony between social interests and individual motivations.²⁵ Abu Musa narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: "One believer to another believer is like a building whose different parts reinforce each other"²⁶. And Nu'man ibn Bashir reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "The example of the believers in their affection, mercy, and compassion for one another is that of a body. If one limb is affected, the whole body responds with alertness and fever".²⁷

7.2 Solutions in the perspective of the socialist economic system:

The socialist economic system bases its solutions on a general principle, which is the abolition of private ownership of economic resources and means of production and the nationalisation of commercial and industrial property for the benefit and priority of society. It establishes the state as the owner of everything, whereby the state should own these resources and means. Public ownership includes state ownership of natural resources, industrial and commercial projects, transport projects, banks and agricultural projects. Individuals, on the other hand, work for the state in exchange for equal wages, with the state distributing goods and consumer products according to need.²⁸

Those who adhere to the socialist viewpoint believe that poverty can only be eliminated by eliminating the rich class, confiscating their wealth and depriving them of their assets. They argue that it is necessary to incite other classes in society against them, to arouse envy and enmity in their hearts, and to fan the flames of conflict between these classes until the numerically superior working class emerges victorious.²⁹

8. Conclusion

The objective of this research was to study the phenomenon of poverty in societies, not at the individual level, but rather as a holistic phenomenon in the entire society. According to the Islamic economic system, this phenomenon is considered a universal reality that must be addressed through legitimate solutions that are compatible with Islamic law and do not contradict the universal laws of Allah. This phenomenon exists in societies regardless of their progress and prosperity, as there will always be some form of poverty among individuals in the community. This is because Allah, in His wisdom, has established certain rules and hidden mysteries that demonstrate the greatness of His creation. He explains the purpose of the distribution of wealth in the Qur'an: "So that it does not become a permanent distribution among the rich among you" (Surah Al-Hashr, 59:7). Allah has also ordained the coexistence of the rich and the poor, as mentioned in the Qur'an: "Are they those who would divide the Mercy of your Lord? We have divided among them their sustenance in the life of this world, and We have raised some of them above others in ranks, that they may be of service to each other" (Surah Az-Zukhruf, 43:32).

This apparent harmony and cohesion is a testimony to the soundness of the Islamic legal system and its lack of contradiction in its various and diverse areas, ensuring the well-being of the believers in every time and place. Allah has made

poverty and wealth a test for His servants, to observe their actions and to test them with each other. It does not prevent the wealthy from increasing their wealth; rather, it is a test for them to fulfil the rights of their impoverished brothers and sisters through the obligatory and recommended acts of charity and spending. Therefore, poverty is a cosmic disposition determined by Allah, which is addressed and alleviated through legitimate solutions guided by Islamic jurisprudence. It should not be used as an excuse for individuals to remain idle without effort. Understanding this concept in the field of Islamic economics makes it possible to propose solutions that are in line with the innate nature of human beings and do not contradict the realities of life.

As for the socialist economic system, which is considered as a terrestrial science derived from human intellect, it considers the phenomenon of poverty in societies as caused by the bourgeoisie class, the owners of capital, and their monopolisation of wealth, as well as the unjust distribution of wealth among the members of society as a whole. However, the supporters of the socialist economic system have a flaw in their understanding, as they do not envisage the possibility of coexistence of the rich and the poor within the same society. As a result, they resent and fight against the wealthy, trying to get the state to seize all that wealth and redistribute it according to their idea of justice.

9. Findings

After presenting the research topic, the following conclusions were reached:

- Poverty is a comprehensive phenomenon that affects societies and the proposed solutions should be at a holistic level.
- The Islamic economic system's perspective on poverty is based on a comprehensive view that encompasses all aspects of life, humanity and the universe, without neglecting any aspect.
- The socialist economic system's perspective on poverty is a reactive response to the monopoly of wealth by the rich.
- The Islamic economic system's perspective on poverty is interpretive, considering it as a cosmic phenomenon and the action of Allah, based on Islamic beliefs.
- The socialist economic system's perspective on poverty attributes it to the wealth of the rich and the unequal distribution of wealth among members of society.
- The Islamic economic system preserves economic freedom and the right to property in accordance with the innate nature of human beings, demonstrating the amazing harmony and integration between the cosmic and legal signs of Allah.
- The socialist economic system's perspective on poverty is a human perspective based on imaginary theories that contradict man's innate desire for ownership and acquisition.
- The Islamic economic system offers realistic solutions to alleviate poverty in accordance with the nature of human beings and their social cohesion and cooperation.
- The solutions of the socialist economic system revolve around confiscating the wealth of the rich and redistributing it to the entire society, thus increasing discord and envy among them.

Footnote

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- ² Al-Bukhari, mohamed ben ismail. (1433). Sahih Al-Bukhari. Boulaq, Egypt: Sultanah from the Grand Amiri Press.
- ³ Al-Asfahani, arrarib. (2009). Mufarrinat Alfaz al-Quran (Vol. 1). Al-Mansour, Egypt: Fayad Library for Trade and Distribution, pp. 486-487.
- ⁴ Al-Saman, mohamed & other. (1429-2008). Principles of Economic Analysis - Partial and General (First Edition) (Vol. 1). Amman: Dar Al-Thaqafah for Publishing and Distribution, p. 34.
- ⁵ Al-Asfahani, arrarib. op cit, p139.
- ⁶ Al-Fanjari, mohamed chaouki.(2019). Islam and economic balance between individuals and nations. Ministry of Awqaf, pp38-39.
- ⁷ Al-Fanjari, mohamed chaouki, ibid, pp38-39.
- ⁸ Al-Fanjari, mohamed chaouki,op cit , p35.
- ⁹ Madoughi, saya ben saidi. (2020). Poverty in the light of Islamic economic system: A comparative study between contemporary economic systems. Al-Sirat Journal, p 265.
- ¹⁰ Barnaoui, mohamed ibhrahim. (1401-1981). Characteristics and Elements of Islamic Economics. 202: Journal of the Islamic University of Al-Madinah, p202.
- ¹¹ Madoughi, saya ben saidi. ibid , p261.
- ¹² Al-Tabari, abou djafer mohamed. (2010). Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil Ayi al-Quran (Vol. 19). Makkah: Dar Al-Tarbiyah wa Al-Turath , p320.
- ¹³ -Ibn Abi Zayd, abou mohamed abdelah. (2010). The Creed of the Salaf, Introduction by Ibn Abi Zayd al Qayrawani. Riyadh: Dar Al-'Asimah,p 57
- ¹⁴ Quran (Vol. 19). Makkah: -Bayan 'an Ta'wil Ayi al-Tabari, abou djafer mohamed. (2010). Jami' al-Al Dar Al-Tarbiyah wa Al-Turath,p 157.
- ¹⁵ Ibn Al-Qayyim, mohamed. (2002). Informing the Observers about the Lord of the Worlds (Vol. 1). Saudi Arabia: Dar Ibn Al-Jawzi for publication and distribution,p 304.
- ¹⁶ Al-Munawi, abderraouf. (1410- 1990). A significant figure in the field of definitions. (Trans.) Cairo: The world of books,p 198.
- ¹⁷ Ibn taymiyyah, ahmed. (1425 - 2004). Fatawa, (Vol. 13). (Trans.) al-Madinah al-Munawwarah: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an, p20.
- ¹⁸ Al-Atoum, ameur youssef. (2012). Macroeconomic equilibrium in the Islamic economy. First edition (Vol. 1). Jordan: Al-Alam Al-Kutub Al-Hadith, 134.
- ¹⁹ Bourni, Nasim. (2021). The Problem of Poverty in the Light of Theoretical Approaches: A study of factors and causes. Algerian Journal of Research and Studies, VOL04 (N°01),p 113.
- ²⁰ Bourni, Nasim. ibid, p202.
- ²¹ Al-Nabhani, mohamed farouk. (1405 - 1985). Collective Orientation in Islamic Economic Legislation (Vol. 3). Beirut: Al-Resalah Foundation, p. 69.
- ²² Barnaoui, mohamed ibhrahim, ibid, p202.
- ²³ Al-Bukhari, mohamed ben ismail, ibid, p112.
- ²⁴ Al-'Uthaymeen, mohamed. (1426). Explanation of Riyadh Al-Saliheen. Riyadh: Dar Al-Watan for publication, p388.
- ²⁵ Al-Atoum, ameur youssef. , Ibid, p134.
- ²⁶ Muslim, Abou houssain ben hadjaj. (1374 - 1955). Sahih Muslim. (Trans.) Cairo: Issa Al-Babi Al-Halabi and Partners Printing Press, p1999.
- ²⁷ Muslim, Abou houssain ben hadjaj, op cit, p1999.
- ²⁸ Madoughi, saya ben saidi. (2020). Poverty in the light of Islamic economic system: A comparative study between contemporary economic systems. Al-Sirat Journal, p262.
- ²⁹ Al-Qaradawi, Youssef. (1996 - 1386). The problem of poverty and how Islam dealt with it. Al-Waha, p9.

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