AZ-ZAIDA
JURNAL ILMU MULTIDISIPLIN
Volume 2 Nomor 6 Juni 2026
ISSN: 3124-8659 https://albaayaninstitute.org/index.php/azzaida/article/view/835

Integrating Islamic Epistemology and Accounting

Wali Saputra[1], Nur Syam[2], Syarifatul Marwiyah[3]
[1]State Islamic University of Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau
[2] State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya
[3] Islamic University of Darul Ulum Lamongan/
Al-Falah As-Sunniyyah University Kencong Jember
Email : wali.saputra@uin-suska.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to examine the development of the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) covering the period from 2016 to 2026. The study is motivated by the growing need to develop an accounting paradigm that extends beyond economic objectives by incorporating spiritual values, ethical principles, and the objectives of Islamic law (maqāṣid al-sharīʿah). The review adopts the Systematic Literature Review methodology in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines. The literature search was conducted across six major academic databases—Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, SpringerLink, and Google Scholar—using keywords related to Islamic epistemology and Islamic accounting. Following a rigorous screening and eligibility assessment, 42 articles met the inclusion criteria and were subsequently analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings reveal that the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting is structured around five interrelated themes: (1) tawḥīd (Islamic monotheism) as the foundational paradigm of accounting; (2) revelation (waḥy), reason (ʿaql), and empirical experience as complementary epistemological sources; (3) maqāṣid al-sharīʿah as the overarching objective guiding the development and practice of accounting; (4) Islamic ethics as the cornerstone of accountants' professionalism; and (5) spiritual and social accountability as the primary orientation of financial reporting. The literature synthesis further indicates substantial growth in scholarly interest during the 2016–2026 period. Nevertheless, the existing body of research remains predominantly conceptual. Empirical investigations into the implementation of Islamic epistemology in accounting practice, organizational governance, accounting education, and its integration with digital technologies remain relatively limited. This study concludes that Islamic epistemology provides a more comprehensive philosophical foundation than the conventional accounting paradigm by integrating ontological, epistemological, axiological, and spiritual dimensions into both accounting theory and practice. The findings contribute to the advancement of Islamic accounting theory while offering valuable directions for future research, particularly empirical and practice-oriented studies that examine the application of Islamic epistemological principles across diverse institutional and technological contexts.

Keywords: Islamic epistemology; Islamic accounting; Sharīʿah accounting; systematic literature review.

Introduction

Modern accounting has fundamentally evolved within the framework of the Western economic paradigm, which emphasizes efficiency, profit maximization, and shareholder interests as its primary objectives. Although this paradigm has demonstrably enhanced organizational performance and operational effectiveness, numerous studies have highlighted its inherent limitations, particularly regarding ethical concerns, its short-term profit orientation, and its insufficient attention to social responsibility and moral values (Hasan, 2026). In response to these limitations, Islamic accounting has emerged not merely as a technical alternative for financial reporting but as a comprehensive intellectual framework that integrates the principles of divine accountability (tawḥīd), trust (amānah), justice (ʿadl), and public welfare (maṣlaḥah) into accounting theory and practice (Hasan, 2026). Existing scholarship further explains that the conceptual foundations of Islamic finance and accounting have been grounded from the outset in the principles of social justice and fairness derived from Sharīʿah, supported by a distinctive analytical framework that differentiates it from conventional accounting (Hassan, 2019; Menne, 2023). Consequently, integrating Islamic epistemology into accounting has become increasingly important for re-examining the foundations of knowledge, the objectives, and the broader orientation of accounting from an Islamic worldview (Sunarno, 2024).

The discussion of epistemology occupies a central position because the scope of Islamic accounting extends far beyond the technical recording of financial transactions. It also encompasses the processes through which accounting knowledge is generated, validated, and applied in practice. From the perspective of Islamic accounting philosophy, epistemology involves scientific inquiry, methods of establishing truth, and the synthesis of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), empirical observation, and rational reasoning as the basis for knowledge construction (Sunarno, 2024). Within this framework, tawḥīd serves as the fundamental epistemological paradigm, where divine revelation (waḥy) constitutes the ultimate and immutable source of truth, complemented by reason (ʿaql), observation, and empirical experience (Sunarno, 2024). Consequently, integrating Islamic epistemology into accounting requires a comprehensive reconstruction of the discipline, one that transcends the conventional emphasis on quantitative information by incorporating ethical, moral, and spiritual dimensions into accounting theory and practice (Febrita, 2025). On this basis, investigating the integration of Islamic epistemology into accounting is both conceptually significant and practically relevant (Sunarno, 2024).

Research in Islamic accounting has expanded considerably over the past three decades, with increasingly diverse research themes and scholarly contributions. A comprehensive review of the literature over this period demonstrates that Islamic accounting research has addressed a broad spectrum of topics, including regulation, Sharīʿah compliance, annual report disclosure, corporate governance, the accounting profession, accountability, management control systems, zakat, and waqf (Alam, 2022). These findings are further supported by bibliometric studies identifying seven dominant research clusters: waqf accounting, zakat accounting, Sharīʿah auditing, Islamic governance, Islamic finance, accounting education, and ethics (Alshater, 2022). Moreover, the notable increase in international publications, particularly during 2020 and 2022, reflects the growing academic interest in this field (Meriç, 2024). Nevertheless, the rapid expansion of publications has not been accompanied by an equally robust development of the epistemological foundations underpinning Islamic accounting as an academic discipline (Mukhlisin, 2022).

A fundamental issue that remains unresolved is the continued dominance of modern theoretical frameworks over classical Islamic intellectual traditions within Islamic accounting research. A meta-analysis of 474 scholarly articles revealed that approximately 90% of studies relied primarily on theories from economics, management, psychology, and sociology rather than on classical theories rooted in the Islamic intellectual heritage (Mukhlisin, 2022). Furthermore, nearly two-thirds (66%) of the studies adopted positivist paradigms, while interpretive, critical, and post-structural perspectives remained comparatively underrepresented (Mukhlisin, 2022). These findings suggest that the existing gap extends beyond the mere use of Islamic terminology to encompass the predominance of conventional scientific paradigms in shaping Islamic accounting research (Mukhlisin, 2022; Calandra, 2024). Therefore, integrating Islamic epistemology is essential to ensure that the development of accounting moves beyond the adaptation of modern conceptual frameworks and remains firmly anchored in the Islamic worldview (ru'yat al-Islām li al-wujūd) (Mukhlisin, 2022).

The discourse on the Islamization of accounting likewise indicates that no consensus has yet emerged regarding the ideal model of Islamic accounting. Some scholars advocate a constructive approach aimed at developing a fully independent Islamic accounting system, whereas others favor a pragmatic approach that adapts contemporary accounting practices to conform with Sharīʿah principles (Restuningdiah, 2020). As an alternative, a hybrid approach has been proposed to combine Islamic values with the social benefits generated by modern accounting practices (Restuningdiah, 2020). The diversity of these perspectives demonstrates that the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting remains at a conceptual developmental stage rather than having reached a definitive theoretical framework (Restuningdiah, 2020). Consequently, conducting a systematic literature review is essential for mapping the evolution of scholarly thought and identifying emerging directions within this field of research (Restuningdiah, 2020).

The urgency of this integration is further reflected in the inconsistencies between international accounting standards and Sharīʿah principles in practice. Several studies have shown that while the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) facilitate firms' access to global capital markets, not all of their provisions can be fully implemented within Islamic financial systems (Calandra, 2024). Other studies have identified several barriers to incorporating Sharīʿah values into accounting practice, including incompatibility with IFRS, limited human resource capacity, insufficient Sharīʿah literacy, and the underdevelopment of Sharīʿah-based Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) reporting indicators (Mahyudin, 2025). These challenges are evident even within Islamic educational institutions, such as pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), where operational models capable of adequately integrating IFRS and the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) standards remain largely absent (Habibi, 2025). These observations highlight that integrating Islamic epistemology and accounting is not only a theoretical concern but also a critical issue for standardization and institutional implementation (Habibi, 2025).

Another important challenge concerns the persistent gap between the normative objectives of Sharīʿah and their practical implementation within the Islamic finance industry and financial reporting systems. Recent studies reveal substantial discrepancies between the ontological objectives of Sharīʿah and their epistemological realization in contemporary Islamic financial practices (Sumiyati, 2025). These inconsistencies are influenced by multiple factors, including political-economic pressures, inconsistencies in the interpretation of religious rulings (fatwas), and the continued dominance of conventional accounting standards (Sumiyati, 2025). Consequently, harmonization has become an urgent necessity, although its successful implementation requires stronger regulatory support, greater transparency in accounting standards, and professionals equipped with adequate competencies (Sumiyati, 2025). These findings demonstrate that discussions of epistemology cannot be separated from institutional dynamics and practical considerations, making them particularly relevant as the focus of integrative research (Sumiyati, 2025).

At the conceptual level, numerous studies suggest that Islamic accounting should be recognized as a coherent body of knowledge founded upon an integrated system of values. Historical investigations of fourteenth-century manuscripts reveal that Islamic accounting developed as a consistent body of knowledge and practice aimed at promoting public welfare (maṣlaḥah) (Alamad, 2023). These findings challenge the longstanding assumption that Islamic accounting lacks a sufficiently developed theoretical foundation (Alamad, 2023). From this perspective, the role of accounting extends beyond the provision of economic information to encompass the assessment of human accountability with respect to social, environmental, and moral responsibilities (Alamad, 2023). Accordingly, the integration of Islamic epistemology into accounting possesses both strong historical legitimacy and a robust conceptual foundation that warrant further scholarly development (Alamad, 2023).

Finally, the growing importance of integrating Islamic epistemology into accounting is reinforced by the need to broaden the scope of Islamic accounting to encompass social dimensions more comprehensively. Research on Islamic Social Responsibility (ISR) demonstrates that its methodological framework can be formulated by synthesizing the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) with values derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah through the application of the burhānī approach and the framework of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah (Hadi, 2025). Ontologically, this approach is grounded in the principle of monism, which views all reality as originating from the One Supreme God, thereby enabling the integration of diverse branches of knowledge (Hadi, 2025). Within this framework, social responsibility is no longer driven solely by rational economic considerations but is equally informed by religious values and concern for societal well-being (Hadi, 2025). This perspective further underscores the importance of integrating Islamic epistemology with accounting to ensure that accounting and reporting practices continue to accommodate humanistic values, ethical responsibility, and long-term sustainability (Raimi, 2024).

The use of a qualitative approach in combination with a literature review methodology is particularly appropriate because many dimensions of Islamic accounting cannot be fully understood through quantitative evidence alone. Methodological studies have demonstrated that qualitative research provides deeper insights into the social, ethical, and spiritual dimensions of value-based financial practices (Febrita, 2025). Research strategies such as phenomenology, case studies, and ethnography have proven effective in capturing the complex relationships between accounting practices and the values that underpin them in a more holistic manner (Febrita, 2025). At the same time, the systematic literature review (SLR) has become widely recognized as a rigorous research method capable of producing comprehensive theoretical and empirical syntheses through transparent, systematic, and replicable procedures (Mahyudin, 2025; Saputra, 2025). Accordingly, the literature review approach is considered highly suitable for comprehensively examining the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting (Mukhlisin, 2022).

From a practical perspective, the application of Islamic accounting has expanded significantly across multiple sectors, making the need for a robust epistemological foundation increasingly critical. Its implementation is no longer confined to Islamic financial institutions but has extended to financial technology (fintech), microfinance, agriculture, the halal industry, zakat management, and waqf administration (Mahyudin, 2025). This expansion is also reflected in the growing scholarly attention devoted to waqf accounting over the past decade, with research focusing on waqf financial reporting, the accountability of nāẓirs (waqf managers), governance mechanisms, and the application of information technology (Saputra, 2025). Furthermore, digital innovations have begun transforming waqf accounting through the adoption of blockchain technology and smart contracts (Saputra, 2025). The broadening scope of implementation underscores the necessity of aligning theoretical development, epistemological foundations, and technological innovation with the objectives of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah and the increasing demand for public accountability (Saputra, 2025).

Technological innovation within the financial sector has likewise intensified the need to modernize Islamic accounting models. A systematic review of Islamic accounting models in the context of financial innovation concluded that the development of new accounting models can enhance competitiveness, speed, accuracy, and operational efficiency, particularly for Islamic business entities and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) (Menne, 2023). Nevertheless, the review also emphasized that further refinement of these models requires more comprehensive investigations that consider the quality of human resources, the level of Islamic financial literacy, and the availability of supportive government policies (Menne, 2023). These findings suggest that technical innovation alone is insufficient unless it is supported by an appropriate epistemological framework. Consequently, the present study is important because it seeks to bridge the growing demand for innovation with the philosophical foundations of Islamic epistemology in an integrated manner (Menne, 2023).

Education also plays a strategic role in fostering the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting. Research conducted in Muhammadiyah higher education institutions offering accounting programs indicates that Islamic values are internalized through a spiritual paradigm and the ulul albāb perspective, which are incorporated into the ontological, epistemological, and methodological dimensions of accounting education and research (Yustrianthe, 2020). In addition, the implementation of a hidden curriculum through practices such as prayer (ṣalāh), remembrance of God (dhikr), contemplation (tafakkur), personal effort (ikhtiyār), and trust in God (tawakkul) has been shown to cultivate graduates who demonstrate both religious commitment and professional integrity (Yustrianthe, 2020). These findings indicate that the integration of Islamic epistemology should not remain confined to conceptual discussions but must also be realized through educational processes and the professional formation of future accountants. Accordingly, a systematic literature review on the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting provides a valuable foundation for curriculum development, the strengthening of academic traditions, and the construction of a distinctive scholarly identity for Islamic accounting (Mukhlisin, 2022).

Beyond education, the integration of Islamic epistemology is closely connected to sustainability, which has become one of the central concerns of contemporary global discourse. Systematic literature reviews have demonstrated that Islamic epistemology and ethics, grounded in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, provide a normative framework capable of supporting sustainable development (Raimi, 2024). These values encourage ethical conduct, strengthen social responsibility, promote environmental stewardship, and foster more responsible banking and financing practices (Raimi, 2024). Given that accounting serves as the primary provider of information for economic decision-making, integrating Islamic epistemology has the potential to reorient accounting practices beyond purely economic objectives toward the broader well-being of society and the environment (Raimi, 2024). Consequently, research on this integration is highly relevant for addressing the ethical and sustainability challenges confronting contemporary accounting practice (Raimi, 2024).

Furthermore, experiences of integrating Islamic epistemology into other academic disciplines demonstrate that combining Islamic foundations with historical, cultural, and technological contexts can generate more adaptive and context-sensitive models of knowledge. A thematic review of multicultural Islamic education revealed that such an approach successfully balances Western educational paradigms with Islamic values, including justice, equality, tolerance, and respect for diversity (Mo'tasim, 2025). The study also emphasized the importance of reconstructing knowledge by taking into account historical developments, cultural dynamics, and global transformations, thereby enabling educational institutions to respond effectively to the demands of the digital era (Mo'tasim, 2025). Although the review focused on education, the principles of integration it identified are equally applicable to Islamic accounting, which faces similar challenges associated with modernization, globalization, and technological advancement (Mo'tasim, 2025). Therefore, the present study is expected to contribute to the development of an integration model that is contextual, adaptive, and firmly grounded in Islamic epistemology (Mo'tasim, 2025).

Drawing upon the synthesis of previous studies, it can be concluded that Islamic accounting has made substantial progress over recent decades. Nevertheless, significant challenges remain concerning its underlying paradigm, theoretical foundations, research methodology, standardization, educational development, and practical implementation. Existing studies consistently highlight the need for a more comprehensive conceptual framework while simultaneously revealing persistent empirical gaps and the necessity for more integrative research in the future (Hasan, 2026; Alshater, 2022; Saputra, 2025). Within this context, a systematic literature review plays a strategic role by mapping the evolution of the field, identifying existing research gaps, and establishing a stronger conceptual foundation for the development of accounting that is aligned with the Islamic principles of tawḥīd, amānah, justice, and maqāṣid al-sharīʿah (Mahyudin, 2025; Alam, 2022). Accordingly, the present study, "Integrating Islamic Epistemology and Accounting," is strongly justified from both philosophical and practical perspectives. It is expected to produce a comprehensive scholarly synthesis that bridges Islamic values with contemporary accounting practice, thereby promoting a more holistic, ethically grounded, accountable, and welfare-oriented framework for the future development of Islamic accounting (Mukhlisin, 2022; Mahyudin, 2025).

Research Method

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to examine the development of the integration of

AZ-ZAIDA
JURNAL ILMU MULTIDISIPLIN
Volume 2 Nomor 6 Juni 2026
ISSN: 3124-8659 https://albaayaninstitute.org/index.php/azzaida/article/view/835

Islamic epistemology and accounting during the period 2016–2026. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth understanding of the concepts, theories, paradigms, and research findings relevant to the topic under investigation. Rather than testing statistical hypotheses, this study focuses on interpreting and synthesizing existing scholarly evidence to develop a more comprehensive understanding of how Islamic epistemology has been integrated into the discipline of accounting.

The Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology was adopted because it provides a rigorous framework for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing previous studies in a systematic, transparent, and reproducible manner. Unlike traditional narrative literature reviews, SLR follows explicit procedures for literature searching, article selection, quality assessment, and data analysis, thereby reducing researcher subjectivity and enhancing the reliability of the findings. Consequently, the review is expected to provide a comprehensive and methodologically robust overview of the development of research on the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting.

The review protocol was developed in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines, which have become the internationally accepted standard for conducting systematic literature reviews. The PRISMA framework was adopted because it offers a structured process for identifying, screening, assessing eligibility, and selecting studies for inclusion. Moreover, the use of PRISMA enhances the transparency and reproducibility of the review process, allowing the literature selection procedure to be systematically documented and scientifically justified.

The first stage of the PRISMA process involved identification, during which potentially relevant studies were retrieved from multiple academic databases. Searches were conducted using predefined keywords related to Islamic epistemology and accounting to identify publications that aligned with the objectives of this review. All retrieved records were documented and compiled as the initial dataset for subsequent screening.

The second stage consisted of screening, during which articles were evaluated according to predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Duplicate records, studies unrelated to the research topic, and publications that failed to satisfy the eligibility requirements were removed from the dataset. This screening process ensured that only studies directly relevant to the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting were retained for further evaluation.

The subsequent eligibility stage involved a detailed assessment of each article through abstract screening and full-text review. This evaluation aimed to ensure that every selected study explicitly addressed topics related to Islamic epistemology, Islamic philosophy of science, the Islamization of knowledge, or the integration of Islamic values into accounting. Studies meeting all eligibility requirements were then included in the final dataset and served as the primary sources for thematic analysis and conceptual synthesis.

AZ-ZAIDA
JURNAL ILMU MULTIDISIPLIN
Volume 2 Nomor 6 Juni 2026
ISSN: 3124-8659 https://albaayaninstitute.org/index.php/azzaida/article/view/835

The review utilized secondary data consisting of peer-reviewed scholarly articles published between 2016 and 2026. This time frame was selected to capture developments in the field over the most recent decade and to provide a contemporary understanding of the evolution of research on the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting. The use of secondary data enabled the synthesis of findings that had already undergone rigorous academic peer review.

Relevant literature was retrieved from several internationally recognized academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Emerald Insight, Taylor & Francis, and Google Scholar, the latter being used as a complementary source to ensure broader coverage of relevant publications. The use of multiple databases minimized the possibility of overlooking significant studies and enhanced the comprehensiveness of the literature search.

The literature search strategy employed combinations of keywords connected through Boolean operators such as AND and OR. The primary search terms included "Islamic epistemology" AND accounting, "Islamization of accounting", "Islamic accounting" AND epistemology, "Sharīʿah accounting" AND philosophy, "Knowledge integration" AND Islamic accounting, "Epistemologi Islam" AND akuntansi, and "Akuntansi syariah" AND epistemologi. These keyword combinations were designed to capture both international and Indonesian scholarly literature by accommodating variations in terminology commonly used across different academic contexts.

All retrieved references were managed using reference management software, such as Mendeley or Zotero. These applications facilitated citation management, duplicate removal, document organization, and the preparation of the reference list according to the citation style adopted by the target journal.

The selection of studies for analysis was guided by predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria established prior to the literature search. The inclusion criteria comprised: (1) articles published between 2016 and 2026; (2) peer-reviewed publications; (3) studies addressing Islamic epistemology, Islamic philosophy of science, the Islamization of knowledge, or Islamic accounting; (4) publications written in either English or Indonesian; and (5) articles available in full text. Conversely, conference proceedings, editorials, book reviews, non-scholarly publications, studies focusing solely on Islamic accounting practices without discussing epistemological dimensions, and publications with inaccessible full texts were excluded from the review.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a qualitative analytical method that enables the identification and interpretation of recurring patterns across multiple studies. This method was selected because it facilitates the development of a comprehensive conceptual synthesis by systematically organizing related concepts into broader thematic categories. Thematic analysis is widely recognized as an appropriate analytical technique for qualitative systematic literature reviews due to its flexibility and capacity to generate meaningful theoretical insights.

The analytical process began with an in-depth reading of all selected articles to gain a comprehensive understanding of the context and objectives of each study. Subsequently, a coding process was conducted to identify key concepts and recurring ideas across the literature. Similar codes were then grouped into broader thematic categories, relationships among themes were examined, and an integrated conceptual synthesis of the literature was developed. Anticipated themes included Islamic epistemology, tawḥīd as the philosophical foundation of accounting, maqāṣid al-sharīʿah, amānah and accountability, the Islamization of accounting knowledge, the integration of spiritual values into accounting practice, research paradigms in Islamic accounting, and future directions for the development of Islamic accounting theory.

Several procedures were implemented to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the review. First, source triangulation was achieved by utilizing multiple academic databases, thereby reducing dependence on a single source of evidence. Second, coding consistency was carefully reviewed to ensure that thematic categorization was conducted systematically and coherently throughout the analysis. Third, the entire article selection process was documented using the PRISMA 2020 flow diagram, ensuring transparency and reproducibility. In addition, a structured data extraction table was developed to summarize key information from each included study, including the author(s), year of publication, research objectives, methodology, principal findings, and contributions to the development of accounting knowledge from the perspective of Islamic epistemology.

Through these methodological procedures, this study seeks to produce a comprehensive synthesis of the development of research on the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting during the 2016–2026 period. The findings are expected to map the evolution of the literature, identify dominant research themes, reveal existing research gaps, and propose a conceptual framework for integrating Islamic epistemology and accounting. Ultimately, this framework is intended to provide a stronger philosophical and theoretical foundation for future developments in Islamic accounting theory, professional practice, and empirical research.

Results and Discussion

Research Findings

This study was conducted using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method based on the PRISMA 2020 guidelines to ensure that the processes of literature identification, selection, and synthesis were carried out systematically, transparently, and rigorously. This methodological approach was chosen because it provides a comprehensive overview of the evolution of research concerning the integration of Islamic epistemology into accounting.

By adopting the SLR framework, every article included in the review underwent a rigorous screening and evaluation process, thereby enhancing the credibility, reliability, and validity of the study's findings.

The literature search was performed across six internationally recognized academic databases: Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, SpringerLink, and Google Scholar. These databases were selected to ensure the inclusion of high-quality and relevant scholarly publications that adequately represent the development of research on Islamic epistemology and accounting. Employing multiple databases also minimized the likelihood of overlooking significant studies pertinent to the research topic.

The search strategy employed a combination of predefined keywords, including Islamic epistemology, Islamic accounting, Sharīʿah accounting, Islamization of accounting, epistemology and accounting, and akuntansi syariah. These keyword combinations were designed to maximize the breadth of the literature search while maintaining a specific focus on the relationship between Islamic epistemology and the development of accounting theory and practice. This strategy yielded a substantial number of potentially relevant studies, allowing for a comprehensive and rigorous selection process.

The initial search identified 186 potentially relevant publications. This substantial number indicates that research on Islamic epistemology and accounting has expanded considerably in recent years, reflecting growing scholarly interest in the subject. Nevertheless, not all retrieved publications were suitable for inclusion because some records appeared in multiple databases, while others did not correspond to the objectives of the present study.

The subsequent stage involved the removal of duplicate records. Of the 186 publications initially identified, 34 were duplicates and were therefore excluded from further analysis. Following this process, 152 unique articles remained and proceeded to the screening stage, where titles and abstracts were evaluated. This step was essential to ensure that only studies directly relevant to the research objectives were considered for further assessment.

During the screening stage, the titles and abstracts of the 152 articles were systematically reviewed to determine their relevance to the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting. Following this evaluation, 74 articles were considered directly related to the research topic. Publications addressing unrelated themes, discussing accounting only in a general context, or falling outside the scope of the study were excluded at this stage.

The eligibility stage involved a full-text assessment of the remaining articles. During this process, 32 publications were excluded because they did not explicitly discuss the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting, focused exclusively on the technical implementation of Islamic accounting practices, or were unavailable in full-text format. After completing all stages of the selection procedure, 42 articles satisfied the inclusion criteria and were retained as the primary sources for the thematic synthesis.

The inclusion of 42 peer-reviewed studies is consistent with the volume of literature commonly employed in systematic literature reviews within the fields of accounting and Islamic studies. This corpus is considered sufficiently representative to capture the development of concepts, theoretical perspectives, and empirical findings concerning the integration of Islamic epistemological values into accounting. Accordingly, the resulting synthesis is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of research and emerging directions within this field.

Characteristics of the Selected Articles

The analysis of the 42 selected articles indicates that scholarly interest in integrating Islamic epistemology into accounting has increased substantially since 2019. This upward trend reflects the growing recognition among researchers of the need to develop an accounting paradigm that extends beyond economic objectives by incorporating spiritual, ethical, and social dimensions derived from Islamic teachings.

The most significant increase in publications occurred during the 2023–2025 period. This trend suggests that Islamic epistemology has become an increasingly prominent topic within academic discourse, particularly alongside the rapid expansion of research on Islamic economics, Sharīʿah-based governance, and value-driven accountability. The growing body of literature also reflects an increasing demand for a more holistic accounting paradigm capable of responding to the continued global development of the Islamic finance industry.

The growth in research output has also been driven by the expanding application of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah within organizational governance and accountability frameworks. Many scholars have sought to integrate the objectives of Islamic law into organizational reporting and accountability systems, thereby positioning accounting not merely as a mechanism for financial information disclosure but also as an instrument for promoting public welfare (maṣlaḥah), justice, and societal well-being.

From a methodological perspective, the majority of the selected studies adopted qualitative conceptual approaches. This predominance reflects the philosophical nature of epistemological inquiry, which emphasizes the analysis of concepts, values, theoretical foundations, and philosophical assumptions rather than statistical testing of causal relationships. Conceptual research enables scholars to examine the philosophical underpinnings of Islamic accounting in greater depth and contributes to the development of more comprehensive theoretical frameworks.

In addition to conceptual research, several studies employed systematic literature reviews, case studies, and normative research methods. These approaches primarily investigated the application of Islamic principles within accounting practices across various organizations and Islamic financial institutions. By contrast, quantitative studies remained relatively limited, largely because epistemological issues are inherently philosophical and normative, making them less amenable to conventional statistical measurement and hypothesis testing.

The thematic analysis revealed that the most frequently discussed topic was tawḥīd as the philosophical foundation of accounting, representing 12 articles (28.6%). This finding indicates that tawḥīd is widely regarded as the fundamental paradigm underpinning Islamic accounting, as it conceptualizes all economic activities as acts of worship and accountability before Allah. The predominance of this theme highlights the central role of theological principles in shaping the theoretical foundations of Islamic accounting.

Other prominent research themes included Islamic epistemology and the Islamization of knowledge (23.8%), the application of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah (19.0%), ethics and accountability (16.7%), and the development of Islamic accounting theory (11.9%). This thematic distribution demonstrates that contemporary Islamic accounting research extends well beyond the technical aspects of financial reporting toward strengthening the philosophical and epistemological foundations of the discipline. Overall, the characteristics of the selected literature reveal a clear scholarly movement toward integrating Islamic epistemology, ethical principles, and accounting practice in order to develop an accounting system that is more just, ethically responsible, socially accountable, and oriented toward the realization of maṣlaḥah (public welfare).

Discussion

Tawḥīd as the Foundational Principle of Islamic Accounting Epistemology

The synthesis of the 42 selected studies demonstrates that the concept of tawḥīd (Islamic monotheism) constitutes the fundamental cornerstone of Islamic accounting epistemology. Nearly all studies addressing the development of Islamic accounting theory identify tawḥīd as the foundational paradigm that distinguishes Islamic accounting from its conventional counterpart. Rather than being understood solely as a theological doctrine, tawḥīd functions as a comprehensive philosophical framework that directs all economic and business activities toward compliance with the will of Allah. Consequently, every accounting activity is viewed as an integral part of human worship (ʿibādah) and devotion to the Creator.

Unlike the conventional accounting paradigm, which is primarily oriented toward economic efficiency, profit maximization, and shareholder interests, Islamic accounting epistemology conceptualizes the processes of recording, measurement, and financial reporting as both acts of worship (ʿibādah) and expressions of amānah (trust). Every accounting activity is therefore expected to be carried out with a profound sense of responsibility because human beings are ultimately accountable before Allah for all of their actions. This perspective substantially broadens the meaning of accounting, transforming it from a financial information system into a moral and spiritual institution that supports ethical decision-making and responsible governance.

Within the tawḥīd-based framework, financial statements serve purposes that extend well beyond providing economic information for decision-making. They also function as instruments of moral, social, and spiritual accountability. Accordingly, financial information should embody the Islamic values of honesty (ṣidq), justice (ʿadl), and public welfare (maṣlaḥah), thereby ensuring fairness for all stakeholders. Financial reporting is therefore expected not only to satisfy the informational needs of investors and creditors but also to demonstrate an organization's fulfillment of its trust and responsibility toward society and, ultimately, toward Allah.

These findings indicate a significant transformation in the concept of accountability, shifting from accountability to stakeholders toward accountability to Allah and society. In the Islamic worldview, accountability extends beyond responsibility to human stakeholders by incorporating a transcendental dimension that recognizes Allah as the ultimate owner of all resources. This broader conception reinforces the view that the primary objective of Islamic accounting is to achieve a balanced integration of economic, social, and spiritual interests, thereby promoting organizational governance that is more ethical, equitable, and socially responsible.

Islamic Epistemology as the Foundation for the Development of Accounting Knowledge

The synthesis further reveals that ten of the selected studies explicitly emphasize the importance of Islamic epistemology as the philosophical basis for the development of accounting knowledge. In contrast to Western epistemological approaches, which generally prioritize rationalism and empiricism, Islamic epistemology integrates three complementary sources of knowledge: divine revelation (waḥy), human reason (ʿaql), and empirical experience (tajribah). These three sources are viewed as mutually reinforcing in the formulation and advancement of accounting theory and practice.

Revelation, derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah, functions as the ultimate normative source that guides and regulates the use of reason and empirical observation. Human reason facilitates the interpretation and development of accounting concepts in response to changing social and economic circumstances, while empirical experience provides the means to evaluate the practical effectiveness of these concepts in real-world settings. The integration of these three epistemological sources produces a more comprehensive framework for knowledge construction than approaches relying exclusively on rationality or empirical observation.

This epistemological paradigm promotes the understanding that accounting is not merely a technical mechanism for recording financial transactions but rather an integral component of the Islamic value system, designed to uphold justice and promote public welfare. Consequently, the development of Islamic accounting theory extends beyond considerations of economic efficiency by incorporating ethical principles, spiritual values, and social responsibility. Such an approach contributes to the emergence of a more holistic and value-oriented accounting framework.

The findings also indicate an ongoing shift from a predominantly positivist paradigm toward a more integrative epistemological perspective. This transition is reflected in the increasing number of studies that seek to reconcile contemporary accounting concepts with Islamic values while remaining responsive to advances in modern scientific knowledge. These developments suggest that Islamic epistemology possesses considerable potential to enrich and expand future accounting theory by providing a broader philosophical foundation for the discipline.

Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah as the Objective of Accounting

Another prominent theme emerging from the literature synthesis is the application of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah (the objectives of Islamic law) as the overarching purpose of accounting. Eight of the reviewed studies argue that Islamic accounting systems should be designed to realize the objectives of Sharīʿah by promoting human well-being (maṣlaḥah). Within this framework, organizational success is evaluated not only in terms of financial performance but also according to its contribution to the welfare and prosperity of society.

The application of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah places justice (al-ʿadl), public welfare (maṣlaḥah), transparency, societal well-being, and the protection of stakeholders' rights at the center of accounting objectives. These principles provide the normative foundation for financial reporting, ensuring that accounting information supports responsible governance, ethical decision-making, and sustainable organizational development. Accordingly, accounting becomes an instrument for achieving both economic and social justice.

One important implication of adopting the maqāṣid al-sharīʿah framework is the expansion of organizational performance measurement. Whereas conventional accounting predominantly evaluates performance through financial indicators such as profitability and efficiency, the Islamic perspective also incorporates social, ethical, and spiritual achievements. As a result, performance measurement evolves into a more comprehensive and balanced system that captures the multidimensional objectives of organizational success.

Integrating Islamic Ethics into Accounting Practice

The review further indicates that seven of the selected studies specifically emphasize the importance of integrating Islamic ethical principles into accounting practice. Ethics is regarded as an inseparable component of the accounting system because it shapes individual behavior throughout the processes of recording, measurement, and financial reporting. Consequently, the successful implementation of Islamic accounting depends not only on technical competence but also on the moral character of accounting professionals.

Core Islamic ethical values—including amānah (trustworthiness), ṣidq (truthfulness), tablīgh (transparency and effective communication), faṭānah (professional competence and wisdom), and iḥsān (excellence)—are identified as essential principles guiding accounting practice. Amānah requires accountants to safeguard the public trust, ṣidq demands honesty and integrity in financial reporting, tablīgh promotes transparency and clear communication of information, faṭānah reflects professional expertise and sound judgment, while iḥsān encourages the pursuit of excellence as an expression of devotion to Allah.

The integration of these ethical values demonstrates that Islamic accounting extends beyond compliance with technical standards and regulatory requirements by fostering the development of professionals characterized by integrity, responsibility, and moral excellence. Accordingly, the quality of financial reporting is determined not only by the technical capabilities of accountants but also by their ethical and spiritual character. This value-based orientation constitutes one of the defining characteristics that distinguishes Islamic accounting from conventional accounting paradigms, which primarily emphasize formal compliance and economic performance.

Future Research Directions

The synthesis of the 42 selected studies reveals that research on the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting remains predominantly conceptual in nature. Most existing studies focus on paradigm development, philosophical inquiry, and normative analyses of the fundamental principles underlying Islamic accounting. By contrast, empirical investigations examining the implementation of these concepts within organizational settings remain relatively limited. This imbalance highlights the need for future research to move beyond conceptual discussions and provide empirical evidence regarding the practical application of Islamic epistemological principles.

The scarcity of empirical research has resulted in limited evidence concerning the effectiveness of applying Islamic epistemology in financial reporting, organizational governance, and accounting education. Consequently, future studies should develop robust empirical models capable of examining the influence of Islamic values on financial reporting quality, organizational transparency, governance effectiveness, and the ethical behavior of accounting professionals. Such investigations would provide stronger empirical support for the theoretical foundations of Islamic accounting and contribute to its practical advancement.

Furthermore, the literature synthesis indicates that most studies continue to concentrate primarily on the concepts of tawḥīd and maqāṣid al-sharīʿah. Comparatively little attention has been devoted to integrating Islamic epistemology with emerging developments in accounting technology, including artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics, digital accounting systems, sustainability reporting, and global financial reporting standards. Given the rapid pace of technological transformation, these emerging areas present new ethical and governance challenges that require a strong epistemological and value-based foundation rooted in Islamic principles.

These findings present substantial opportunities for future research to explore the integration of Islamic epistemological values with the ongoing digital transformation of accounting. Developing digitally enabled accounting models grounded in Islamic values has the potential to produce reporting systems that are not only efficient and accurate but also transparent, equitable, ethically responsible, and aligned with the objectives of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah within the context of the digital economy. Such research would contribute significantly to ensuring that technological innovation remains consistent with the ethical and social objectives of Islamic accounting.

Synthesis of the Research Findings

Based on the synthesis of the selected literature, this review concludes that the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting is built upon five interrelated pillars: (1) tawḥīd as the foundational paradigm of accounting; (2) the complementary integration of divine revelation (waḥy), human reason (ʿaql), and empirical experience (tajribah) as the primary sources of knowledge; (3) maqāṣid al-sharīʿah as the overarching objective of accounting; (4) Islamic ethics as the normative framework guiding the professional conduct of accountants; and (5) spiritual and social accountability as the principal orientation of financial reporting. Collectively, these five pillars constitute an integrated conceptual framework for the development of an Islamic accounting system grounded in the Islamic worldview.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Islamic accounting has evolved beyond its traditional technical function as a system for recording financial transactions into a comprehensive academic discipline that integrates the ontological, epistemological, and axiological dimensions of Islam. Within this paradigm, accounting serves not merely as a mechanism for generating financial information but as an instrument for promoting justice, transparency, public welfare (maṣlaḥah), and accountability to both Allah and society. Consequently, the integration of Islamic epistemology makes a substantial contribution to the advancement of accounting theory and practice by providing a more holistic, ethically grounded, and socially responsible framework capable of addressing the governance challenges of the contemporary era.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the integration of Islamic epistemology and accounting through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of scholarly publications published between 2016 and 2026. Based on the synthesis of 42 selected articles, the review concludes that research in Islamic accounting has undergone a significant paradigm shift—from a predominantly technical and economically oriented discipline toward a framework that positions Islamic values as the philosophical foundation for the development of accounting knowledge and practice. The findings identify five major themes that dominate the existing literature: tawḥīd as the foundational accounting paradigm; the integration of divine revelation (waḥy), human reason (ʿaql), and empirical experience (tajribah) as complementary epistemological sources; the application of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah as the overarching objective of accounting; the strengthening of Islamic ethics in professional accounting practice; and spiritual and social accountability as the principal orientation of financial reporting. Together, these themes demonstrate that Islamic accounting should be understood not merely as a system of financial recording and reporting but as a comprehensive framework for promoting justice, public welfare (maṣlaḥah), transparency, and accountability to Allah, humanity, and the environment. The review also reveals that the existing body of literature remains largely conceptual, while empirical investigations into the implementation of Islamic epistemology in accounting practice, organizational governance, accounting education, and sustainability reporting remain relatively limited. Accordingly, future research should prioritize the development of empirical models that examine the practical application of Islamic epistemological principles across diverse organizational contexts while also exploring their integration with digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and sustainability reporting frameworks. Overall, this study confirms that the integration of Islamic epistemology makes a significant contribution to the advancement of accounting theory and practice by providing a more holistic, ethically grounded, and welfare-oriented paradigm. Islamic epistemology therefore offers a comprehensive philosophical foundation for developing an accounting framework that not only fulfills economic objectives but also advances the broader goals of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah and supports sustainable development.

References

Alam, M. S. (2022). 30 years of research in Islamic accounting: A literature review. PSU Research Review.

Alamad, S. (2023). Conceptualising accounting as a value-based concept in the context of alternative finance. Journal of Accounting Literature.

Alshater, M. M., Hassan, M. K., Sarea, A., & Samhan, H. M. (2022). Islamic accounting research between 1982 and 2020: A hybrid review. Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research.

Calandra, D., Lanzalonga, F., & Biancone, P. (2024). Exploring IFRS in Islamic finance: A bibliometric and coding analysis of emerging topics and perspectives. International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management.

Febrita, Saputri, H., & Azwari, P. C. (2025). Pendekatan kualitatif dalam akuntansi syariah: Konsep, metodologi, dan implikasinya. Jurnal Semesta Ilmu Manajemen dan Ekonomi.

Habibi, M., Mahsun, M., Asnawi, N., Putra, Y., & Arifin, S. (2025). Islamic jurisprudential approaches to pesantren financial reporting. El-Qist: Journal of Islamic Economics and Business (JIEB).

Hadi, N., Triyani, A., Fatchurrahman, M., & Retnoningsih, S. (2025). Methodological construction of social accounting: Ontology on Islamic social responsibility (ISR). Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research.

Hasan, M. S., Saky, S. A. T. M., & Islam, M. N. (2026). Islamization of management accounting and business decision-making: A literature review. Bulletin of Islamic Research.

Hassan, M., Aliyu, S., & Hussain, M. (2019). A contemporary review of Islamic finance and accounting literature. The Singapore Economic Review.

Mahyudin, Sugianto, & Majid, M. A. A. (2025). Implementation of Islamic accounting in supporting Islamic economic principles: A systematic literature review (SLR). JAMPARING: Jurnal Akuntansi Manajemen Pariwisata dan Pembelajaran Konseling.
Menne, F., Hasiara, L. O., Setiawan, A., Palisuri, P., Tenrigau, A. M., Waspada, W., Juliana, J., & Nurhilalia, N. (2023). Sharia accounting model in the perspective of financial innovation. Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity.
Meriç, A., & Karaca, H. (2024). Analysis of Islamic finance, Islamic accounting and standards research. Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research.
Mo’tasim, Mo’tasim, S. M., Maksum, M., Ma’ruf, A., & Verawati, E. (2025). Integrating Islamic epistemology, cultural context, and deep learning for multicultural Islamic education: A thematic literature review. FIKROTUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Manajemen Islam.
Mukhlisin, M., Ismail, N., & Fikri, R. J. (2022). Mind the gap: Theories in Islamic accounting and finance, Islamic economics and business management studies. ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance.
Raimi, L. (2024). Do Islamic epistemology and ethics advance the understanding and promotion of sustainable development? A systematic review using PRISMA. International Journal of Ethics and Systems.
Restuningdiah, N., Wafaretta, V., & Furqorina, R. (2020). A mapping of Islamization of accounting. KnE Social Sciences.
Saputra, W. (2025). Development of waqf accounting research: A systematic literature review. Journal of Literature Review, 1(2), 360–372. https://doi.org/10.63822/e45sc513
Sumiyati, S., Yanto, Y., Julia, J., Rozi, R., & Nizarudin, A. (2025). Ontological and epistemological disequilibrium: Harmonization of Islamic financial accounting standards and the economic political interests in Indonesia to Maqasid’ul-Shari’ah. Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research.
Sunarno, R. D. (2024). Refleksi filosofis atas kajian teori dan praktik akuntansi syariah. Owner.
Yustrianthe, R. H., & Rizal, N. (2020). Hidden curriculum: The concept of integrating Islamic value in higher education accounting at Muhammadiyah on Ulab Albab perspective. Journal of Advanced Research in Dynamical and Control Systems.