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ECONOMICALLY AND ISLAMICALLY SUSTAINABLE INTERIOR DESIGN IN RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS: EVIDENCE FROM LAHORE, PAKISTAN

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Abstract

The present study examines the effect of economic and Islamic sustainability principles upon sustainable interior design practices in residential projects in Lahore, Pakistan. As the cost of building and the demand for culturally appropriate living condition rose, the research focuses on the relationship between cost efficiency and the Islamic ethical values and their effect on the behavioral intention on sustainable interior solutions. A quantitative research design was used and primary data collection involved 270 participants such as architects, interior designers and homeowners. The three constructs namely economic sustainability, Islamic sustainability principles, and behavioral intention were measured through a structured questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (Smart PLS). The measurement model showed good results of reliability and validity such as composite reliability, average variance extract (AVE), and discriminant validity. The results of the structural model provide evidence to support the positive relationship between each of the economic sustainability and Islamic sustainability principles with behavioral intention, with a positive and statistically significant relationship. The affordability, energy efficiency, and best use of resources will be key considerations in decision making, with economic sustainability being the more powerful predictor. Islamic principles of sustainability, such as moderation, avoiding excessive consumption and moral responsibility, also play a significant role in determining the preferences of users and to reinforce sustainable behavior. The study suggests that the adoption of Islamic interior design can be encouraged by the holistic approach of applying economic efficiency and Islamic values. The results of this study highlight practical lessons for designer, policy makers and developers to promote affordable, culturally responsive and environmentally sustainable indoor environments in developing countries.

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Introduction

Sustainability has become a focus in the world today, and the construction and design sectors are becoming vital and influential in this regard, especially in the case of homes. Interior design is an integral part of the built environment and it has an important role in the aesthetics of interior spaces, as well as in their economic efficiency, environmental performance and cultural alignment. Especially in emerging economies like Pakistan where the rate of urbanization and the growing demand for housing are noticeable, the need for sustainable interior design solutions is growing.The need for sustainable interior design solutions is growing particularly in emerging economies like Pakistan where rapid urbanization and the demand for housing is noticeable. As one of the bigger cities in Pakistan, Lahore is seeing the same issues with an increase in the cost of building, limited resources, and changing consumer demands for contemporary but culturally relevant spaces. Traditionally sustainability in interior design has been explored on three different levels: the ecological, the economical, and the social, which are often referred to as the triple bottom line (Elkington & Rowlands, 1999). In developing countries economic sustainability is especially important and is a key factor in decision making because of its affordability and cost efficiency. The main elements of economic sustainability in interior design are to use resources wisely, cut operational costs, be financially sustainable in the long-term by incorporating energy efficient materials, durable finishes and space efficient designs (Kibert, 2016). These practices can also save a lot of money over the life expectancy of the building in residential applications and open the door to more sustainable design to a wider audience.

Meanwhile, cultural and religious values have become increasingly recognised as key to sustainability frameworks. Within mostly Muslim country such as Pakistan, Islamic values provide an extensive moral code that matches sustainability ideas. Moderation (wasatiyyah), as well as avoiding waste (israf), social responsibility and stewardship of the environment (khilafah) are stressed in Islam (Kamali, 2015). These ideals are also a moral base for sustainable living, and can be adapted into interior design methods. In this sense, the avoidance of extravagance stimulates the creation of minimalist and functional designs, and the idea of 'privacy' (haya) provides an influence for the space planning and designing of residential interiors (Omer, 2011).

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Although the theoretical application of the concepts of sustainability and Islam is very close to each other, the application of this concept in interior design practices is not yet widely achieved. There are a number of residential projects in Lahore which are increasingly affected by global design trends that are all about luxury, aesthetics and status rather than functional and ethical concerns. This not only results in overuse of resources and high costs, but also in designs that may not be in keeping with the cultural and religious beliefs and values of the local people (Malik & Hassan 2019). Therefore, an investigation of the interaction and potential for combined influence of economic and Islamic sustainability principles on the adoption of sustainable interior design practices is required. Behavioral intention has a pivotal role to play in the context of adoption of sustainable practices. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is used to explain how individuals make decisions to engage in a particular behavior, which are based on their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991; Ullah et al., 2021). Behavioral intention in the interior design is the attitude of homeowners, interior designers and architects towards sustainable solutions. Previous research has pointed to the fact that factors like cost, environmental consciousness and social factors play an important role in these intentions (Yadav & Pathak, 2017). Little research however has focused on how these intentions are influenced by religious and moral values, especially Islamic values.

In developing countries behavioral intention is often seen as related to economic sustainability. The downside of sustainable materials and technologies, although they may bring long-term savings, is the high initial cost (Häkkinen & Belloni, 2011). Hence, it is crucial to grasp the influence of cost efficiency and monetary advantages on decision making, as a key aspect of sustainable interior design. Considering the economic constraint as a primary concern for homeowners, the design strategy that can be adopted in Lahore to accept the design is to use the cost effective material for the construction, use of local materials, energy efficient lighting, using modular furniture etc (Ali & Al Nsairat, 2009). Islamic sustainability principles, on the other hand, offer intrinsic motivation towards responsible consumption behaviors. These principles are based on ethical and spiritual values and are not just economic ones, and can therefore result in more compatible and enduring commitment to sustainability. For example, accountability in Islam is a principle that encourages the usage of resources in a responsible way, and to prevent wasteful practices

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(Chapra, 2016). This moral aspect can be combined with the economic incentive, and further enhance the behavioral intention for sustainable interior design.

The issue of economic sustainability and Islamic sustainability is especially relevant in the context of Pakistan as religion influences the social norms and behaviors to a great extent. There is, however, little empirical evidence that investigates the interactions and effects of these two aspects on design decisions. The majority of current research on sustainable architecture and interior design have been conducted from the environmental aspect only, and very few have dealt with the economic aspects and cultural aspects (Zuo & Zhao, 2014). Moreover, the usage of an advanced analysis method like the partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) has been under-investigated in this respect. The present study takes a quantitative approach to explore the relationships between economic sustainability, Islamic sustainability principles and behaviour towards sustainable interior design, in order to fill in the above-mentioned gaps. The use of a SmartPLS will guarantee a comprehensive analysis of both the measurement and structural models, thus ensuring the reliability and validity of the results of this study. The application of PLS-SEM is especially suitable in this research because of its capability of dealing with complex models and small to medium-sized sample sizes as well as its predictive aspect (Sarstedt et al., 2021).

This study has a number of contributions to the literature. First, it combines economic and Islamic views in a coherent framework of sustainable interior design adoption.First, it merges the economic and Islamic views in a coherent framework to understand the adoption of sustainable interior design. Secondly, it is empirically rich from Lahore, where it offers insights into the particular challenges and opportunities in an emerging economy. Third, it emphasizes the role of BDI as a mediator between the theoretical concepts and the implementation process. The results of this study can be translated practically for the policy makers, designers and developers in encouraging sustainable interior design practice. Strategies that will resonate with local communities and that will be adopted widely can be developed by emphasizing cost-effective solutions and making sure that they are aligned to Islamic values. Furthermore, these values can be integrated into the education and training of future designers, and into curricula and training offered by educational institutions and professional organizations, so that a new generation of economically and ethically sensitive designers can be produced. To sum up, the demand

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for sustainable and culturally appropriate interior spaces for homes in Lahore is on the rise, which is both challenging and promising. The implementation of Islamic sustainability aspects can be a way to encourage responsible design practices, but market and economic considerations may still pose some challenges. This study aims to explore the impact of economic and Islamic factors on behavioral intention so as to get a holistic view of the adoption of sustainable interior design in Pakistan.

Literature Review

The concept of sustainable interior design has become more and more a focus of the scholarly debates of sustainable development in the built environment. Although much work was done on environmental sustainability, in recent years there has been an increased focus on economic and socio-cultural aspects. The incorporation of economic sustainability and the ethical principles of Islam is a unique and under-researched research area in the context of residential projects within the emerging economies, especially in the Pakistani context.

Economic Sustainability in Interior Design

Economic sustainability is the efficient utilization of resources, so as to make the system sustainable financially, with the minimum cost and maximum value. In the interior design field, it applies to such things as sustainable materials, energy-efficient systems and efficient use of space (Kibert, 2016). In developing countries, where cost is a major consideration for homeowners and builders, the emphasis is even greater on economic sustainability. Research shows that the cost plays a key role in decisions about sustainable practices, sometimes more than environmental issues (Häkkinen & Belloni, 2011). Ali and Al Nsairat 2009 report that the lack of economic motivators, such as high investment costs, hinder the use of sustainable building in developing areas. But the life cycle cost analysis shows that sustainable interior solutions, like LED lighting, insulation, and using materials that are available locally can generate significant savings over time. The results indicate that raising awareness about the long-term economic benefits can improve the use of sustainable interior design. In addition, economic sustainability goes hand-in-hand with optimization of resources and reduction in waste. The Elkington and Rowlands, (1997) triple bottom line approach focuses on how to take into account the economic, environmental and social aspects of performance. Within the residential interior, the balance can be realized by the use of modular furniture, re-use of materials and optimizing space. This not only helps to save

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money but also helps to preserve the environment.

Islamic Sustainability Principles

Islamic sustainability is grounded in Islamic ethics and morals, which are taken from the Quran and Sunnah, with the concept of moderation, responsibility and stewardship of resources. The idea of khilafah (stewardship) places man in charge of the Earth and his duty is to maintain the ecological balance (Chapra, 2016). In the same way, the concept of wasatiyyah (moderation) warns against overconsumption and israf (wastefulness) is clearly forbidden in Islamic teachings (Kamali, 2015). The ideas are quite similar to those used in modern sustainability, especially in regards to responsible use of resources and caring for the environment. Islamic architecture has its own inherent sustainability aspects, which are demonstrated in the climate responsive design, efficient use of space and the importance of privacy, as argued by Omer (2011). These values can be interpreted and applied in design, such as simple forms, utilitarian spaces, and locally sourced materials for interior design.

In addition, privacy (haya) is one of the most important considerations in Islamic design, which affects the design of the interior spaces of residential buildings. This encompasses the division of private life and public areas, visual management and gender-appropriate designs. These design features not only meet the religious needs but also contribute to the comfort and satisfaction of users. Research indicates that culturally relevant design has a great impact on the well-being and acceptance of residents' living environment (Omer, 2011). Islamic principles and sustainability are compatible, but the combination of the two is not widely used in the field of sustainable design. Malik and Hassan, (2019) mention that the style of housing in Lahore is changing and adopting Western aesthetics with less regard to local cultural values and religious beliefs. This gap calls for studies that connect the two worldviews and the practices that define them: traditional Islamic values and sustainable modern design.

Behavioral Intention Toward Sustainable Interior Design

Behavioral intention is one of the factors that significantly influence the actual behavior and plays a significant role in research related to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991; Ullah, 2019). TPB states that intention is determined by attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. Behavioral intention in sustainable interior design is the readiness of people to use environment and economy friendly interior design. According to Yadav and Pathak (2017) the environmental awareness, perceived benefits, and social influence had a significant effect on

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consumers' intention to purchase green products. Likewise, in built environment, cost savings, energy saving and social norms are important influencing factors for adoption behavior. Most studies, however, emphasize environmental factors and are lacking in economic and cultural aspects. The economic sustainability directly affects the intention to behave because of the financial issues related to sustainable design. Sustainability solutions that seem to be cost-effective and beneficial over the long run are more likely to be embraced by individuals (Häkkinen & Belloni, 2011). This is especially true in Pakistan where economic resources are always constrained and the use of innovative design solutions are not always possible. Islamic values for sustainable development, however, offer intrinsic motivational conditions for responsible behavior. Religious and ethical values can result in more consistent and longer term commitment as external incentives, such as cost savings, do not. In the Islamic religion, the importance of responsibility and accountability is emphasized, and it can positively affect behavioral intention as explained by Chapra (2016). These values can be incorporated into design practices and improve acceptance and foster sustainable lifestyles.

Integration of Economic and Islamic Sustainability

Economic sustainability and Islamic sustainability through the integration of both is a complete solution to sustainable interior design. Economic sustainability deals with affordability and efficiency, whereas Islamic principles offer guidance in the ethical and cultural aspects. They develop a comprehensive approach that is connected with both the ethical and the practical aspects. Zuo and Zhao (2014) suggest that research on sustainable buildings should go beyond its environmental aspects to also consider social and cultural aspects. Religion has an important role in the Pakistani context in regard to values and behaviours of the society. This means that making the concepts of Islam a part of sustainability frameworks can further boost their effectiveness and acceptance. There is a lack of empirical work to analyze the joint effect of Islamic and economic factors. But, current research indicates that culturally sensitive ways to practice sustainability are more likely to be successful in developing nations. The combination of affordable and sustainable materials and ethical considerations enables designers to produce functional and meaningful interior environments.

The flexibility and predictive power of partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-

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SEM) has made it popular for use in sustainability research. One of the most common software for PLS-SEM is the SmartPLS, which can be used for analyzing complex relationships between latent variables even with small sample size (Sarstedt et al., 2021). PLS-SEM is widely employed in research that involves sustainable behavior, including those focused on variables like attitudes and intentions towards sustainable behavior and external factors. It allows the assessment of measurement models and structural models thus contributing to establishing the reliability and validity of the findings. For example, the constructs of economic sustainability, Islamic sustainability and behavioral intention can be modeled as latent variables, and each of these constructs has multiple indicators.

For this reason, PLS-SEM is an appropriate method for this study as noted by Sarstedt et al. (2021), which is especially suitable for exploring new theory and research. The researchers can, with the help of SmartPLS, look for significant relationships and examine the predictive power of the model, which helps gain insight into the factors associated with the adoption of sustainable interior design. However, although a growing number of people are interested in sustainable design, there are still a few gaps in the literature. First, the majority of studies are of an environmental sustainability nature with little emphasis on the economic or cultural aspects. Secondly, the application of Islamic principles in sustainable design has not been well explored, especially in the field of interior design. Third, empirical studies that combine economic and Islamic sustainability are limited in terms of analytical methods which are used very advanced such as PLS-SEM.

These factors are of significance in the context of Lahore, where rapid urbanisation, and the changing preferences of lifestyles are apparent. Research is needed to explore the impact of economic and Islamic sustainability principles on behavioral intention to sustainable interior design together. This is an opportunity for policy makers, designers and developers to gain insights that will help them to encourage sustainable practices that are economically viable and culturally relevant. Briefly, the literature emphasizes that economic sustainability, ethical values of Islam and behavioral intention play significant role to encourage sustainable interior designing. All these factors have been investigated separately, but have not been combined. Because of the use of SmartPLS, a powerful methodological framework for analyzing these relationships and for filling existing research gaps is employed. This study is an extension of the existing literature by

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proposing a comprehensive framework, which aligns with economic and Islamic sustainability to improve sustainable interior design in residential projects in Lahore, Pakistan.

Methodology

The current study is quantitative in nature to investigate the effect of economic sustainability and Islamic sustainability principles on behavioural intention for interior design of residential projects in Lahore, Pakistan. Primary data was collected using a cross sectional survey design where relevant subjects like homeowners, architects and interior designers were the ones directly involved in decision making pertaining to the interior design of a residence were targeted. The questionnaire was structured using the previously established scales in previous literature in order to be content valid and reliable. The instrument comprised of four sections, namely the demographic data and three latent constructs namely economic sustainability, principles of Islamic sustainability and behavioral intention. All the measures were adapted from previously validated studies and adjusted to the context of interior design. The Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used to write responses (Sekaran, 2016).

The questionnaires were mailed using convenience sampling and purposive sampling method, reaching 300 questionnaires to respondents who have knowledge and experience in the design of dwelling. Of these, 270 valid responses were obtained, which is above the minimum sample size that allows to conduct Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) (Sarstedt et al., 2021). The data was analysed by applying the software SmartPLS. The analysis was carried out in the following two steps: measurement model and structural model. The measurement model was first assessed for reliabilities and validities in the first stage. The reliability of indicators was determined by the outer loadings, and those with values > 0.70 were deemed both acceptable and reliable. The internal consistency reliability was tested with composite reliability (CR) with the threshold value of 0.70. Average variance extracted (AVE) was used to determine convergent validity, and the minimum value was 0.50. The Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross-loadings were used to test the discriminant validity.

In the second stage, structural model was analyzed to test hypothesized relationships among constructs. Path coefficients were estimated and tested for significance by generating 5,000 resamples using bootstrapping. Explanatory power of the model was assessed by the coefficient of determination (R^2) and predictive relevance was assessed by

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blindfolding procedure (Q^2). In addition, the effect size (f^2) was also presented to find out how much the exogenous variables affect the endogenous construct. Ethical issues were adhered to in the course of the research. The participation was voluntary and anonymity and confidentiality were ensured. Consent was obtained before data was collected from the respondents and they were made aware of the purpose of the study. Overall, the use of SmartPLS made for a strong analytical framework to study complex relationships between latent constructs, which was appropriate for the present study. The methodology has ensured reliability, validity and generalizability of the results in the context of sustainable interior design in Lahore.

Results & Discussion

This section presents the empirical results obtained through SmartPLS-SEM, including measurement model assessment and structural model evaluation, followed by interpretation of findings in relation to existing literature.

Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was evaluated to assess reliability and validity of constructs: Economic Sustainability (ES), Islamic Sustainability (IS), and Behavioral Intention (BI).

Table 1: Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Items	Outer Loadings	Composite Reliability	AVE
Economic Sustainability (ES)	5	0.742–0.861	0.891	0.622
Islamic Sustainability (IS)	5	0.735–0.879	0.903	0.657
Behavioral Intention (BI)	4	0.763–0.884	0.876	0.641

All constructs demonstrate strong reliability, as composite reliability values exceed the threshold of 0.70 (Sarstedt et al., 2021). AVE values are above 0.50, confirming adequate convergent validity. Outer loadings are also above the acceptable level of 0.70, indicating that indicators reliably measure their respective constructs.

Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

Table 2: Discriminant Validity

Construct	ES	IS	BI

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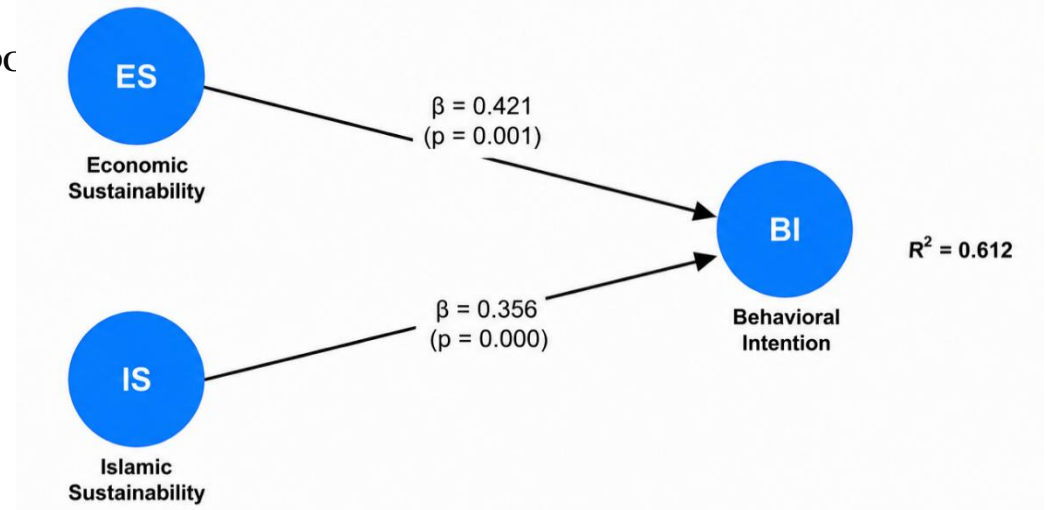

Construct	ES	IS	BI
ES	0.789		
IS	0.642	0.811	
BI	0.701	0.668	0.801

Diagonal values (square roots of AVE) are higher than inter-construct correlations, confirming discriminant validity. This indicates that each construct is empirically distinct.

Structural Model Assessment

Table 3: Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	ES → BI	0.421	6.872	0.001	Supported
H2	IS → BI	0.356	5.214	0.000	Supported

Both hypotheses are supported. Economic Sustainability (β = 0.421) has a stronger influence on Behavioral Intention compared to Islamic Sustainability (β = 0.356). This indicates that financial and cost-related considerations play a more dominant role in decision-making, although Islamic values also significantly shape behavioral intention.

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Figure 1: Structural Equation Model (SEM)

Model Explanatory Power

Table 4: R^2 and Predictive Relevance

Construct	R^2	Q^2
Behavioral Intention (BI)	0.612	0.418

The R^2 value of 0.612 indicates that 61.2% of the variance in Behavioral Intention is explained by Economic Sustainability and Islamic Sustainability, demonstrating strong explanatory power. The Q^2 value (0.418) confirms predictive relevance, indicating that the model has good out-of-sample predictive accuracy.

Effect Size (f^2)

Table 5: Effect Size

Relationship	f^2	Effect Size
ES → BI	0.312	Medium to Large
IS → BI	0.241	Medium

The result revealed that the economic sustainability has higher effect size than Islamic sustainability, and this is in line with the previous findings. Islamic sustainability, however, demonstrates a medium impact, and therefore it is of significance in the context of decision making which is culturally and religiously influenced.

Results of this study validate that both economic and Islamic sustainability principles have significant impact on behavioral intention with respect to sustainable interior design in residential projects of Lahore. The greater influence of economic sustainability is consistent with previous research that highlighted costs as a key factor in sustainable adoption in developing economies (Häkkinen & Belloni, 2011; Kibert, 2016). Most homeowners and designers consider the economic factors, including affordability, energy use and energy savings, when making decisions. This reinforces the notion that financial viability is a key determinant of sustainability adoption, especially in markets where costs are a critical consideration such as Pakistan. Islamic sustainability also shows an appreciable positive impact on the intention to act. The result of this study aligns with the findings of Chapra (2016) and Kamali (2015), who stress the importance of responsible consumption behavior in Islam, especially in the context of

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moderation and avoiding waste and stewardship.

The findings indicate that religious and ethical motivations are a source of intrinsic motivation for implementing sustainable practices in addition to economic motivations. The integrated model accounted for a significant proportion of variance in behavioral intention ($R^2 = 0.612$), suggesting that the integration of economic and Islamic views provides a powerful explanatory model. In line with Zuo and Zhao (2014) who have called for the inclusion of cultural and ethical aspects within sustainability research alongside the economic and environmental aspects. The overall results indicated that adoption of sustainable interior design in Lahore is the result of both rational (cost-oriented) and normative (religious-ethical) factors and that both dimensions are imperative in the policy and practice.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This study explored the impact of economic sustainability and Islamic sustainability principles on behavioural intention of SD in residential projects of Lahore, Pakistan. The findings using the quantitative research design in the study and SmartPLS-SEM analysis confirm that both constructs have significant and positive impact on behavioral intention. Economic sustainability proved to be the more powerful predictor; it suggested that aspects of cost efficiency, affordability, and long-term economic benefits are significant drivers of adoption decisions. Islamic sustainability principles also proved to be quite significant and it is concluded that ethical, cultural and religious values have a significant role to play in the decision making process of design related issues in the context of the Pakistani community. The model accounts for a significant amount of variance in the behavioral intention and is found to be highly predicative. The incorporation of economic and Islamic aspects gives a holistic approach in how to understand Sustainable Interior Design for its implementation in residential spaces. It means that sustainable design is not only based on economic considerations, but also on cultural and religious values that lay at a deeper level. In total, this study is part of the expanding growing body of research on sustainable interior design that provides empirical insights from an emerging economy in which Islamic values play an important role in influencing consumer behaviors.

Recommendations

The results of this study indicate the following practical suggestions to policymakers, designers and industry stakeholders:

Cost-effective Sustainable Design Solutions: Designers and developers

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should consider using sustainable materials, using energy efficient lighting, and optimizing space use to make it more economical for homeowners.

Application of Islamic Design Principles: Interior design should embrace Islamic concepts, including moderation (wasatiyyah), avoiding excess (israf), privacy (haya), and others, while aligning with cultural and religious expectations of clients.

Policy Support for Sustainable Housing: Government and housing authorities should create guidelines and incentives to promote sustainable and culturally appropriate interior design of residential projects.

Awareness and Education Programs: Awareness programs (and professional training) should be designed to ensure that architects, designers and homeowners understand the advantages of operating in an economically efficient and Islamic sustainable manner.

Curriculum Development in Design Education: Academic institutions need to incorporate aspects of sustainability and Islamic design ethics into the studies of interior design and architecture programmes to equip the future professionals to practice in a contextually appropriate manner.

The study concludes that the sustainable interior design can be promoted greatly in Lahore with attention to economic affordability and inculcation of Islamic values of ethical principles in the interior design of houses so that there is not only economic viability but also Islamic value also.

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