

Leadership From the Perspective of the Qur'an

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Abstract

Keywords:

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Leadership is a crucial element in social and organizational life. From the Islamic perspective, leadership is not merely authority but a trust (*amanah*) that must be exercised in accordance with Qur'anic values. This paper is motivated by the need for an ethical and spiritually grounded leadership concept to address contemporary leadership challenges marked by integrity and moral crises. The purpose of this paper is to examine leadership from the Qur'anic perspective and to identify the core principles of Islamic leadership. The discussion focuses on Qur'anic values related to trust, justice, consultation (*shura*), and leaders' responsibility toward society. This study employs a qualitative library research method by analyzing relevant Qur'anic verses, classical and contemporary commentaries, and related scholarly literature. The findings indicate that the Qur'an frames leadership as a moral and spiritual responsibility requiring justice, honesty, wisdom, and commitment to public welfare. Leaders are accountable not only to their followers but ultimately to God. In conclusion, Qur'anic leadership principles remain relevant as ethical guidelines for developing leadership that is trustworthy, just, and oriented toward the common good.

Abstrak:

Kata Kunci:

Kepemimpinan
Islam, Keadilan,
Etika
Kepemimpinan,
Kepercayaan, Al-
Qur'an

Kepemimpinan merupakan unsur krusial dalam kehidupan sosial dan organisasi. Dari perspektif Islam, kepemimpinan bukan sekadar otoritas, melainkan amanah yang harus dijalankan sesuai dengan nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an. Artikel ini didorong oleh kebutuhan akan konsep kepemimpinan yang etis dan berlandaskan spiritual untuk mengatasi tantangan kepemimpinan kontemporer yang ditandai oleh krisis integritas dan moral. Tujuan artikel ini adalah untuk mengkaji kepemimpinan dari perspektif Al-Qur'an dan mengidentifikasi prinsip-prinsip inti kepemimpinan Islam. Pembahasan berfokus pada nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an terkait amanah, keadilan, musyawarah (*shura*), dan tanggung jawab pemimpin terhadap masyarakat. Studi ini menggunakan metode penelitian perpustakaan kualitatif dengan menganalisis ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an yang relevan, tafsir klasik dan kontemporer, serta literatur akademik terkait. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa Al-Qur'an memandang kepemimpinan sebagai tanggung jawab moral dan spiritual yang memerlukan keadilan, kejujuran, kebijaksanaan, dan komitmen terhadap kesejahteraan umum. Pemimpin bertanggung jawab tidak hanya kepada pengikutnya tetapi pada akhirnya kepada Allah. Kesimpulannya, prinsip-prinsip kepemimpinan Al-Qur'an tetap relevan sebagai pedoman etis untuk mengembangkan kepemimpinan yang dapat dipercaya, adil, dan berorientasi pada kebaikan bersama.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an, as the primary source of Islamic teachings, provides a normative framework and transcendental values that form the basis of understanding Islamic leadership. Leadership from the perspective of the Qur'an must be in harmony with principles such as justice ('adl), trustworthiness, consultation (syūrā), noble character, and accountability before Allah (takāful ilā Allāh).

Leadership is a universal phenomenon that is the subject of attention in various disciplines such as management, sociology, and religious studies. In the context of Islam, leadership is not merely related to power or formal positions, but also as a manifestation of moral responsibility, service, and trust or confidence.

The study of Islamic leadership or leadership from the perspective of the Qur'an is important, especially in the modern era where leadership crises in the form of corruption, abuse of power, and moral failure are real problems in various public and private institutions.

Thus, the ideal leader in the perspective of the Qur'an is not a dominant or absolute figure, but someone who carries out their mandate and leads based on the principles of obedience to the divine will and the welfare of the people. This concept implies that leadership is normative and has a spiritual dimension that cannot be separated from the rules of Sharia.

In Q.S. Al-Baqarah verse 30, it is stated that humans are appointed as God's representatives on earth with the responsibility to prosper and protect creation, including in social, political, and moral aspects. This idea has the consequence that human leadership must not conflict with the interests of the people and the guidance of Sharia law.

Against this backdrop, research on leadership from the perspective of the Qur'an deserves further development, especially in institutional contexts such as schools, universities, religious organizations, and government in Indonesia. Such research not only enriches Islamic leadership theory but also offers normative solutions to address moral problems and leadership failures in the current era.

II. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a library-based research design. This approach is used to explore in depth the ideas and values of leadership in Islam through the study of texts and literature, enabling researchers to understand the concept of Qur'anic leadership interpretively and contextually.

The research data was sourced from the Qur'an as the main reference, particularly verses that contain leadership principles, such as trust, justice, deliberation, and leadership accountability. To enrich the analysis, supporting sources were also used in the form of classical and contemporary tafsir (exegesis) books, as well as scientific works such as books and journal articles

relevant to the study of Islamic leadership. The diversity of sources is intended to obtain a more comprehensive perspective.

Data collection was carried out through systematic literature searches by identifying, classifying, and documenting sources relevant to the research focus. The collected data was then analyzed using descriptive-analytical techniques.

The analysis stages included determining relevant verses from the Qur'an, examining the meaning of the verses based on the interpretations of exegetes, grouping the leadership values contained therein, and interpreting the findings within the framework of the concept of Islamic leadership. The results of the analysis were presented narratively to provide a systematic overview of leadership from the perspective of the Qur'an.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Result

A study of relevant verses of the Qur'an, interpretations by classical and contemporary scholars, and scientific literature discussing the concept of Islamic leadership shows that leadership in the perspective of the Qur'an is holistic and integral. The dimensions of leadership are not limited to the ability to manage power or organize, but also include moral, spiritual, social, and managerial aspects that are interrelated and inseparable. The Qur'an positions leadership as an instrument for guiding human life to be in accordance with divine and human values, so that the success of a leader is measured not only by material achievements, but also by the quality of their character and the social impact they have.

From the perspective of the Qur'an, leadership is understood as a very heavy responsibility, as reflected in various verses that emphasize the responsibility of humans as caliphs on earth. This responsibility has moral and spiritual consequences, because every leader will essentially be held accountable not only by the people they lead, but also by Allah SWT. Therefore, the Qur'an emphasizes that leadership should not be practiced as a means of domination or fulfillment of personal and group interests, but rather as a form of service to achieve justice, benefit, and mutual prosperity.

In addition to moral and spiritual aspects, the Qur'an also emphasizes the social and managerial dimensions of leadership. Socially, leaders are required to care about the condition of the people, be able to listen to their aspirations, and prioritize deliberation in the decision-making process. This shows that Qur'anic leadership is participatory and inclusive, not authoritarian.

From a managerial perspective, the Qur'an emphasizes the importance of competence, skill, and professionalism in carrying out the mandate of leadership, so that common goals can be achieved effectively and sustainably. Thus, leadership in the perspective of the Qur'an is a combination of spiritual strength, moral maturity, social sensitivity, and managerial competence that is complete and balanced.

From the perspective of the Qur'an, a just leader is not only required to be able to make decisions that are legally correct, but also to consider the ethical and humanitarian dimensions of every policy taken. The enforcement of justice includes efforts to maintain social balance, protect vulnerable groups, and ensure that the rights of every individual are respected without discrimination based on social or economic status or personal proximity. This

shows that justice in Qur'anic leadership is inclusive and oriented towards protecting human dignity.

In addition, justice in Qur'anic leadership also serves as an evaluative guideline for leaders' actions and policies. Every decision must always be tested based on the principle of 'adl, whether it reflects balance, avoids narrow interests, and is oriented towards the common good. In this framework, justice is not only a normative value, but also a practical instrument that guides leaders to remain consistent in carrying out their leadership mandate in accordance with the values of the Qur'an.

In addition, deliberation (shūrā) emerges as one of the key mechanisms in the decision-making process in Qur'anic leadership. The Qur'an places deliberation as a normative principle that emphasizes the importance of dialogue, joint consideration, and the exchange of ideas in establishing policies that concern the interests of the people. Through deliberation, leadership is not exercised unilaterally, but is built on collective awareness and shared responsibility, so that the decisions made have stronger moral and social legitimacy.

Deliberation reflects participatory values that place community members as active subjects, not merely objects of policy. The involvement of various parties in the decision-making process allows leaders to gain a broader perspective, understand the real needs of the community, and minimize the potential for errors due to narrow views. In this context, deliberation serves as a means of constructive social control, as it provides space for criticism, suggestions, and aspirations that can enrich the quality of leadership.

In addition to intellectual aspects, wisdom (hikmah) is a key quality that distinguishes Qur'anic leadership from mere technocratic leadership. Wisdom enables leaders to place knowledge in the right context, consider long-term impacts, and balance idealistic interests with practical realities. In this regard, courage is also seen as an important character trait, especially the moral courage to uphold the truth, make difficult decisions, and take risks for the benefit of the people, even if those decisions are not always popular.

For example, studies referring to the interpretation of Surah Al-Baqarah verse 247 emphasize that the criteria for an ideal leader in the perspective of the Qur'an include excellence in knowledge and physical and moral readiness. This verse shows that Talut's leadership legitimacy was not based on social status or wealth, but rather on his superior knowledge and strength bestowed by Allah SWT. This implies that leadership in Islam is based on competence and adequate personal capacity to face challenges, maintain stability, and carry out responsibilities in a responsible manner.

The findings also show that the concept of Ulul Amri in the perspective of the Qur'an has a much more substantive meaning than simply holders of power or formal authority. Ulul Amri are understood as parties who are given a leadership mandate to manage public affairs, but their legitimacy is not only determined by the power structure, but also by their ethical and moral qualities in carrying out this mandate. Thus, authority in Islam is normative and based on responsibility, not on domination or power alone.

In the context of modern challenges marked by social complexity, plurality, and demands for public accountability, the values contained in the concept of Ulul Amri become a strategic reference in developing a model of ethical leadership. The principles of trustworthiness, justice, wisdom, and social concern provide a relevant normative framework for responding to the contemporary leadership crisis, while offering an alternative form of leadership that is not only administratively effective, but also morally

and spiritually meaningful. Thus, the concept of Ulul Amri can be positioned as a conceptual foundation for the development of contextual and sustainable ethical leadership in the modern era.

2. Discussion

a. Conceptual Introduction

Leadership is one of the central themes in social and religious studies, as it concerns the management, influence, and responsibility of a person towards the individuals and groups they lead. From an Islamic perspective, leadership (al-qiyādah or al-imāmah) is not only viewed as a structural position or political power, but also as a divine mandate that carries a very high moral, spiritual, and social responsibility. The Qur'an provides a strong conceptual basis for the function and essence of human leadership, which is inseparable from the role of humans as caliphs on earth.

The term leadership in English comes from the word leader, which means a person in charge. Philip Sadler concludes that leadership encompasses four things, namely: first, activities or processes; second, these activities involve influence, exemplary behavior, or trust; third, these activities involve two actors, namely leaders and followers; and fourth, it is a process of activities aimed at achieving goals, group commitment, and organizational cultural change. Wuradji adds one more thing related to the leadership process, namely the effort to direct members to have a sense of responsibility and to be organized in carrying out organizational tasks.

Leadership is the process of influencing subordinates, or setting an example from leaders to their followers, and is also an art of directing people with obedience, trust, respect, and enthusiastic cooperation in an effort to achieve organizational goals. Leadership patterns basically refer to the way leaders relate to their followers or subordinates.

In Q.S. Al-Baqarah verse 30, it is stated that every human being, especially those entrusted with leadership, has a responsibility to uphold justice, truth, and prosperity on earth. Thus, leadership in the Qur'an is not only related to the dimension of power, but is also rooted in ethical, spiritual, and religious moral values.

Exemplary behavior is an important aspect of Islamic leadership, where a leader is expected to set an example for those he leads by demonstrating Islamic principles in every action and decision. Deliberation, in the context of Islamic leadership, demonstrates the importance of consultation and cooperation in decision-making, in line with the Qur'an's encouragement to listen to the opinions of the community.

As a reliable leader who is able to inspire and always supportive, a leader is believed to be able to develop the skills necessary to carry out their duties effectively. The success of a leader in this context is determined by their ability to achieve the organization's goals optimally.

The requirements that every leader must have are that they must have advantages over their members. The requirements that every leader must have are:

- 1) Competent, competent here means being able to manage their members and prioritizing the interests of their members over their personal interests.

- 2) Fairness: Every leader must be fair and impartial in managing their members. This is explained in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "The most beloved of creatures to Allah is a fair leader (imam)" (HR. Ahmad).
- 3) Honest, Fulfilling Obligations, Responsible, and Trustworthy. By cultivating an attitude of honesty, a leader can automatically cultivate an attitude of trustworthiness. Therefore, leaders have a significant role or influence on their members. This is because leaders have the power and strength to encourage their members to do good and prevent evil.
- 4) Humility: a leader must not be arrogant but must be humble and always approachable to each of their members. Although there are those who are arrogant, conceited, haughty, and even hurt the feelings of their members who have worked together to elevate them to leadership positions, there are still many leaders who are humble today.

b. Leadership Values in Islamic Educational Institutions from the Perspective of the Qur'an

Within Islamic educational institutions, the principal must play a role in influencing, encouraging, guiding, directing, and motivating teachers, staff, students, parents, and all relevant parties who are active and play a role in achieving the objectives that have been set.

In summary, the criteria and characteristics that an Islamic educational leader must possess are as follows:

- 1) Fairness, which means treating everything proportionally, orderly, and with discipline. A leader who is impartial and wise in making decisions. This is based on sincere intentions solely for the sake of Allah SWT. If fairness is ingrained in oneself, it will give rise to good behavior.
- 2) Trustworthiness means being honest, responsible, and accountable for all the aspirations of the community or subordinates. Not betraying the organization/institution.
- 3) Fathonah means having intelligence and broad knowledge so that one always innovates within the organization and institution, thereby experiencing development and progress, not stagnating. An intelligent leader has brilliant ideas that can bring the organization progress and success.
- 4) Tabligh means conveying everything correctly, without hiding anything, being open and accepting suggestions or criticism from subordinates. Leaders have a big responsibility in providing correct information to their subordinates. Even a slight mistake in providing information can have a negative impact on the organization.
- 5) Shiddiq means truthful, as a characteristic of a fair leader, where everything that is said is the same as what is done. Leaders are required to always carry out all their duties correctly, provide accurate information, make the right decisions, and act correctly.
- 6) Qona'ah means accepting things as they are, not being greedy, being grateful to others, and being grateful to God. A qana'ah leader will not engage in corruption or harm others. How many leaders are there who are not grateful or are greedy? They abuse their position for personal gain, thereby destroying the vision, mission, and goals of the organization.

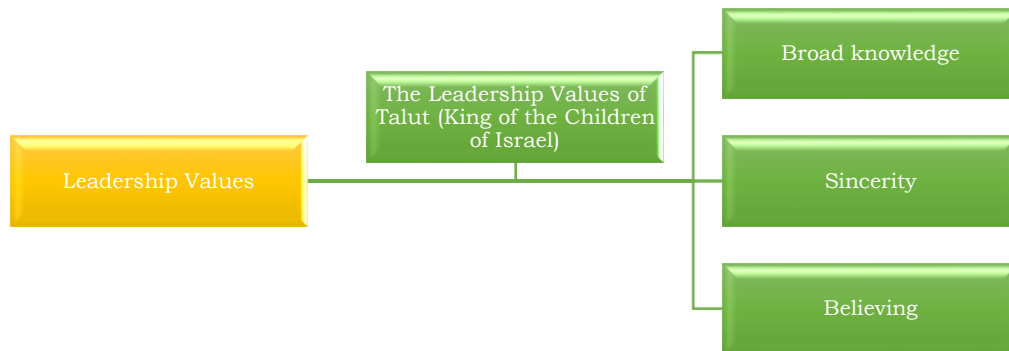


Figure 2.1 Thalut's Leadership Values

- 1) Broad Knowledge
One of the values that can be taken from the story of Thalut's leadership is the breadth of knowledge that Allah gave him. Although Thalut came from a lower class family, Allah SWT gave him a position because of the knowledge he had acquired.
- 2) Sincerity
Sincerity is implemented with determination and optimism, as illustrated in the story of Talut as described above. Sincerity is one of the important aspects that today's leaders must have. Sincerity is defined as purity of heart.
- 3) Faith
Then, in leading his people, Talut as a leader also had leadership values, namely faith. A leader should have a sense of optimism in leading. Based on the story of Talut as told in the Qur'an, it turns out that the source of Talut's optimism can be seen from his closeness to God.

c. The Relevance of Islamic Leadership Perspectives to the Modern World

Normatively, Islamic education views humans as *khalifah fil ardh* (leaders on earth) who have moral and spiritual responsibilities in utilizing the world's progress. Philosophically, Islam emphasizes a balance between material progress and moral perfection. Historically, Islamic education has proven its ability to prepare individuals who are intellectually superior, ethical, and civilized (*insān kāmil*).

In the modern world, advances in science and technology often give rise to rational, efficient, and results-based leadership patterns. However, on the

other hand, various moral, social, and spiritual crises have also emerged due to weak ethical values in the leadership process. This is where the relevance of Islamic leadership finds its urgency. Islam not only emphasizes intellectual competence or technocratic abilities, but also requires leaders to have high moral and spiritual integrity. Leaders who adhere to Islamic values lead not only with their minds, but also with their conscience, which is rooted in their devotion to Allah SWT.

The concept of amanah in Islam shows that leadership is not a privilege, but rather a great responsibility that must be accounted for both in this world and in the hereafter. Leaders who carry out their amanah with full responsibility will strive to advance society, maintain justice, and avoid abuse of power.

In a modern context, this concept can be translated as professional integrity, transparency, and public accountability. Similarly, the value of justice emphasized in Islam is relevant in efforts to build a balanced social and political system and guarantee the rights of every individual without discrimination.

Islamic moral values provide guidelines so that every decision is based on honesty, justice, and the interests of the people. Thus, Islamic leadership is not only relevant but also needed as a solution to the challenges of the modern world, which tends to be materialistic and individualistic.

Ultimately, Islamic leadership plays an important role in balancing technological progress and humanity. The modern world needs leaders who are able to adapt to change, but still adhere to ethical and spiritual values. The relevance of Islamic leadership to the modern world lies not only in its ability to provide an efficient system, but also in its ability to instill moral values that maintain social harmony, foster a sense of responsibility, and create a just and civilized civilization.

IV. CONCLUSION

Leadership in the perspective of the Qur'an is a comprehensive and timeless concept. The Qur'an places leadership as a great trust that is not only related to power, but also to moral and spiritual responsibilities towards Allah SWT and society. Leaders in Islam are khalifah fil ardh who have the role of prospering the earth, upholding justice, and maintaining the welfare of the people based on the principles of sharia. Values such as trustworthiness, fairness, tabligh, fathonah, and shiddiq are the main foundations in shaping the character of leaders who have integrity and are oriented towards the common good.

In the context of the modern world, which is characterized by technological advances, globalization, and moral crises, the principles of Islamic leadership serve as ethical guidelines that balance spiritual and material aspects. Qur'anic values such as justice, deliberation, sincerity, and social responsibility are highly relevant in responding to contemporary leadership challenges, which are often pragmatic and materialistic in nature. Modern leaders are required not only to be intellectually intelligent, but also to be trustworthy, honest, and responsible for the welfare of the people.

Islamic leadership also emphasizes the importance of collaboration, transparency, and justice in decision-making. This is in line with the principles of modern democracy, where community participation is an important element in the leadership process. Furthermore, spirituality in Islamic leadership affirms that all forms of authority and policy must be oriented towards worship, not

merely worldly interests. Thus, the relevance of Qur'anic leadership to the modern world lies in its ability to combine ethical, moral, and professional dimensions to produce leadership that is just, moral, and civilized.

Overall, leadership in the perspective of the Qur'an is not only a normative concept but also a practical guide in building social, educational, and governmental systems based on divine values. Islamic leadership provides direction for humanity to maintain a balance between worldly progress and moral integrity. Leaders who are faithful and virtuous will become role models for society and will be able to bring about positive change for the progress of the nation and the welfare of the people.

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