

A REVIEW OF SERVANT AND TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE IN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES: A LESSON FROM THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH) AS AN EXCELLENT ROLE MODEL FOR MUSLIM LEADERS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to give a review of the servant and transformational leadership styles in Islam perspectives that have appeared in the literature. In so doing, the article provides the concept of the Islamic leadership model as a known dual-style Islamic leadership model by proposing the author. This paper used the narrative literature review methodology from previously publication such as textbooks and journal articles especially from primary data - Qur'an and Sunnah. The study finds that two types of Islamic leadership were identified based on the leadership style of the prophet Muhammad (PBUH): servant and transformational leadership style. Furthermore, the paper provided a dual-style Islamic leadership model as effective leadership in practice for Muslim leaders in Indonesia. It is hoped that leaders such as managers, principals, CEOs in organizations/ corporations/social groups/communities would not hesitate to apply the Islamic leadership style especially dual-style Islamic leadership model. This paper will add to the literature on Islamic leadership style, especially for Muslim leaders in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Indonesia, Servant leadership style, Transformational leadership style, Dual-style Islamic leadership, Muslim leaders*

Introduction

Leadership is a complex human phenomenon that existed since the dawn of history (Haddara & Enanny, 2009). Also, leadership has long been an often-discussed topic among scholars of a variety of disciplines which is often centered around daily practices of particular organizations (Marbun, 2013) including leadership from an Islamic perspective. However, defining leadership unambiguously is not easy as there is no agreement on one definition available in the literature (Daniëls, Hondeghem, &

DochyS, 2019). For the concept of leadership, there is also a difference in opinion regarding the necessity of having a universal definition (Haddara & Enanny, 2009). (Daniëls, Hondeghem, & Dochy (2019) also stated numerous scholars have researched leadership and most of them stipulate leadership in different ways.

For instance, in general perspectives, Koontz (1994, as cited in Ather & Sobhani, 2007) described that leadership refers to a process of influencing and supporting others to work enthusiastically toward achieving objectives. Luisser and Achua, (2010) define “leadership is the influencing process of leaders and followers to achieve of organizational objectives through change”. Also, leadership is a process that entails influencing an organized group towards achieving a common goal (Northouse, 2018 cited in Abdallah, Çitaku, Waldrop, Zillioux, Pretani, & Khan, 2019). Yukl (2006, in Haddara & Enanny, 2009) defines leadership as “the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives.” Likewise, in Islamic perspectives, those definitions of leadership are same and there is none one definition all scholar agrees with.

In Islam leadership is viewed as a godly mission that a Muslim has to accomplish. It is work to ensure the collective prosperity of society through the practice and dissemination of good things (Amr Bil Maroof) and beating all deemed as evil (Nahi–Al-Munkar; Lari, 1999). In Islam, leaders must possess commitment to accomplish a vision to create a just, prosperous society in accordance with egalitarian model that is free from discrimination, mistreatment, and tyranny. In addition, Islam values transformational leaders over opportunist ones as leaders must also become good role models for their people, give optimistic support, and rally assurance as well as focus on the people need for growth (Bass, 1998). Burns (1978) has defined transformational leadership in this way: “Leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation” (Mir, 2010).

Leadership in Islamic perspectives

In Islamic perspectives, leadership has the same definition such as another perspective. However, there is any differentiate from another perspective which is the Islamic roots of leadership generally exist in the primary sources of Shari'ah (Qur'an and Sunnah) in addition to the practices of the early Muslims (Ahmad & Ogunsola, 2011; Almoharby & Neal, 2013). Where the Qur'an is the holy book of the religion of Islam, and the Sunnah describes the exemplary life of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), largely understood through the narration of his words and deeds, as known the Hadiths (Abdallah, Çitaku, Waldrop, Zillioux, Pretani, & Khan., 2019).

Furthermore, in the Qur'an chapter 68 verse 4, leadership in Islam perspectives where Allah (SWT) describes the very core of prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) leadership as follows: *And you (Muhammad) stand as an exalted standard of character* (Beekun, 2012). Additionally, one of the well-known Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was: "*Kullu kum ra'in wa' kullu ra'in mas'ool an rai'yatay-hi [...]*" meaning that "*Every one of you is a caretaker, and every caretaker is responsible for what he is caretaker of*" (Sahih Muslim, as cited in Ahmad and Ogunsola, 2011).

From the above explanation it is clear that the concept leadership in Islam includes leading oneself that is directing oneself to good direction. Besides leading oneself, the concept of leadership also applies in leading the people, this can be seen from the appointment of the Prophet David as caliph. The concept of caliph here has intermediate conditions, which is do no harm to the face of the earth, decide a matter fairly and not indulge his lusts. Allah threatens the caliph who did not carry out Allah's orders (Sidiq, 2014).

The nature of leadership in Islamic perspectives

Leadership in Islam is based on the principle of trust - *Amanah* (Ahmad & Ogunsola, 2011) and accountability (Abdallah, Çitaku, Waldrop, Zillioux, Pretani, & Khan., 2019; Haddara & Enanny, 2009). Trust and accountability go on together

(Haddara & Enanny, 2009), in which the leader is trusted to lead a group and is accountable to both the group members and to God (Abdallah, Çitaku, Waldrop, Zillioux, Preteni, & Khan, 2019).

Trust is further emphasized in the Qur'an chapter 2 verse 30: *I am going to place a vicegerent on earth*. Thus, humans are gifted trust as a vicegerent (*Khalifah*) on earth that God entrusted them to undertake are to manage the earth's resources and to establish a good and just life on earth. And also accountability is further emphasized in the Qur'an chapter 17 verse 13 to 14: *“And every man's fate, We have fastened on his neck: on the Day of judgment we shall bring out for him a scroll that he will see spread wide open (13), “Read your scroll! You will suffice this day as a constant reckoner against you (14).”*

Imam al-Mawlawi argued that a leadership role in the opinion of Islam is a necessity in social life. Other than that, he said, the presence of a leader in his leadership is very important. For example, this means that leadership has two purposes: (1) Values in religion and it is an alternative to the prophetic mission to protect religion; (2) and *Siyasati ad Dun* to run or govern world affairs. In other words, goals of leadership is to create a sense of security, justice, and fame, uphold Ammar Maarouf Nahi Munkar, cares about people, and manages as well solve society's problems. (3) Talking about legal questions in Islamic leadership, the existence of legal leadership is mandatory. But experts are still divided on whether it is mandatory or legal. Some groups say that they are committed because they make sense to strike for eliminating corruption, loss, and division caused by a group or group. Others argue that judgment is mandatory because commanders are recruited directly from Sharia in his command, as in QS. An-Nisa 'paragraph 59 (Amin, 2019).

The differences between Western and Islamic leadership

There are a number of basic differences between Western and Islamic leadership according to Mohammad Anisuzzaman and Md. Zainal Abedin Majumder (1996, as

cited in Ather and Sobhani, 2007), in their research about *Leadership: Western and Islamic – A Conceptual and Explorative Study*, which have been stated in **Table I**:

Table I. A number of basic difference between Western and Islamic leadership

No.	Point	Western leadership	Islamic leadership
1	Goals	Solution of a problem by groups, no reference to divine efforts	Seeking Allah's pleasure in solving a problem by group
2	Participants	Formal and informal leaders, and rarely ordinary member	Allah (SWT), Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the leader and followers
3	Nature	Leadership is rule-bound situation and no 'trust' are involved	Leadership relates to 'trust' which are to be rendered back to the participants
4	Methodology	Meetings, conference, study reports, file orders etc	Consultation with the follower especially with those with relevant knowledge, memoranda, and notifications.
5	Traits	Mundane knowledge, skill, values as prescribed by organizations (or groups, community)	Knowledge of Islamic Shariah, individual judgement, justice, and competence
6	Decision making	With reference to rules of business and no reference to any divine law	After consulting, the leader must decide, but put trust on Allah (SWT)
7	Limitations of leader	Leaders seek leadership without waiting for	Leaders must not seek leadership; it must come to

		leadership to come to them	them
8	Limitations of followers	Followers usually have a passive role	Followers have an active role to advise and warn leadership of consequences of policy/action
9	Leadership style	Authoritative, let alone, democratic as necessary	A combination of authoritarian and democratic styles
10	Followers style	Responding to the leader's call for advice and cooperation with the leader, but no acceptance of partial responsibility. Both of the leaders and followers are primarily accountable to organization (or groups, community)	Responding to the leader's call for advice and cooperation with the leader, and acceptance of partial responsibility for action. Both of the leader and followers are primarily accountable to Allah (SWT) and organization (or groups, community)

Source : Ather & Sobhani, (2007)

Research question and aims

In this paper, this general review aims to identify servant and transformational leadership in the Islamic perspective in the literature. Moreover, the study aims to provide an argument from the author by presenting in the concept of the Islamic leadership model for Muslim leaders in the current situation. The present review raises two research questions:

RQ1. How did theories of leadership in Islamic perspectives? Particularly the servant and transformational leadership style of the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) from the recent research

RQ2. What is the best argument from the author and how is the best concept of leadership style in practice for Muslim leaders in the current situation?

Research methodology

To answer the research questions (RQ1 & RQ2), the author used a narrative literature review methodology in this paper. The literature survey in this study entails the searching and reviewing of scholarly works from previous publications such as textbooks and journal articles. All publications considered for inclusion in this paper, in particular, discuss the servant and transformational leadership style. Then, only papers written in English and appearing in peer-reviewed journals and edited books were considered (see **Table II**).

Table II. Some selected studies on Islamic leadership

No.	Author(s)	Title	Servant leadership	Tranformational leadership
1	(Abdallah, Çitaku, Waldrop, Zillioux, Preteni, & Khan, 2019)	A review of Islamic perspectives on leadership	V	V
2	Ali, (2009)	Islamic perspectives on leadership: a model	V	V
3	Beekun, (2012)	Character centered leadership : Muhammad (p) as an ethical role model for CEOs	V	V
4	Haddara & Enanny, (2009)	Leadership : An Islamic Perspective	V	V

Findings

Types of leadership in Islamic perspectives

In this part, the evolvement of Islamic leadership literature will be presented especially two types of Islamic leadership: the servant and transformational leadership (for answering RQ1).

Servant leadership

This concept of servant leadership is a prophetic tradition and emphasizes the importance of the dedication and honesty of leaders in serving their followers (Abdallah et al., 2019; Ahmad and Ogunsola, 2011). The concept of servant leadership in its current modern context highlights the relevance of role-modeling (Greenleaf 2002, in Abdallah, Çitaku, Waldrop, Zillioux, Pretani, & Khan., 2019), which is exemplified by the leadership style of the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) such as the Qur'an chapter 33 verse 21 says: '*For you, in the prophet, is a good role model*'.

The servant-leader focusses on the needs of others rather than his or her own needs (Greenleaf 1977 as cited in Beekun, 2012). Farling et al. (1999) indicated that such leaders also provide vision, gain credibility, and trust from their followers (in Beekun, 2012). According to Beekun, (2012), he described five key attributes of servant leaders – A lesson from Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as follow:

a. *Service before self*

The servant-leader is not interested in obtaining power, status, or wealth. The leader wishes to do what is morally right even when it may cost him/her personally. For example, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stated that '*a leader of the nation is their servant*' (*sayyid al qawn khadimuhum*).

b. Listening as a means of affirmation

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did not seek to impose himself on others unless it was a matter of divine revelation. The prophet would stay quiet while first listening to the queries from his followers, and then respond appropriately.

c. Creating trust

The servant-leader is above all honest with others, focussing on their needs, and earning their trust. As indicated, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was known as the trustworthy (al-Ameen). The Prophet was always a man of his word, never cheated or stole from anybody and spoke the truth at all times even his enemies grudgingly acknowledged.

d. Focus on what is feasible to accomplish

The servant-leader neither seeks to accomplish everything nor does he take the most difficult route to do it. Aisha (*Radhiyallahu 'Anha* (RA)) narrated that '*whenever God's Apostle was given the choice of one of two matters, he would choose the easier of the two*' (Bukhari, 4:760).

e. Lending a hand

The servant-leader is a good person – The leader searches for opportunities to do good. Such as Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) kindness and benevolence were limitless. He was always helping the poor and the needy. As reported from 'Abdullah ibn Abi Awfa that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) never disdained to go with a widow to accomplish her tasks. Jabir also stated that the Prophet used to slow down his pace for the sake of the weak and also prayed for them.

Transformational leadership

The concept of transformational leadership is in the preferred Islamic tradition of leadership, and this is exemplified and indeed demonstrated by how the Prophet

Mohammad (PBUH) transformed the society in which he lived through inspiration, motivation, and intellectual stimulation (Abdallah, Çitaku, Waldrop, Zillioux, Preteni, & Khan, 2019). Moreover, transformational leadership is about change and change has to be sustainable (Haddara & Enanny, 2009).

Besides that, the transformational leadership can be measured using a tool of five scales: idealized influence (attributes), idealized influence (behavior), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Haddara & Enanny, 2009). Other, based on Beekun, (2012) that described six key attributes of transformational leaders – A lesson Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), namely:

a. Raising people's awareness

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) increased awareness of what it is right, just, and lawful (*halal*) during a period of jahiliyyah or ignorance. He spent his life teaching and mentoring his followers in the core Islamic virtues i.e. truthfulness and integrity, trustworthiness, justice, benevolence, humility, kindness, and sabr (patience).

b. Help people look beyond their self-interest

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) encouraged his followers – the Muhajirin and the Ansar – to look at the “big picture” for the sake of the Ummah. Blood ties were to be superseded by the ties of the brotherhood of faith strengthened by the virtues that the Prophet's (PBUH) himself lived by ‘*None of you truly believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself*’ (in the Hadith An Nawawi:13)

c. Intellectual stimulation

Besides raising their spiritual awareness, the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) encouraged his followers to engage themselves in learning and to excel in whatever field they pursued: *He who issues forth in search of knowledge is busy in the cause of God till he returns from his quest* (as reported by Anas Ibn Malik in Hadith Al Tirmidhi:420).

d. *Idealized influence or charisma*

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was an ethical charismatic leader, and this is validated by the virtuous life he lived. Where ethical charismatic leaders work to develop their followers into leaders, learn from criticism, and rely on an internal moral standard. The Prophet (PBUH) who demonstrates integrity in ethical conduct becomes role models that followers admire, respect, and pattern themselves after.

e. *Individual consideration and attention*

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) paid close attention to the personal differences among his followers. He understood that each follower had different needs and that those needs changed over time. He reached out to everybody with kindness and benevolence. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) treated them fairly, but differently depending on his assessment of their maturity level and readiness – for example when he refused to appoint Abu Dhar to an administrative post based on his *'inability to manage the affairs of the people'* (Muslim, *Imara*, 16-17).

f. *Inspirational motivation*

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as an Inspirational leader who often encourages during difficult times and set the group standard as far as work ethic is concerned – as when the Muslims were being harassed and several were being tortured and put to death most cruelly. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) refused to react vindictively and kept his companions focussed on their higher common purpose.

Discussion

In this section, based on the explanation above (in Point 5), the author attempt to provide an argument on the Islamic leadership model particularly effective leadership in practice for Muslim leaders in the current situation (for answering RQ2). Unfortunately, nowadays, many Muslim leaders that try to apply a model of Islamic

leadership are still less, especially in their leadership practice. Thus, to solve this case, a dual-style Islamic leadership model is provided by the author. The model combines the servant and transformational leadership style that was combination an example from the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as an excellent role model (*Uswatun Hasanah*) in Islamic leadership practice. The Qur'an chapter 33 verse 21 states: *For you, in the prophet, is a good role model*. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is a good servant leader which stated in the hadiths, *'the leader of the people is their servant'* (Muslim, 2000 in Abdallah, Çitaku, Waldrop, Zillioux, Pretenti, & Khan, 2019)). While prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also is the transformational leader as in the Qur'an chapter 21 verse 107 states: *We have not sent you except as a mercy to mankind*.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has a dual-style Islamic leadership model such as Abdallah et al., (2019) mentioned in their research. Also, in line with the statement from El Syam, (2017) in his research that stated prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is a figure of the social leader, who develops leadership based on solid morality and portrays himself as a figure of noble character, exemplary in various dimensions. Additionally, to make the explanation clear, the author illustrated that the dual-style Islamic leadership model, which is a set of inspiration from the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), that shows in **Figure 1**.

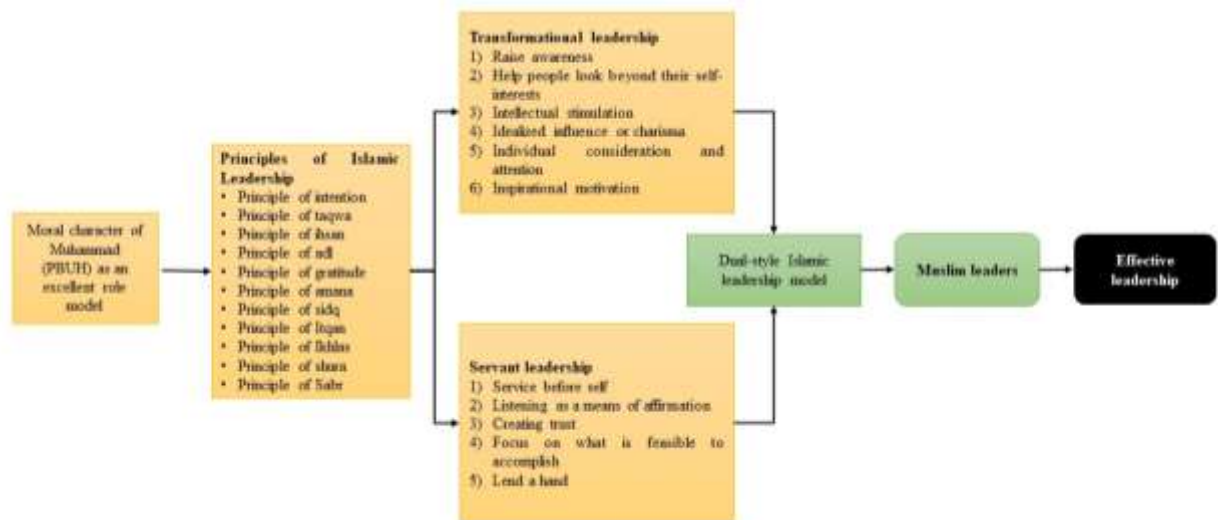


Figure 1. Dual-style Islamic leadership model from prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as an excellent role model for Muslim leaders

Source: Authors' illustration modified from Beekun, (2012)

Furthermore, Muslim leaders should hold several principles in a dual-style Islamic leadership model. These principles are summarized from (Ali, 2009); Haddara & Enanny, (2009); Almoharby & Neal, (2013); Beekun, (2012); Marbun, (2013), and (Abdallah, Çitaku, Waldrop, Zillioux, Pretenti, & Khan, (2019), namely:

- a. Intention (*Niyyat*) is stated by the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) says: '*Actions are recorded according to intention and a person will be rewarded or punished accordingly*', and the Qur'an in chapter 13 verse 11 states: '*God does not change the condition of a nation unless it changes what is in its heart*'.
- b. Muslim leaders should possess forever mindful of the Almighty of God (*Taqwa*).
- c. Kindness and care while feeling the presence of God (*Ihsan*).
- d. Justice (*Adl*) is stated in the holy Qur'an chapter 5 verse 8: '*O you who believe! Stand out firmly for God as witnesses to fair dealing and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice [...]*'.
- e. Gratitude is a key element of Islam since it reminds one and all of the bounties that God has granted humankind. A leader or follower who does not feel gratitude toward his Creator is likely to trend toward being arrogant (*ghabid*) like Satan instead of being a sincere servant of God (*ghibad*).
- f. Trust (*Amanah*) is stated in the Qur'an chapter 8 verse 27: '*O you that believe! Betray not the trust of God and the Apostle nor misappropriate knowingly things entrusted to you*'.
- g. Truthfulness (*Sidq*).
- h. Conscious of self-improvement (*Itqan*).

- i. Sincerity and keeping promises (*Ikhlas*) is stated in the Qur'an chapter 5 verse 1: '*O you who believe! fulfill (all) obligations*'.
- j. Consultation (*Shura*) is stated in the Qur'an chapter 42 verse 38: '*their matters are shura among them*', and the Prophet's (PBUH) habit of seeking and accepting advice, the limits on the exercise of power have been set both by the Qur'an and the Sunnah.
- k. Patience (*Sabr*).

Conclusion

In conclusion, from the above description, the concept of leadership in Islam perspective was discussed. The paper provides two types of leadership in Islamic perspectives especially servant and transformational leadership style by example from prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as an excellent role model (*Uswatun Hasanah*) for Muslim leaders in this current situation. In the presented overview of leadership theories, it is noticeable that servant leadership strongly is focused on the key attributes of servant leaders i.e. service before self, listening as a means of affirmation, creating trust, focus on what is feasible to accomplish, and lending a hand. Meanwhile, transformational leadership is focused on the key attributes of transformational leaders i.e. raising people's awareness, help people look beyond their self-interest, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence or charisma, individual consideration, and inspirational motivation. Thus, Muslim leaders attempt to assign proper attribution from the servant and transformational leadership to reach Islamic effective leadership

Additionally, the author argued that the concept of the dual-style leadership model is the better model for Muslim leaders to reach effective leadership by a lesson from Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as an excellent role model in Islamic leadership practice. Moreover, Islamic leadership must be based on several principles, namely: *niyyat*, *taqwa*, *ihsan*, *adl*, gratitude, *amanah*, *sidq*, *itqan*, *ikhlas*, *shura*, and *sabr*. These principles should be held by Muslim leaders.

It is recommended that Muslim leaders (such as managers, principals, CEOs, etc) in organizations/corporations/social groups/communities from Indonesia country would not hesitate to apply the Islamic leadership model especially a dual-style Islamic leadership model. This is also the way to follow (sunnah) from the excellent role model (*Uswatun Hasanah*) in Islam – Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

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