

Leadership : An Islamic Perspective

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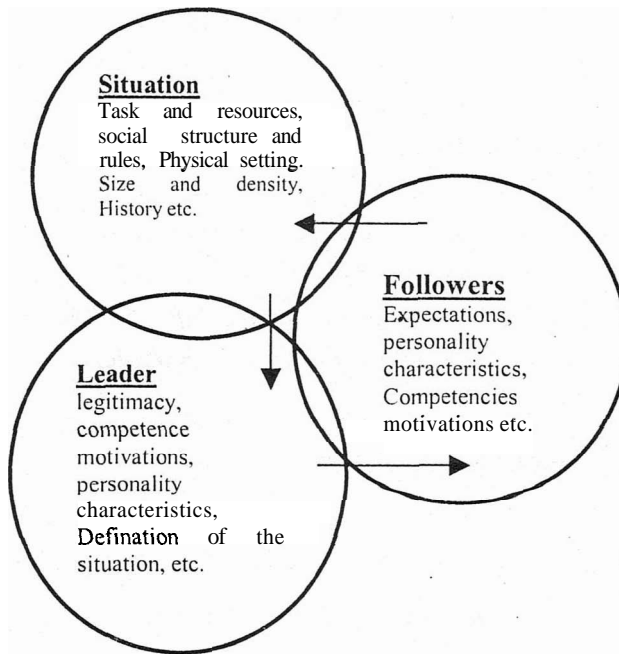
Abstract: *Leadership in Islam is a trust. Often, it takes the form of an explicit contract or pledge between a leader and his followers that he will try his best to guide them, to protect them and to treat them fairly and with justice. Hence, the focus of leadership in Islam is on integrity and justice. Given the recent emphasis on ethical behavior in the leadership literature (Kouzes and Posner, 1995), an examination of the moral bases of leadership from an Islamic perspective may provide some interesting insights for the field of leadership in general. In this paper, we will examine what leadership is from an Islamic perspective, discuss the moral dimension of leadership.*

The concept of leadership

Leadership is an organizing principle of considerable social impact. In any group, large or small, some individuals have more power and influence than others. The person with the most influence often assumes a position of prominence in the group and comes to be regarded as the leader. One of the suggested approaches of leadership views it as the ability of a person to guide the efforts of many persons in achieving some objectives. This definition of leadership involves three elements, viz (i) a leader who guides other person's (ii) a group of followers who respond to such guidance (iii) a situation or objectives to be

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achieved by co-ordinating the efforts of many persons. These are the three basic elements of leaders, followers, and situation are crucial to the understanding of a leadership behavior- (Fig-1)



The'elements of leadership ¹

Leadership in Islam:

Leadership in Islam is a trust. To begin with, Muslims base their behavior as leader and follow upon the word of Allah as revealed in their holy book, the Qur'an. They believe that the prophet of Islam, Muhammad (SAW), has modelled the way for Muslim leaders and followers for all times. This belief is supported when Allah says the following about Muhammad (SAW), : *And you stand an exalted standard of character.* ¹ Muhammad's (SAW) example, then, is what both Muslim leaders and followers seek to emulate.

According to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), leadership in Islam is not reserved for a small elite. Rather, depending upon the situation, every person is the "shepherd" of a flock, and occupies a position of leadership. Muhammad (SAW) is reported to have said:

*Each of you is a guardian, and each of you will be asked about his subject.*³

In most circumstances in life, Muslims are urged to appoint a leader and follow him. According to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), Muslims must appoint a leader during a trip, select a leader to lead the prayer, and choose a leader for other group activities. Leadership, then, can be depicted as a process by which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of followers in an effort to reach certain objectives. This definition suggests that leadership is essentially a process whereby the leader guides *willing* followers. At all times, a leader must remember that he cannot compel others to do things against their will.

*Let there be no compulsion in religion. [...].*⁴

Leadership Roles from an Islamic Perspective

According to Islam, the two primary roles of a leader are those of servant-leader and guardian-leader. First, the leader is the servant of his followers (*sayyid al qawm khadimuhum*). He is to seek their welfare and guide them towards good. The idea of a leader as a servant has been part of Islam since its beginning, and has only recently been developed by Robert Greenleaf:⁵

The servant-leader is servant first....It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. [...] The best test, and the most difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons?

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has emphasized a second major role of the Muslim leader: to protect his community against

tyranny and oppression to encourage Allah-consciousness and *taqwa*, and to promote justice.

*A commander (of the Muslims) is shield for them.[...].*⁶

Whether as servant or as guardian, a Muslim leader may make use of certain bases of power to be effective. Islam recognizes the existence of power, but suggests an etiquette for its use.

Leadership and the Basis of Power

Power is "the ability to marshal the human, informational, and material resources to get something done" Five bases of power are usually mentioned in the leadership literature; the Islamic perspective of leadership incorporates all five, but views them differently.⁷

1. Legitimate Power

Legitimate power is associated with one's position in the organization. Generally, Islam discourages Muslims from actively seeking positions of authority. Campaigning for a position of power may imply that one is enamored of the position for one's own advancement or some other self-serving reason. Muhammad (SAW) is reported to have said.

Do not ask for a position of authority, for if you are granted this position as a result of your asking for it, you will be left alone (without Allah's help to discharge the responsibilities involved in it), and if you are granted it without making any request for it, you will be helped (by Allah in the discharge of your duties).

An exception can be made to this injunction when a person sees a situation in which there is a potential crisis or disaster. Should he have the expertise required to help other in this situation, he may seek specific position so as to provide assistance. For example, Prophet Yusuf (AS) asked for such a position when he requested the King of Egypt to be placed in charge of the granaries. A deed, accompanied by the right intention, is within the parameters of Islam.⁹

2. Reward Power

A leader who possesses power may also control organizational rewards, including pay raises, desirable work assignments, or promotions. The same holds true for Islam. It is noteworthy that Umar Ibn Al-Kahattab (ra) used to pay state officials high salaries. He wanted to ensure that they would not get tempted by bribes. By treating his appointees equitably, Umar (ra) became one of the most outstanding Islamic leaders."

3. Coercive Power

Besides controlling organizational rewards, a leader in a position of authority also controls group sanctions. Islam recognizes the legitimacy of coercive power, but suggests that it should not be used to coerce followers towards evil. In fact, the prophet once said, "obedience (to the leader) is required only in what is good." Placing emphasis on the role of the leader as servant, 'Umar (RA) , was quoted as saying to the people:

*I have appointed over you governors and agents not to beat your bodies or take your monies, but rather to teach you and serve you.*¹¹

4. Expert Power

Leaders who possess valuable expertise and information have expert power with respect to their followers who need this information to perform their task. For example, in a prayer congregation, a person may be chosen to lead the prayers of his knowledge of Islam. There is no clergy in Islam.¹²

5. Referent or Charismatic Power

A person has charisma when others wish to follow him because they are attracted by his personality. Born leaders are usually charismatic. Ethical charismatic leaders, such as prophet Muhammad (SAW) and all other prophets (AS), use power for the benefit of mankind, learn from criticism, work to develop their

followers into leaders, and rely on moral standards. A recent, very charismatic American Muslim leader was Malcolm X. Many embraced Islam in the USA after listening to, or reading about him.

*[Malcolm X's] life showed me something eminently more useful than skilled oratory : what role religion could play as one approached this race-conscious society. He provided an example of how a man could use conviction as a powerful instrument to change the course of life –one's own and others.*¹³

Given how Islam views leadership and power, what will ensure that a Muslim leader behaves ethically? The moral bases of Islamic leadership are expected to provide the inner core that guides leaders.

Moral Bases of Islamic Leadership.

Leadership in Islam is rooted in belief and willing submission to the Creator, Allah. It centers on serving Him.

*And We made them leaders guiding (men) by Our Command and We sent them inspiration to do good deeds, to establish regular prayers and to practice regular charity : and they constantly served Us (and Us only).*¹⁴

To serve Allah, a Muslim leader is to act in accordance with the injunctions of Allah and His prophet (SAW), and must develop a strong Islamic moral character. This moral character will be reflected by his increasingly strong belief in Allah as he progresses through 4 stages of spiritual development : *iman, islam, taqwa and ihsan*. Each stage is now discussed in terms of how it affects a Muslim leader's behavior.

(a) Iman

At the core of Islamic moral character is *iman* or faith in Allah. *Iman* implies belief in the Oneness of Allah and the prophethood of Muhammad (SAW). A leader with a strong *iman* will consider

himself and all his possessions as belonging to Allah. He will bow his ego, his ideas, his passions and his thinking to Allah. *Iman* also implies belief in the life hereafter and in one's ultimate accountability for one's deeds. A leader with a firm *iman* will not dodge responsibility for his actions, and will continuously emphasize good deeds. To reinforce this idea, the Qur'an links *iman* with good deeds no less than 60 times.

Although Muslims consider it desirable to appoint a leader with *iman*, it may not always be possible to find such a person. An organization may have to choose between a strong Muslim with weak leadership skills or a strong leader with moderate/weak Islamic understanding. The example of Amr Ibn Al 'Aas is to be remembered here. He had been a Muslim for only four months when he was appointed by the prophet (SAW) to a key leadership position. This issue was explained by Ibn Taymiyya in his book *Assiyasah Ash-Shar 'iyya*. A leader with weak or inadequate expertise can bring disaster to an organization where as a skilled leader may advance and help the same organization. Even if the skilled leader were not a strong Muslim, his shortcomings can be made up through *shura* or the consultative process of decision-making.¹⁵

(b) Islam

Building upon *iman*, *Islam* is the second layer of the moral personality of an Islamic leader and followers. Islam means the achievement of peace with Allah, within oneself and with creation of Allah, through willing submission to Him.¹⁶ As Maudoodi (1991) points out so well, "*Iman is the seed and Islam is the fruition.*" Because of his or her *iman*, a leader who practices Islam will never see himself as supreme. Ali Ibn Abu Talib's (RA) letter to Malik al-Ashtar an-Nukai, the new Governor of Egypt, stresses this point in the following manner

Malik, you must never forget that if you are a ruler over them, then the Caliph is a ruler over you, and Allah is the supreme Lord over the Caliph.

(c) Taqwa

As an individual submits to Allah through Islam, he develops an awe of Allah. This all encompassing, inner consciousness of his duty towards Him and this awareness of his accountability towards Him is taqwa. As pointed out by Maudoodi, "the essence of taqwa lies in an attitude of heart and mind rather than in an outward form."¹⁸ When imbued with *taqwa*, a person's frame of mind, his thoughts, emotions and inclinations- will reflect Islam. *Taqwa* will restrain a Muslim leader or follower from behaving unjustly whether to community members, to customers, to suppliers or to any body else.

Allah commands justice the doing of good and liberality to kith and kin and He forbids all shameful deeds and injustice and rebellion. He instructs you that you may receive admonition.

(d) Ihsan

Whereas taqwa is the fear of Allah and the feeling of Allah's presence, *ihsan* is the love of Allah. This love of Allah motivates the individual Muslim to work towards attaining Allah's Pleasure. The prophet Muhammad (WAS) describes *Ihsan* as follows. "To worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you cannot achieve this state of devotion then you must consider that He is looking at you."²⁰ The constant feeling that Allah is watching is likely to prompt any leader or follower with *Ihsan* to behave at his best. The difference between the Muslims with *taqwa* and Muslims with *Ihsan* is concisely explained by Maudoodi with the following example.

Among government employees, there may be some who perform their duties scrupulously, but who do not demonstrate any

additional commitment. Other employees, however, push themselves beyond the call of duty they are energized, and willing to make sacrifices in the performance of their tasks. Within the context of Islam, the first group of employees are like believers who do what is sufficient and necessary they are those that have *taqwa*. By contrast, the second group of employees have *Ihsan*. These are the Muslim leaders and followers who will tirelessly carry the banner of Islam under the most difficult circumstances..²¹

Based on the above discussion of the four layers of Islamic moral character, leaders and followers may be classified depending on what stage they are at: *Iman*, *Islam*, *Taqwa* and *Ihsan*. The Islamic moral character requires that leaders emphasize the following five key parameters of Islamic behavior: justice, trust, righteousness, the struggle towards self-improvement, and promise keeping.

1. Justice

Justice is a dynamic characteristic which each Muslim must strive to develop whether he is a leader or a follower.

O you who believe! Stand out firmly for God as witness to fair dealing and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. [...] ²²

The need to achieve balance and to take a middle road is quite important in a leader, and is stressed repeatedly by Allah in the Qur'an. He describes those "who will be rewarded with the highest place in heaven" as:

Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not niggardly, but hold a just (balance) between those two extremes.[...] ²³

Application of justice to leadership :All Muslims – leaders and followers alike, must observe the principle of justice. For example, Allah admonishes Muslims thus –

Allah does command you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due – and when you judge between man and man that you judge with justice [....] ²⁴

This is why the prophet (SAW) emphasized that justice must never be compromised by personal affiliations or other considerations.

2.Trust : This concept of trust stresses the idea of responsibility towards organizational stakeholders, and holds true where those entrusting something to Muslims are themselves non-Muslim.

O you those believe! Betray not the trust of Allah and the apostle

Nor nzisappropriate knowingly things entrusted to you. ²⁵

As a core value, trust fits within the overall Islamic etiquette governing social relationships.

Application of Trust to Leadership: Trust is explicitly linked to leadership in the Qur'an . We refer to the story of Prophet Usof (AS). After the king had indicated that he placed great trust in him, prophet Usof (AS) deliberately asked to be put in charge of the granaries and storehouses, and the demanding task of establishing them and guarding them. As one translator of the Qur'an, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, points out, Prophet Usof (as) understood the need to build reserves better than any one else, and was prepared to take on this himself rather than throw on to another the burden of restricting supplies in times of plenty.

Once ,an individual has accepted to be the leader of a group or organization, he has become their trustee. In an organization for earning profit, the management of the organization is entrusted with the shareholder's investment. In a nonprofit organization, the management of the organization is charged with watching over the properties in the trust. Consequently, any managerial decision must be balanced with respect to this trust, The concept of trust

can be extended to other dimensions of one's work as a leader or a follower. Should one be wasting time or organizational resources in performing one's task, one is violating his/her employer's trust.²⁶

3. Righteousness. Righteous Behavior is Described as Follows-

It [..] is righteousness to believe in Allah and the Last Day and the Angels and the Book and the Messengers ; to spend of your substance out of love for him for your kin, for orphans , for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask [....] to be steadfast in prayer and practice regular charity, to fulfil the contracts which you have made – and to be firm and patient in pain (or suffering and adversity) [.....] ²⁷

These general attributes will now be linked to the attributes that Islamic leaders and followers should embrace.

Application of Righteousness to Leadership : Based on the above verses, several moral attributes of righteous leaders become salient—

- * They act justly and do not allow their personal feelings to hinder justice.
- They have *iman*,
- They take care of those in need and do so for the love of Allah,
- They are steadfast in prayer and practice charity.
- They observe all contracts, and
- They are patient no matter what type of adversity they may be experiencing.

In general, then, organization participants 'of all 'faiths are entitled to be treated with basic human decency and dignity and with the maximum of fair play and justice. In an Islamic organization, a leader is expected to be sensitive to their needs.²⁸

4. Struggle Within Oneself Towards Self-improvement.

The Qur'an portrays this concept very accurately. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) stressed the importance of this inner striving to improve oneself.

*Allah's Messenger (SAW) said, "The believers in the world are in three classes: those who believe in God and His Messenger and do not doubt, but strive with their property and their persons in Allah's cause; the man whom people trust with their property and their persons; and the man who, when he is about to display greed, abandons it for the sake of Allah, Who is Great and Glorious."*²⁹

The dimension of inner struggle permeates the very progression from *Iman* to *ihsan*, and continues thereafter.

Application of the concept of self-struggle to leadership : This principle encapsulates the process of inner struggle towards self-betterment. Leaders and followers practicing this principle are continuously monitoring and evaluating their intentions and actions, and acting to improve themselves accordingly. They work hard at practicing what they say, and encourage others in this struggle for self-improvement.³⁰

5. Promise-keeping.

All Muslims--whether leaders or followers--are urged to keep their promises. They also cannot make promises that are unislamic in nature.

*O you who believe! fulfil (all) obligations.*³¹

Keeping one's word characterizes a Muslim. Breaking one's word is tantamount to hypocrisy.

Application of promise-keeping to leadership : Based upon the above discussion, keeping promises is very important for all, and a leader is not exempted from this important principle.

*I bought something from the prophet (SAW) before he received his prophetic commission, and as there was something still due to him I promised him that I would bring it to him at his place but I forgot. When I remembered three days later, I went to that place and found him there. He said: [...] I have been here for three days waiting for you.*³²

Now that we have discussed the bases of Islamic leadership, we need to explore what normative attributes are required of Muslim leaders and followers.

Leader's characteristics:

The characteristics of Muslim leader effect his /her behavior. There are some especially moral qualities, which the Qur'an and Sunnah associate with the role of leadership. These are as follows:

(1) **Honesty:** Leaders are considered to be honest to the extent that there is "consistency between word and deed". They do what they say they are going to do. In the Qur'an, the Prophet Moses (AS) is himself labelled as "strong and trustworthy" by one of the damsels and the prophet Usuf (AS) is described as one who is truthful. Similarly, the prophet Muhammad (SAW) used to be called *Sadiq* (the truthful) and *Amin* (the trustworthy) during his youth.³³

(2) **Inspiration:** Followers expect their leaders to remain positive about the future no matter how bad the situation may be. The leader must never give up or lose hope. An example of how a leader inspires his followers comes from Abu Baker (RA). After the death of the prophet (SAW), Muslims were shocked. Umar (RA) was especially distraught. Abu Bkar (RA) calmed him down, and then delivered the following address –

*O People, fy you have been worshipping Muhammad, then know that Muhammad is dead. But fy you have been worshipping God, then ~~know~~ that God is living and never dies.*³⁴

(3) **Patience (sabr)** : a quick survey of Muslim literature shows that no virtue has more affinity to leadership than patience. The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes the importance of *sabr* for believers in general, and for leaders in particular. Indeed the Qur'an identify *sabr* as one of two essential qualities of leadership, the other being *yaqin* or conviction.

*And we made from among them , leaders (a'immah) giving guidance, under our command, so long as they displayed patience (sabr), and Continued to demonstrate faith (yaqin) in our signs .*³⁵

*Be sure we shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil) but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere.*³⁶

However, when the source of pain and suffering is not divine, but human, the Qur'anic term for conveying the meaning of calm endurance are resolve (*azm*) and forbearance (*hilm*). Resolve denotes one's perseverance when confronted with superior human power. A resolute person, hence, continues to pursue his objectives despite the strong opposition of those who have the power to inflict pain and suffering on him.

This was the kind of patience with which prophets persisted in their mission of transforming their communities from the state of corruption to that of truth.

*Therefore patiently persevere, as did the resolute among the prophets, and be in no haste with them (the unbelievers).*³⁷

Forbearance, on the other hand, refers to one's ability to endure annoyance and irritation even when one has the upper hand over those responsible for producing them. As the Qur'an points out:

For Abraham was, without doubt, forbearing, compassionate, and given to look to Allah. ³⁸

and as the Hadith stresses:

The strong among you is not the one who can overpower others, but the one who can control himself in the moment of anger. ³⁹

Resolve and forbearance are important qualities for effective leadership. The former is essential for overcoming adversaries, the latter for maintaining unity and solidarity between leaders and followers.

Other characteristics are;

1. Knowledge (*ilm*): Leaders are expected to be knowledgeable and well informed, not only to become functioning members of their communities, but to the extent of acquiring specialized knowledge and insight in the areas in which they are exercising leadership. Those who assume leadership responsibilities in political, economic, intellectual, legal, educational, or military fields of endeavor must acquire specialized knowledge and expertise in their respective areas. A leader of a commercial firm, for example, should have general knowledge about his social and political environments, but must have mastery over the specification of his trade. It was the prophet Yusof's (Joseph's) knowledge which gave him the confidence to step forward and ask the ruler of Egypt to appoint him to the post of the realm treasure:

*[Yusof] said: set me over the storehouses of the land:
I will indeed guard them, as one that knows.* ⁴⁰

Ultimately, however, it is not one's scope of pure knowledge (*ilm*) which matters in the exercise of leadership, but one's ability to apply the knowledge he obtained to practical situations, i.e. one's wisdom (*hikmah*). While *ilm* and *hikmah* are closely interrelated, they have slightly different connotations. The term *ilm* (knowledge) denotes the various ideas one receives about the

nature of reality. Whereas the term *hikmah* (wisdom), or *hukm* (judgement), signifies *the* way by which knowledge is brought to bear on action (*fi'l*). More specifically, wisdom consists in those principles, which guide actions. This specific meaning of the term *hikmah* is revealed in both *surah* al-Isra' and *surah*, Luqman. In *Surah* Al Isra' for instance, *h'ikmah* is used in reference to number of precepts, such as "fulfil every engagement"; or "pursue not that of which you have no knowledge."

It is for this reason that wisdom receives special emphasis in the Qur'an. The Qur'an makes it abundantly clear that *hikmah* is a source of blessing and goodness to those who possess it:

*He grants wisdom to whom He pleases, and he to whom wisdom is granted receives indeed a benefit overwhelming. But none will grasp the message but men of understanding.*⁴¹

The Qur'an also emphasizes that wisdom has been an essential quality of prophets:

*O Yahaya! Take hold of the book with might: and We gave him wisdom even as a youth.*⁴²

Also :

*When he [Musa] reached full age, and was firmly established (in life), We bestowed on him wisdom and knowledge.. for thus We reward those who do good.*⁴³

And again :

*And We strengthened his [Dawud's] kingdom, and gave him wisdom and sound judgement in speech and decision.*⁴⁴

In short, leaders must be intellectual and perceptive, capable of analyzing the overall situation, establishing priorities for action, and developing strategies for their implementation.

2. Eloquence (*fasahah*): Another important quality of leadership is the ability to articulate ideas and views with clarity and eloquence. Eloquence is important not only for persuading followers to adopt the proposed course of action, and commit themselves to a specific set of values and purposes, but also to negotiate and communicate with opponents and competitors.

Again, the Qur'an stresses the importance of eloquence through the example of Musa (Moses). When Musa (AS) received the divine commission to go to Pharaoh to call him to the way of Allah, his initial reaction was to plea for the inclusion of his brother Harun (Aaron) in this mission. The reason for this inclusion, Musa argued:

*My brother Harun is more eloquent in speech than I: so send him with me as a helper, to confirm (and strengthen) me: For I fear that they may accuse me of falsehood.*⁴⁵

3. Enterprise (iqdam): One of the qualities that distinguish leaders from others is their *iqdam*. *Iqdam* reveals itself through the initiatives, which a leader takes in his drive to carry out his mission. The leader's *iqdam* is usually manifested through the leader's self confidence, boldness, and willingness to take risk whenever necessary, as well as in his energy, diligence, and hardwork. The Qur'anic equivalence of the term *iqdam* is "*al-akhdh biquwwah*" (taking with might). This meaning can be found in Allah's injunction to Musa to take the divine mission with firmness and strength:

*And We ordained laws for him [Musa] in the Tablets in all matters, both commanding and explaining all things, (and said): Take and hold these with strength and enjoin your people to hold fast to the best of the precepts.*⁴⁶

It is this attitude of "taking with might" that one sees in the boldness of the young Abraham when he stood firmly before the elders of his community telling them :

*Fie upon you, and upon the things that you worship besides Allah! Have you no sense?*⁴⁷

It is the same attitude, which we observe in the energy exhibited by Nuh (Noah) as he pursued his mission with diligence and hardwork, despite the negative response he received from his people:

He said: O my Lord! I have called to my people night and day, but my call only increased (their) flight from truth). . . . So I have called them aloud! Further, I have spoken to them in public and secretly in private. ⁴⁸

The attitude of "taking with might" can also be seen in the bravery displayed by Musa as he stood before Pharaoh asking him to let go of the children of Israel from their servitude in Egypt. Responding to Pharaoh's showing of his favors on Musa when the latter was taken in a member of the former household, Musa said:

And this is the favor with which you do reproach me that you have enslaved the children of Israel. ⁴⁹

For the decision of Musa's mother to put her baby boy in a boat which took him by Allah's design to the palace of Pharaoh, where he was raised, was precipitated by the servitude imposed by Pharaoh himself on Musa's people, the children of Israel.

The same attitude is, finally, revealed in the self-confidence shown by the last Messenger when he stood on the mount of al-Safa calling his people to the way of Allah, saying:

Tell me O men of Quaraysh, if I were to inform you that I see a cavalry on the other side of this mountain, would you believe me? They answered: indeed, for we trust you, and we have never known you to tell a lie. Muhammad(SAW) said: know then that I am a warner, and that I warn you of a severe punishment. ⁵⁰

4. Leniency (Lin): Self-confidence, boldness, and courage do not produce effective leadership if they are not balanced by kindness, courtesy, and leniency. The latter are the result of the leader's genuine concern for the well being of his subordinates, as well as those who come under his responsibility, and reflect an attitude of compassion and humility. It would be quite difficult for a leader

who is lacking in leniency to keep people attracted to his message, or interested in him for long. As the Qur'an makes it clear to the prophet of Allah, it was the prophet's kindness and good manner, which kept the believers attracted to him:

*It is by the mercy of Allah that you have been lenient with them [the believers]. Were you severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from you: so pass over (their faults), and ask for (Allah's) forgiveness for them, and consult them in (public) affairs.*⁵¹

5. Conviction (yaqin) : conviction and patience are by far the most 46 *Bangladesh Journal of Public Administration* conviction in his mission and purpose lies at the root of all other traits, including resolve and perseverance, knowledge and wisdom, enterprise and eloquence, leniency and forbearance. It is for this reason that the higher the leader's responsibilities and the more volatile the environment in which he operates, the more crucial the conviction of the leader in his mission it is.

The importance of conviction for the act of leadership in times of volatility and change is evident in the fact that in such times the existing order with its rules and regulations begins to break down. In these circumstances actions can be guided only by the principles and values to which one is committed. A deep conviction in, and a strong commitment to, a set of principles or values are, therefore, essential for a leader to be able to reform the accepted patterns of behavior. Again, the same conviction is needed if the leader is to challenge the status quo, for without a deep faith in a higher and better order, the task of changing the prevalent order is impossible.⁵²

6. The willingness to seek consultation: Islam stresses consultation in all affairs. Through the Qur'anic phrase "*amruhum shura baynahum*"⁴² and the Prophet's (*saw*) habit of seeking and accepting advice, the limits on the exercise of power have been set both by the Qur'an and the Prophet (SAW). As Al Buraey points out, *shura* plays a critical role in administration and management;

specifically with respect to decision-making; it provides a restraint on the leader's administrative power and authority.⁵⁴

Follower's characteristics

Follower's characteristics also represent an important ingredient in the leadership process. Just as in the case of their leader, the characteristics of Muslim followers affect their behavior. These characteristics correspond to those of their leaders except for the additional characteristics of obedience to the leader and dynamic followership.

Obedience: At all times, the leader must be obeyed. Ibn Umar reported Allah's messenger (SAW) as saying, 'Heamg and obeying are the duty of a Muslim, both regarding what the likes and what the dislikes. As Muhammad Asad indicates, after a leader has been duly elected, he may be considered to have received a pledge of allegiance from the community. As a result, both the majority who voted for him as well as the minority who may have voted against now owe obedience and allegiance. Islam considers obedience to the leader so important that it views any kind of insubordination to be abhorrent unless in very specific circumstances.⁵⁵

Dynamic followership: Although Islam emphasizes that followers should comply with the directives of their leader, it does not condone blind subservience. On one occasion, Umar (RA) was suggesting the quantity of dowry to be fixed at the time of a marriage ceremony. What he said was not in accordance with Islamic principle. A lady immediately stood up and said, "O Umar, fear God." Hearing her sound argument based on the Qur'an, Umar (RA) realized his mistake and said, "The lady is right and the leader of the Muslims (himself) is wrong."⁵⁶ Umar's behavior illustrates clearly that followers in Islam are not to be passive bystanders should the leader err.

Now, a comparative analysis between Islamic and western leadership is shown below. Ten elements are found from the organizational leadership⁵¹

WEST	ISLAM
Objectives: Solution of a problem by groups, no reference of Divine efforts.	Objectives: Seeking Allah's pleasure in solving a problem by group and in guiding efforts in this regard.
Participants: Formal and informal leaders, and rarely ordinary member.	Participants: Allah, Qur'an, Rasul , leaders and the followers.
Nature: Leadership is rule-bound and situational and no 'trusts' are involved.	Nature: Leadership relates to "trusts" which are to be rendered back to those mentioned in item no 2 in that order.
Methodology: Meetings, conference study reports, file orders, memoranda, notifications.	Methodology: Consultation with followers especially by those with relevant knowledge
Traits: Mundane knowledge, skill, values as prescribed by organizations and no Divine law.	Traits: Knowledge (<i>ilm</i>) of Islamic law (sha'riah) as also knowledge of the sha'riah overriding the organization, if necessary with the leader exercising: Ijtihad, (individual judgement), adala (justice), and Kifaya (competence).
Decision making: With reference to rules of business and no reference to any Divine Law.	Decision making: After consulting, the leader must decide but put faith in Allah.
Limitation of leaders: Leaders seek leadership without waiting for leadership to come to them	Limitations of leaders: Leaders must not seek leadership; it must come to them.
Limitation of followers: Followers usually have a passive role	Limitation of followers: Followers have an active role to advise and warn leadership of consequences of policy/action .
Leadership style: Authoritative, let alone, democratic as necessary	Leadership style: A combination of authoritarian and democratic styles.
Follower's style: Responding to the leaders call for advice and cooperation with the leader, but no acceptance of partial responsibility-Both the leader and the followers are primarily accountable to organization.	Follower's style: Responding to the leader's call for advice, cooperation with the leader, and accepting partial responsibility for action-Both leader and the followers are accountable to Allah and organization.

Conclusion

Basis of on the above brief discussion we can say that fundamentals of Islamic leadership viz, submission to, and fear of Allah, Consultation between the leader and the followers, Judging with justice, advice by the followers and decision by leaders, sharing responsibility for action by both the leader and the followers, and putting trust in Allah after decision making all these intended to receive Allah's guidance in ensuring the good in this world and in the hereafter. In so doing, Muslims and nonmuslims alike will be implementing a critical Qur'anic injunction expressed as -'lita'aarafuu'- to get to know one another – an injunction addressed by God to mankind as a whole, not to Muslim alone.

*“O Mankind, we have created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another”.*⁵⁸

From the above verse, it is clear that no leader should do any discrimination to his followers irrespective of sex, race, religion, tribe, nationality, color etc.

Indiscriminate guidance and direction from leadership can make an accepted relation between the leader and followers in the society in general, and the organization in particular.

FOOT NOTES

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- (37) Qur'an, 46 : 35
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- (40) Qur'an, 12: 55
- (41) Qur'an, 2 : 269
- (42) Qur'an, 19:12
- (43) Qur'an, 28 :14
- (44) Qur'an, 38:20
- (45) Qur'an, 28 :34
- (46) Qur'an, 7 : 145

- (47) Qur'an, 12 : 67
- (48) Qur'an, 71 :(5-6, 8-9)
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