

# **Educational Leadership: An Islamic Perspective**

**Dr. Walid Ahmad Masa'dah, Department of Islamic Studies, College of Shari'ah  
and Islamic Studies, Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan**

**And**

**Dr. Ali Mohammad Jubran, Department of Islamic Studies, College of Shari'ah  
and Islamic Studies, Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan**

## **ABSTRACT**

This paper aims to identify the main features of educational leadership from an Islamic perspective. It is an attempt to contribute to the development and understanding of educational leadership in Islamic institutions. This will give a better understanding of organizational effectiveness and provide guidelines for leaders of Islamic educational institutions in order to achieve their Islamic managerial objectives successfully.

This paper discusses the Islamic thought on educational leadership. It managed to highlight both early and contemporary ideas on Islamic leadership. For that, ideas of Ibn Taymiya, Al-Farabi, Al-Mawardi, Al-Ghazali and Ibn Khaldoun as well as ideas of some contemporary scholars of educational leadership were analyzed. It also highlighted the main roles of educational leadership in Islam such as the visionary leader, the servant leader, the leader as a guide, the influential leader and the educative leader as well as styles of educational leadership in Islam such as Brotherhood Leadership, Collaborative Leadership, *Shuratic* or Consultative Leadership and Supportive Leadership.

The definition of educational leadership in Islam was analyzed at the beginning of the paper. Finally, the paper came up with few suggestions and recommendations for the Muslim educational leaders, managers and researchers.

**Keywords:** educational leadership, roles of educational leadership, styles of educational leadership

## **Introduction**

This research discusses the main features of educational leadership from an Islamic perspective. It will be an attempt to contribute to the development and understanding of educational leadership in Islamic educational institutions. This will give a better understanding of organizational effectiveness and provide guidelines for principals of Islamic schools in order to achieve their Islamic educational objectives successfully.

## **Aimes of the Research**

This research aims to identify the Islamic model of educational leadership. It highlights both early and contemporary ideas on Islamic leadership. It also highlights the main roles and styles of educational leadership in Islam. The definition of leadership in Islam is analyzed at the beginning of the research.

## **Leadership from an Islamic Perspective: An Introduction**

Leadership in Islam is a responsibility and a trust that leaders feel when they deal with their followers. It is considered as a part of worshipping Allah (s.w.t). Leadership in Islam is to serve the members of the organization, the community and the society at large, that is, directing and guiding people to what is good in this world and the Hereafter.

Understanding leadership from an Islamic perspective is an important need today. The Muslim *Ummah* should have its own views and theories of whatever is necessary for Muslims. Islamic resources and history are rich in ideas and examples, that may be used as the formations for the Islamic theoretical framework of leadership and other subjects. Muslims also are “beginning to invest heavily in education and knowledge management, and the results are tangible” (Beekun and Badawi, 1999: viii). This requires great efforts towards understanding the issue of education and other related subjects. In addition, the ethical and moral system that is considered as the core of the Islamic framework of leadership is becoming an emphasis of the western perspective of the topic (Gardner, 1990: 67- 80; Paine 1997: 3; Spitzer, 2000: 203- 244; Murphy and Shipman, 2000: 99; Sergiovanni, 2001: 103). This further fuels the need for investigating the topic of leadership more precisely from an Islamic perspective.

Because of the limited scholarly development on leadership from an Islamic perspective, the researchers will often refer directly to the Qur'anic verses and the traditions of the Prophet as the primary sources of the Islamic thought. In addition, contributions of the early and contemporary Muslim scholars in the concerned field will be examined. The objective of this investigation is an attempt to understand the term of leadership more precisely and try to come up with a framework for Islamic leadership.

### **Definition of Leadership in Islam**

Early Muslim scholars used words such as *wilaya*, *Imamah* and *Khilafah* to mean leadership. Ibn Taymiya (661-728 AH) defined *wilaya* as “maintaining the religion of the people such that if it is lost, they will be the losers, and maintaining a life that will assist people to understand their religion.” (1992: 11).

Al-Mawardi (957-1058) looked at *Imamah* in the context of “the guarding of the religion and life. It is an obligatory system for all Muslims because without it, people will be living in darkness and religion will not be guarded.” (quoted in Basbous 1988: 47 and al-Wakeel 1988: 22). On this matter Allah (s.w.t) has said in the Qur'an about Prophet Abraham (a.s): “And remember that Abraham (a.s.) was tried by his Lord with certain commands, which he fulfilled, He said: I will make thee an *Imam* to the people.” (Qur'an 2: 124). In his commentary on this verse, Ali (1985) explained that “*Imam* means the primary sense of being foremost: hence it may mean leader in religion or leader in congregational prayer or model, pattern and example.” (p. 50). Therefore, one of the meanings of *Imamah* is leadership.

According to Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406 AC), *Khilafa* means “to assist people to live in accordance with the Islamic rules as a guidance for their interests in this world and in the Hereafter. It is the vicegerent duty on behalf of Allah (s.w.t) to guard the religion and to manage life.” (Ibn Khaldun, 1979: 179).

With regard to the term ”leadership”, the Arabic dictionary of Al-Mo’jam Al-Waseet defined ‘to lead’ as “to head a group while being in front” (Mustafa et al. 1989: 765).

Therefore, leaders always come in front of their members and organization, and are the

first. The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language in the same way defined to lead as “to guide or direct in a course, or to go first as a guide.” (Morris, 1981: 719).

Leadership in Islam according to some writers could be “the bridge used by some people to influence the members’ attitudes and behaviors in order to be able to achieve the objectives of the organization” (Adlouni and Sweidan 2000: 18). According to this definition, the influential role of the leadership is the most important one as leaders can enable people to do the right job.

Some scholars tend to connect the term of leadership with the importance of having a vision. They believe that good leadership is one that can come up with a clear vision and thus be able to transfer such vision to the members. For example, Murad Khurram defined leadership as “the ability to see beyond assumed boundaries, and to come up with solutions or paths that few can visualize. The leader must then project this vision for every one to see and pursue” (quoted in Beekun and Badawi. 1999: 5- 6).

Leadership could be defined as “the process of moving people in a planned direction by motivating them to act through noncompulsive means” (al-Talib, 1992: 50). This definition emphasized the leader’s role in moving his or her organization’s members towards the achievement of the common objectives. This means that leaders should not only direct people to do the job but to help them move by motivating them in a way that will encourage them to have a productive attitude towards work.

In another way, leadership could also be defined as the “art of influencing and directing others towards a common objective in a way that leaders will gain their members’ trust, respect, cooperation and sincere obedience” (Basbous 1988: 28). It should be noted here that such definitions consider leadership as an art that requires several skills in understanding others and dealing with them wisely. It emphasizes both the direction and influential roles of leadership.

Similarly, Beekun and Badawi have defined leadership as “the process of directing and influencing organization members so that they will take ownership of organizational activities and programs” (1999: 132). Al-Talib (1992) once again stressing that leadership is “a process of influencing others” (p. 50).

However, leadership in Islam has a unique role - that is guiding people to what is good in this world and the Hereafter. This means that leadership does not only deal with the mere objectives of the organization in the context of its daily work. The objectives of any organization must be connected with the religion’s objectives. Therefore, leadership has a new dimension – which is the connection with the religion and the Creator. In this way, a Muslim leader will understand that his or her role is to guide people, not only to achieve the mission of the organization, but also to raise them higher than that and

connect them with the highest goal of existence as a human being. It should be clear to everybody that worshipping Allah (s.w.t) is the main goal for all Muslims. Leadership in this way, should be understood as “a kind of worship” (al-Nahwi, 1999: 36).

Therefore, leadership is a guiding process more than a directing one. Leadership in this context could be the process of guiding and influencing the members of the organization so that they will display initiative and love for the work that they do as a kind of worship towards achieving the common objectives of the organization. By doing so, leaders and members will be able to attain happiness in both worlds.

### **Early Ideas on Islamic Leadership**

Early Islamic thought has contributed significantly to the field of leadership. Muslim scholars and specialists laid the basis for this science that in turn became the basic elements of leadership in the Islamic state and the managing of society's affairs. Their contributions to humanity in this respect have become a prominent and important element at the present time.

One of the earliest scholars who touched upon the topic of leadership was Ibn Taymiyah (661-728 AH). He emphasized in his book *Assiyasah Ashari'yah Fi Islah Arrai' Warrai'yah [The Shari'at Politics]*, the reform of the Islamic government and leadership. Ibn Taymiyah stated the following necessary characteristics for leaders to be able to lead. These are: trustworthiness, a strong personal character, to be qualified, to be experienced, adherence to Islamic commands and an ability to carry out responsibilities (Ibn Taymiyah 1988: 20- 21). He emphasized also some leadership principles to be taken into consideration by government leaders. These are: responsibility, trust and *Shura* (consultation) (Ibid.: 17). According to Ibn Taymiyah,

*Shura* is recommended for two reasons. First, it will create familiarity and amicable relations among the state subjects. Second, *shura* will create positive social interaction that will improve the state's performance (Ibid.: 17).

Ibn Taimiyah further investigated leadership in his second book *Risalatul Hisbah Wal-Hukomah Al-Islamiyah [Al-Hisbah and the Responsibility of the Islamic Government]*. He discussed leadership control as a tool to preserve the legacy of the Islamic state and to redirect personal and governmental actions towards the right direction. The leadership control is used to contribute effectively to the developmental process of the state.

Later, al-Qalqashandi (756-821 AH) concerned himself with leadership functions, particularly with the offices of civil administration (kuttab). His well organized book *Subh Al-A'sha Fi Sina't Al-Insha [The Night-Blind's Morning]* is a useful textbook in the field of administrative secretarial functions. The book contains preparatory office work, procedures, organization, responsibilities, requirements and means of communication between different government circles.

Al-Qalqashandi described in detail the characteristics of the executive officer as a leader which includes personal, physical, professional and social characters (al-Qalqashandi 1963: 61- 67). Moreover, al-Qalqashandi developed an organizational structure for the leadership office and explained the responsibilities of each bearer (Ibid.: 101-139).

Later, al-Farabi (872-950) concerned himself with proper leadership, a leadership that will be able to establish the virtuous state or 'the city of excellence' - as he called it - and will bring happiness to the people. He was also concerned with the characteristics

of the Muslim leader. Al-Farabi in his book *Ara' Ahl Al-Madinah Al-Fadilah [Opinions of Dwellers of the City of Excellence]*, pointed out the characteristics of the rightly guided leaders. According to him, they should be intelligent, full of wisdom, possess complementary characters in terms of their physical and mental abilities, ideal and long-sighted policy makers (al-Farabi 1985: 127-130). He emphasized that a leader and those who are working with him should show excellent behavior in order to achieve the ideal goals and ambitions of the society. Al-Farabi further focused on the importance of having strong relationships among all members of the city of excellence and between all organizations. He argued the members of the city of excellence must be able to cooperate and support each other. All dwellers should aim at achieving happiness for all.

Al-Mawardi (957-1058) addressed the leadership system of the government. He looked at the government as a leader of the society and organizer of its activities. According to al-Mawardi, the leader is fully responsible for the prosperity of the society and ought to manage its various affairs effectively.

The contents of his well-organized book, *Al-Ahkam Assultaniyah Wal-Wilayat Addiniyah Fil-Idarah Al-Hukoumiyah [The Sultanic Rules]* discusses the leadership system of the government and its fundamentals, and the leadership obligations of the head of state at regional, local and central levels. The book also contains recommendations regarding methods and techniques necessary for organizing government activities throughout different departments and circles. Moreover, al-Mawardi highlights some principles of leadership such as justice, hierarchy of leadership, qualification, worthiness in employment and specialization (al-Mawardi 1983: 20).

From a psychological point of view, al-Ghazali (1058-1111) - a well-known Islamic scholar - focused on studying the behavior of the Muslim leaders. He was concerned with the leadership of the citizens, society and Muslim affairs. In his valuable book in the field of leadership, *Attibir Al-Masbouk Fi Naseehat Al-Molouk, [Council or Advice for Kings]*, he outlined the characteristics of a leader from an Islamic perspective.

Al-Ghazali provided ten commandments – supported by the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and viewpoints of Muslim philosophers - that should be taken by the Muslim leaders. Some of these commandments are: *shura* (consultation), avoidance of committing injustice, softness and tenderness as a mode of conduct between authorities and citizens and helping members in solving their problems whether personal or professional (al-Ghazali 1987: 22-33).

From another angle, Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) laid emphasis on the social aspects of leadership and organization. His famous book *Al-Ibar Wa Diwan Al-Mubtada' Wal-Khabar Fi Ayyam Al-Arab Wal-Barbar Wal-Ajam Waman A'sarahum Min Dhawi Assultan Al-Akbar (Al-Moqaddimah) [The Introduction]* is considered as one of the most important books in the field of social science. He emphasized that leadership is an outcome of social interaction between different social groups. Ibn Khaldun believed that the social organization is related to many factors and environmental elements, which affect human behavior and ultimately, will be reflected in the leadership of the society.

Ibn Khaldun also stated that the development of the social organization's structure is related to its cultural background (Ibn Khaldun 1979: 144). Ability to structure an organization is one aspect of leadership. He believes that studying the development of the organization will help to forecast its future potential. This will be done by

combining environmental elements, and as he believed, with both psychological and geographical.

It is worth mentioning that the contribution of the above mentioned Muslim scholars remain as the basic pillars for the development of current leadership thought. However, most of these contributions focused on the leadership of the government and state affairs that can be useful for managing institutions in society and in shaping the philosophy of leadership from the Islamic perspective. Yet it remains clear that there is no published work on educational leadership by early Muslim scholars.

### **Contemporary Ideas on Islamic Leadership**

Although the study of leadership is one of the most important fields of modern time, with the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* providing us with numerous references for understanding the Islamic approach to leadership, Muslim intellectuals have failed to give it its proper due. In addition to the contributions of the early Muslim scholars in the field of leadership, there is also the practical application of the Islamic approach to leadership through the Islamic states throughout history.

Until today, Muslim intellectuals have been unable to formalize an Islamic theory of leadership. Although there have been many attempts to do so, starting with the intellectual awakening movement at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, yet no serious or scientific steps were taken until the sixth decade of this century.

Till now, most of such attempts were not aimed at formulating an Islamic theory of leadership, but rather were trying to prove that Islam had sufficient resources to

formulate such a theory. Additionally, they also attempted to prove that some of the Western achievements in this field were rooted in Islamic principles.

Such an approach is apologetic in nature, and will not lead to formulating a proper Islamic theory of leadership, even though it is indeed the first step in doing so. A more proper approach would be to examine the Qur'an, *Sunnah* and Islam's heritage, and try to deduce a theory of leadership, its objectives, characteristics, roles, styles, dimensions and principles. These attempts that aimed at presenting an Islamic feature of the leadership theory have succeeded in doing so. Some researchers raised the issue of Islamic leadership and tried to define it based on an Islamic point of view. The attempts also have come up with a set of characteristics of Islamic leadership and stated its objectives and goals. In addition, other researchers analyzed some periods of Islamic history starting from the time of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), his caliphs (r.a.), the Ummayyad and Abbasiad periods and others. These analyses aimed at identifying the leadership practices, to be found in Islamic history. Following is a summary of the contemporary related studies that touched the topic of leadership from an Islamic perspective

A very important study that touched the topic of leadership was *Nitham Al-Hukomah Al-Nabawiyah, [The Prophet's System of Governance]* by al-Kittani (1920), who was dissatisfied with the obvious lack of published material on Islamic leadership and administration especially in regard to the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). Al-Kittani's book is a collection of narrations that recorded some events and behaviors of leadership and administration as practised by Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). However, these practices were not related in any way to any kind of the leadership system in general or in Islam in particular.

Muslim scholars have shown the general features of the Islamic leadership. Fazlul Karim (1963) for example has focused on the unique concepts of the Muslim leader. He outlined some leadership concepts as guidelines for leaders to be followed. He explained these concepts when he wrote the following about the Muslim leader:

He shall view this world as a temporary resting place for preparation for the everlasting and eternal next world. He shall continuously endeavour to acquire, in his lifetime, as much religious merit by just and honest administration, which must be based upon justice, social equity and efficiency. He shall place himself as a mere servant of the people and a trustee for his subjects, i.e. those below him in command as well as the public in general (quoted in al-Buraey, 1985: 238).

Fazlul Karim further elaborated on some other principles of leadership in Islam. Among them are the following:

A Muslim leader shall love for his subjects what he loves for himself and his immediate family and relatives. He shall keep his door always open for hearing grievances and for redressing of wrongs. He shall use, as a keynote of his administrative policies, justice coupled with mercy. He shall observe the religious duties and rites of others. He shall wisely choose pious, truthful and sincere men as his ministers and aids and advisors. He shall look after every community with an eye of equality so far as justice is concerned. He shall govern the people under his administrative charge according to the laws of the Qur'an, *Sunnah* and general rules of equity and justice (Ibid).

More recently, Abu Sin (1986: 171) emphasized that leadership thought in Islam is based on the Qur'an, *Sunnah* and the human values that were prevalent at the beginning of Islamic history. Therefore, Muslims have to look at their legislative sources precisely in order to understand the Islamic perspective of leadership. In addition, they could look at leadership practices of the early Muslim state formed by Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and his Pious caliphs (r.a.).

According to many scholars, the comprehensiveness and all encompassing nature of Islamic leadership theory is what distinguishes it from other leadership theories. The striking feature of an Islamic leadership theory is its emphasis on all the relevant variables and factors that affect the leadership cycle or process, inside and outside the organization, as well as its understanding of individual behavior in light of social and cultural forces. It includes an important dimension, that is the ethical and moral factors that have a great effect on leadership behavior in organizations.

As for the practical program of an Islamic leadership that would achieve its objectives, Abu Sin (1986: 201) stressed the importance of connecting leadership with the Islamic social environment making it bound by society's social values. The concept of *shura* and participation should be applied, and a humane environment that encourages higher productivity should be secured. The economic variable should also be dealt with by providing it for the material needs of the workers.

An Islamic leadership is the one that seeks happiness for the individual and society. Al-Buraey (1994: 17) stated that Islamic leadership assists the individual in attaining happiness in both worlds. Therefore, the function of leadership is to direct human resources properly in order to serve society in achieving happiness.

Muslim scholars succeeded in drawing attention towards this important dimension for leadership in Islam. Jabnoun (1994) made the distinction between Islamic and the Western perspectives of leadership by saying that, "unlike the common concepts of management, Islam encompasses the dimensions of belief in Allah (s.w.t) and the Hereafter. These added dimensions have innumerable ramifications on the actions and interactions of individuals, organizations and societies." (pp. 1- 2). Like Abu Sin

(1986) and al-Buraey (1990), Jabnoun (1994) emphasized that ethics play a major role in Islamic perspectives. Although his book was on leadership in general, the writer concentrated on some Qura'nic verses and some of Hadith literature related to the elements of leadership, such as planning, organizing and leading. However, the writer relied on both Islamic and Western sources of management.

To emphasize more the ethical dimension of leadership, Abdul-Athim (1994) believes that values and ethics are the most important features of Islamic leadership. Therefore, he concentrated on discussing Islamic values and their influence on the leadership process at its various levels of planning, organizing, implementing, supervising and others.

The objective of an Islamic leadership is mainly the worship of Allah (s.w.t) on Earth by applying the Islamic principles in *ibadat* and *mu'amalat*, establishing *khilafah* and justice. Such objectives were presented by many Muslim writers such as Abu Sin (1986: 200). However, such a set of objectives is for every Muslim, which means that the evaluation of achievement of an Islamic leadership is difficult.

Furthermore, the higher objective of an Islamic leadership and its proper tools and instruments were presented by al-Ali in his book *Al-Idarah Fil-Islam, [Administration in Islam]* which mentioned that Islam combines faith and good deeds (al-Ali 1985: 68). Allah (s.w.t) says: “ By time, verily man is in loss, except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual enjoining of truth, and of patience and constancy.” (Qur'an 103: 1- 3).

Islamic leadership has sublime characteristics that distinguish it from other models of leaderships. In his second book *Management and Administration in Islam*, al-Buraey

(1990) allocated an entire chapter to the roots of Islamic leadership. He stated that, “The most important characteristic of the leadership in Islam was the religious and moral spirit which dominated the entire field of government and leadership under Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and the four pious caliphs.” (al-Buraey, 1990: 233). He emphasized that the orientation and general philosophy of Islamic leadership centres on the concepts of piety, *shura*; consultation, justice, equality, and social equity.

Al-Ali (1985) on the other hand mentioned some characteristics of leadership in Islam, in addition to the effects of Qur’an and *Sunnah* on the development of leadership. He also mentioned some Qur’anic verses and sayings of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) to support the idea that we have the resources to Islamize anything. However, he did not relate these sayings to the Islamic system of leadership or administration.

More recently, Beekun and Badawi (1999) in their book entitled *Leadership: An Islamic Perspective*, emphasized the importance of morals and good behavior in the Islamic leadership. They mentioned the four main bases of Islamic moral character that Muslim leaders should follow. These are *Iman* or faith, Islam, *Taqwa* or piety, and *Ihsan* (pp. 19- 25). They emphasized additional five key hallmarks of Islamic behavior. These are ‘*adl* (justice), *amanah* (trust), *birr* (righteousness), *mujahadah* (struggle) and ‘*ahd* (keeping a promise) (Ibid.: 26- 33). The two authors touched briefly upon the roles of leadership from an Islamic perspective. They stated that a Muslim leader should be both a servant and a guardian for his or her followers (Ibid.: 15).

Finally, there were some attempts aimed at presenting the features of an Islamic theory of leadership. Abdul-Athim (1994) called for a theory in which values and morals are

the basis. He called this attempt as 'leadership by values'. Abu Sin also specified the main features of an Islamic theory of leadership as follows:

1. It is connected to the social philosophy of the Muslim society, its ethics and values.
2. It stresses the economic variable and material incentive, and works to satisfy the needs of the individual.
3. It also gives consideration to the human and spiritual dimensions. It respects the individual as a human being and incorporates him in the administrative process, each according to his capabilities.
4. It should also give due attention to organizational diminution; specification of responsibilities, respect for authority, official ties and the organizational structure (1986: 188).

## **Educational Leadership Roles in Islam**

Educational leadership in Islam has some unique roles as it is concerned with worldly matters as well as spiritual ones. A Muslim leader in any organization has all of these interests. As he strives for the success of the organization, he takes care regarding the satisfaction of Allah (s.w.t.). Additionally, he or she has the responsibility of guiding people to the good for this life and for the Hereafter. This section will look at five roles of educational leadership in Islam.

### **A. The Visionary Educational Leader**

A Muslim leader is a forward-looking person whose main concern is to achieve the vision of the planned future rather than just the daily objectives of the organization. He or she has a clear vision that guides him or her towards the achievement of the objectives by following the right way and method. The leader's vision will clarify why one is here, how and what one is doing and what one will be doing in the future. Leaders have to transform this clear vision to the members of the organization. This will

enhance the organization and lead it to a high state whereby everybody is informed of what he or she is doing and towards what end.

Allah (s.w.t) asked the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and his companions to be patient and not to clash with their oppressors because the final vision had yet to be reached. Allah (s.w.t) said in the Qur'an: " Hast thou not turned thy thought to those who were told to hold back their hands (from fight) but establish regular prayers and spend in regular *Zakah*..." (Qur'an 4: 77). Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) therefore, kept planning for this final vision until it was achieved when the first Islamic state was established in *Medina*.

It was clear thus that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) had a very clear vision from the beginning of his Prophethood. He refused several times to clash with Quraish tribes in *Mecca* during the first thirteen years of the new religion. His vision was clear - that is building a new and unique Islamic state. "Small clashes here and there will not help Muslims to achieve their final goal. Even when his companions were suffering, he only used to ask them to have patience." (Abdul-Wahhab 1997: 106). Therefore, a visionary leader is required for any organization that is looking forward to achieving its future objectives.

## **B. The Servant Educational Leader**

Serving one's people is one of the main roles of a Muslim leader. Educational leadership in this context, is not a matter of privilege or position. It is rather a huge responsibility. Educational leaders need therefore to feel that they are the servants of their followers in order to be able to fulfill their duties in the best way possible. This feeling will help leaders to make great efforts towards protecting the members of the organization and do whatever necessary to achieve its objectives.

The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said: “A ruler who has been entrusted with the affairs of the Muslims but makes no endeavor (for the material and moral upliftment) and is not sincerely concerned (for their welfare) will not enter Paradise along with them.” (Muslim, n.d. Vol. 1, ch. 44, *hadith* No. 264, p. 82).

Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) said: “A commander (of the Muslims) is a shield for them. They fight behind him and they are protected by him (from tyrants and aggressors). If he enjoins fear of Allah (s.w.t), the Exalted and Glorious, and dispenses justice, there will be a (great) reward for him; and if he enjoins otherwise, it rebounds on him.” (Muslim, 1987, *hadith* No. 4542).

The second caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab (r.a.) was quoted as telling his people: “I have appointed over you governors and agents not to beat your bodies or take your money, but rather to teach you and serve you.” (Abdul-Hadi 1970: 73 and al-Buraey 1985: 248). It is clear therefore that a Muslim leader should realize that he or she is obliged to serve the members of the organization as part of serving the Muslim *Ummah*.

### **C. The Educational Leader as a Guide**

A Muslim educational leader is but a guide who is concerned about his followers' well being. His main concern is guiding them to what is good in the organization in life in general and in the Hereafter. He has to direct the followers towards understanding the vision of the organization and how they are going to achieve success in their duties in the best manner. He should have such ability. In addition, the Muslim leader should have in mind that one of his duties is to direct people to be good Muslims besides being professional members.

About several of His prophets, Allah (s.w.t) said in the Qur'an: "And We made them leaders, guiding (men) by Our command, and We inspired them to do good deeds, to establish regular prayers and to give *Zakah* and they constantly served Us (and Us only)." (Qur'an 21: 73).

To reiterate the idea, Allah (s.w.t) said in the Qur'an about the children of Israel: "And We appointed, from among them, leaders, giving guidance under Our command, so long as they persevered with patience and continued to have faith in Our signs." (Qur'an 32: 24).

The caliph Umar Ibn al-Khattab (r.a.) reinforced the meaning of 'guiding' when he addressed the newly appointed governors and agents as follows:

Listen, verily I am not sending you as rulers and potentates; rather, I am sending you as the leaders of guidance so that men may follow you. Render unto the Muslims their rights; beat them not, lest you humiliate them; praise them not lest you make them undisciplined. Do not shut your doors against them, lest the strong among them devour the weak ones (Husaini 1958: 83).

It was clear for all Muslim leaders during the time of Umar (r.a.) that they were just to guide their people and help them towards living in happiness. This role should be clear also for today's Muslim leaders in order to understand the essence of educational leadership and be able to lead people towards success in this life and in the Hereafter.

#### **D. The Influential Educational Leader**

A Muslim leader's job is not only to serve and guide people but to bring about some changes for the betterment of their lives. Educational leadership in this context is connected with change from the wrong to the right. By influencing people, leaders will be able to transform their spirit, knowledge and experience to everybody in the

organization. However, this will not be achieved unless leaders are good models and examples for their followers.

The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) was very successful in influencing people and guiding them to the new religion - beginning with his wife Khadija (r.a), his close companion Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (r.a) and all other companions (Abdul-Wahhab 1997: 97). The caliph Abu Bakr (r.a) was then very influential in persuading Umar Bin al-Khattab and other people regarding the importance of fighting those who refused to pay the *Zakah* in order not to differentiate between all pillars of Islam (al-Sayouti 1994: 87). This resulted in keeping the religion as pure as Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) preached it to his people.

Such examples are to be followed by all Muslim leaders who intend to encourage some positive changes in the lives of their followers. Leaders should realize that leading must come together with influencing. The leader's influential role can touch the hearts of the members of the organization and affect their behaviors.

#### **E. The Educative Leader**

A Muslim educational leader is concerned about the enhancement of the potentials and capabilities of all members. Thus educational leadership is concerned with the advancement of the members of the organization in a number of ways, especially: spiritually, mentally, intellectually, psychologically, socially and professionally. A leader's main mission is not only to ensure the job is done but also to develop and train people in order to be competent, efficient and independent. Educational leadership in Islam in this context will allow leaders to transfer their experiences to the members. As a result, the capable people will be trained in one way or another to be the leaders of the future and the cycle will continue.

The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) used to teach his companions in different ways, especially when somebody was given a position involving leadership. It has been reported that when Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) appointed Ali Ibn Abi Talib (r.a.) as a judge in Yemen, he was concerned that he had no experience in the field. Regarding this incident, Ali (r.a.) said: “the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) sent me to Yemen as a judge. I said: Oh! Messenger of Allah ! I am a youth, how could you send me to a people who are far advanced in years than me. The Prophet prayed for me, and said: ‘If two adversaries approach you; (for fair judgement) and you hear the claim of one, do not judge until you have heard from the other, for this is to decide the case’”(al-Baihaqi n.d., Vol.10, *Kitab A’dab al-Qadi*, p. 86). It is clear here that Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) had taught Ali (r.a.) the main and most general rule to be practiced by a judge. Muslim leaders therefore, should follow such examples and train their followers how to do the assigned jobs. By doing this, members will be more confident in tackling their duties and as a result, they will be more professional in their concerned fields.

## **Educational Leadership Styles in Islam**

Educational leadership from an Islamic perspective has some unique styles which makes it different from other styles of educational leadership. They are based on the Islamic principles that guide and frame the theoretical perspective of educational leadership. Four educational leadership styles could be recognized; brotherhood, collaborative, *shuratic* or consultative and supportive educational leadership styles. However, Muslim leaders can adapt more than one style as they relate to each other. Feelings of brotherhood within the organization will lead people to collaborate with each other and will help the leader to support his or her followers. On the other hand, applying the *shura* system in the decision making process will bring the leader and the

followers together as everybody feels loyal to the organization. This section will look at these four possible educational leadership styles in Islam.

### **A. Brotherhood Educational Leadership**

It is a style of educational leadership in which the leader and all the organization's members are considered as a family. Followers feel that they are but brothers and sisters of each other before having any kind of organizational structure or position. To have the real essence of brotherhood, leaders tend to feel that they are not better than any other person in the organization. They also tend to deal with others exactly as they like to be dealt with.

Having this feeling in an Islamic organization will make everybody feel as part of one family. Such an achievement will help to create a socially healthy environment for the excellence of the organization.

It was reported that Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (r.a.) has said when he was appointed as the *Khalifa* (leader) for the Muslims: "I am not a better person than any one of you, if I am right follow me and if I am wrong, correct me." (al-Sayouti 1994: 84). Today's leaders need such feelings that guide them to understand the essence of educational leadership that Muslim organizations need at this time. It is not a matter of having a rank or a position but rather it is a matter of feeling of equality and building good relationships with the members of the organization.

The fifth *Rashidi* (rightly guided) caliph Umar Bin Abdul-Aziz also has been reported to have said that: "I am not a better person than any one of you, but I am just having more responsibilities than any one of you." (al-Sayouti 1994: 276). Therefore, leaders

should feel they are responsible for creating an environment of brotherhood in their organizations in which members feel that they are close to each other. Such an environment will enhance the social relationships among everybody and motivate them for better achievements.

### **B. Collaborative Educational Leadership**

Working in harmony as a team is an inner feeling in most people.. Leaders should realize that they cannot work separately even if they are experts unless they cooperate with everybody in the organization. Leaders then believe that strengthening the relationships of the members will lead to success. Such strong relationships and cooperation will bring harmony to the organization, which will create a positive and healthy environment. To achieve that, leaders tend to have the members working in groups as much as possible. They tend also to have some social programs for all members. As a result, members in the same way will believe that they cannot achieve their objectives unless they put their hands together and work as one team.

The Islamic model of educational leadership emphasizes co-operation rather than competition (al-Buraey, 1985: 344). Allah (s.w.t.) directed Muslims to help each other. He said: “help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancour.” (Qur’an 5: 2). This kind of help and cooperation will be considered as a system for Muslims in order to achieve success. Leaders therefore should help their followers to overcome their problems and facilitate whatever they need in order to carry out their duties in the best way possible.

### **C. *Shuratic* or Consultative Educational Leadership**

Whatever experience the leader has, his or her decision will be according to one person's opinion. He or she will probably feel the need for others' opinions and ideas before making any necessary decisions that might affect the members of the organization. Leaders therefore apply the *shura* (consultation) method in any way that allows them to listen to others and allow the members to express their ideas on certain important matters that concern the organization. Leaders then will tend to ask for feedback about any matter that concerns the school and the members. As a result, members will feel free to go to the leader and present any necessary suggestions or advice. Such an atmosphere will create a high level of trust and spirit among all members of the organization.

Allah (s.w.t) said in the Qur'an about Muslims: "Those who respond to their Lord, and establish regular prayer who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation; who spend out of what We bestow on them for sustenance." (Qur'an 42: 38).

Mutual consultation as Allah (s.w.t) declared, is a distinguishing Muslim trait, especially of leaders. What makes *shura* unique in the Islamic point of view is "its consensus generating mechanism rather than majority or minority influence." (al-Buraey, 1985: 344). All decisions that have been agreed upon in any organization must be in accordance with the Islamic principles.

Practicing *shura* (consultation) will help leaders to more involve the members of the organization in the decision making process. As a result, the members will be more motivated to do their job. They will feel a sense of belonging to the organization, as it is their own. They will also feel as having an important role to play and not only

implementing whatever they have been asked to do. Such an environment will boost the team spirit in the organization.

#### **D. Supportive Educational Leadership**

Islamic educational leadership believes in supporting the members of the organization in their work. Leaders are trying to be on their members' side. The organization's members are always in need of their leaders' motivation and encouragement. They need the spiritual motivation before any other. They also need training programs that increase their knowledge and skills in different fields. Therefore, leaders in this style will take any given opportunity to motivate and encourage their followers in different ways and utilize different situations. Leaders believe in training and developing the members in necessary skills, and thus a continuous professional development program for the members is an absolute priority.

In clarifying Prophet Muhammad's (p.b.u.h.) duty, Allah (s.w.t) said in the Qur'an: "It is He Who has sent amongst the unlettered, a messenger from among themselves, to rehearse to them His signs, to purify them, and to instruct them in the Book and wisdom, although they had been, before, in manifest error." (Qur'an 62: 2). It is evident here that the duty of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) as a leader was not only to make sure that everything proceeded smoothly but also to teach, educate and develop further people's knowledge and skills. Muslim leaders should practice such duties that will help them to understand the essence of educational leadership and be good leaders.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

This work was an attempt in studying the philosophy of educational leadership in Islam. It tried to cover part of it to some extent. Other parts such as the objectives,

characteristics, fundamentals and principles of educational leadership in Islam and other topics need more investigations. The researchers, therefore, would suggest the following recommendations to enhance the status of Islamic educational leadership:

1. Muslim scholars should make great efforts towards investigating the concepts of Islamic educational leadership. They have to do more in-depth research on this topic. This will be of assistance in formulating a theory of educational leadership from the Islamic perspective which contributes to the existing knowledge and engage with it by means of accommodation or modification.
2. Several education ministries in Muslim nations, Muslim manager training institutions, Muslim leadership training institutions and authorities dealing with Muslim institutions should pay a great deal of attention towards understanding the concepts of Islamic leadership and educational leadership. As Muslims, they should emphasize more on realizing that every aspect in life including administration in all institutions must be in accordance with Islam.
3. Courses on educational leadership in universities, colleges and managers training institutions should focus more on incorporating Islamic concept of educational leadership. This will enable these institutions to produce sound, knowledgeable and skillful managers and administrators who are able to serve the Muslim *Ummah*.
4. Educational leaders, managers and other administrators should practice more clearly the Islamic way of leadership. They should consider their work for the sake of Allah as the highest level on their list of priorities. They should be competent and should possess good character (*akhlaq*) so that they can be role models for others especially the younger generation.
5. Educational leaders should make a great effort to create a sound and healthy environment for their organization. Such an environment will help accomplish the objectives of the institution.

6. Research centres and educational leadership institutions should organize more seminars, workshops and conferences in order to disseminate the concepts of educational leadership from an Islamic perspective. This will also help to consolidate and crystallize the Islamic theory of leadership.
7. Muslim scholars who are well-versed in Western educational leadership should increase their efforts in doing comparative studies between the Islamic and Western philosophies of educational leadership.
8. The five educational leadership roles and four educational leadership styles from an Islamic perspective that have been studied could be a guideline for selecting new leaders and managers for the Islamic organizations.
9. Further studies are to be conducted in the Islamic institutions in Muslim countries. This will assist scholars in acquiring a broader view of the current situation in the Islamic institutions in Muslim societies. As a result, this will help understanding the Islamic theory of educational leadership.
10. A comparative study between Islamic institutions and other ones could help us in understanding the unique aspects of the Islamic institutions and the main differences between both of them.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abdul-Athim, M. (1994). *Usol Al-Fikr Al-Idari Fi Al-Islam, [Fundamentals of Administrative Thought in Islam]*. Cairo: Maktaba Wahbah.

Abdul-Hadi, H. A. (1970). *Al-Fikr Al-Idari Al-Islami Wa Al-Muqaran, [Comparative and Islamic Administrative Thought]*. Cairo: Dar Al-Hamami Li Al-Tiba'ah.

Abdul-Wahhab, M. (1997). *Mokhtasar Sirat Al-Rasoul Sallah Allahu Alaihi wa Sallam, [Summary of the Sirah of the Messenger Peace Be Upon Him]*. Damascus: Dar Al-Fayha'.

Abu Sin, A. I. (1986). *Al-Idarah Fil-Islam, [Administration in Islam]*, Dubai: al-Ashiyah.

Adlouni, M. A. and Sweidan, T. M. (2000). *Al-Qiyadah fi Al-Qarn Al-Ishreen, [Leadership in the Twenty First Century]*. Riyad: Qurtobah Lil-Intaj Al-Fanni.

Al-Ali, M. M. (1985). *Al-Idarah Fil-Islam, [Administration in Islam]*, Jeddah: al-Dar Al-Saudia.

Al-Baihaqi, A. B. A. (n.d.). *Al-Sunan Al-Kubra*. Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr.

Al-Buraey, M. (1985). *Administrative Development: An Islamic Perspective*. London: Kegan Paul International Limited.

Al-Buraey, M. (1990). *Management and Administration in Islam*. Saudi Arabia: King Fahd University.

Al-Buraey, M. (1994). *Mabadi' Al-Idarah Wa Al-Qiyadah Fi Al-Islam, [Principles of Administration and Leadership in Islam]*. Al-Dammam: Matabi' Al-Ibtikar.

Al-Farabi. A. N. (1985). *Ara' Ahl Al-Madinah Al-Fadilah [Excellent City Dwellers Opinions]*. Fifth Ed. Beirut: Dar Al-Shorouq.

Al-Ghazali, A. H. M. (1987). *Al-Tibr Al-Masbouk Fi Nasihat Al-Molouk*. Beirut: Dar Ibn Zaidoun.

Ali, A. Y. (1985). *The Holy Qur'an, English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary*. Al-Madinah al-Munawwarah: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an.

AL-Kittani, A. H. (1920). *Nitham Al-Hukomah Al-Nabawiyah, [The Prophet's System of Governance]*, Beirut: Dar al-Kotob Al-Amali.

Al-Mawardi, A. A. M. (1983). *Al-Ahkam Al-Sultaniyah, [The Sultanic Rules]*. Beirut: Dar Al-Kutob Al-Ilmiyah.

Al-Nahwi, A. A. R. (1999). *Fiqh Al-Idara Al-Imaniyyah fi Al-Da'wah Al-Islamiyyah, [Faithful Administration in the Islamic Da'wah]*. Riyadh: Dar Al-Nahwi Lil-Nashr wa Al-Tawzi'.

- Al-Qalqashandi, A. A. A. (1963). *Subh Al-A'sha Fi Sina't Al-Insha*. Vol. 1. Cairo: Al-Mua'ssasah Al-Misriyah Al-A'mmah.
- Al-Sayouti, J. A. A. (1994). *Tarikh Al-Kholafa' [History of Kholafa]*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Beirut: Dar Al-Jalil.
- Al-Talib, H. (1992). *Training Guide for Islamic Workers*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. USA: International Graphics.
- Al-Wakil, M. S. (1988). *Al-Qiyadah wa Al-Jondiyyah fi Al-Islam [Leadership and Military in Islam]*. Egypt: Al-Wafa' Littiba'a wa Al-Nashr.
- Basbous, A. M. (1988). *Fan Al-Qiyadah fi Al-Islam, [The Art of Leadership in Islam]*. Jordan: Maktabat Al-Manar.
- Beekun, R. I. and Badawi, J. (1999). *Leadership: An Islamic Perspective*. Maryland: Amana Publishers.
- Gardner, J. W. (1990). *On Leadership*. New York: Free Press.
- Husaini, M. (1958). *Al-Idarah Al-Arabiyah, [Arab Administration]*. Egypt: Al-Matba'ah Al-Namouthajiyah.
- Ibn Khaldun, A. R. (1979). *Al-Ibar Wa Diwan Al-Mubtada' Wal-Khabar Fi Ayyam Al-Arab Wal-Barbar Wal-Ajam Waman A'sarahum Min Dhawi Assultan Al-Akbar*. V.1 Beirut: Mua'ssasah Jammal Li Al-Tiba'ah Wa Al-Nashr.
- Ibn Taymiyah, T. A. A. (1988). *Al-Siyasah Al-Shariyah Fi Islah Al-Rai Wa Al-Raiyah*. Beirut: Dar Al-Kutob Al-Ilmiyah.
- Ibn Taymiyah, T. A. A. (1992). *Al-Siyasah Al-Shariyah Fi Islah Al-Rai Wa Al-Raiyah [The Shari'at Politics]*. Beirut: Dar Al-Kutob Al-Ilmiyah.
- Jabnoun, N. (1994). *Islam and Management*. Kuala Lumpur: IKD.
- Morris, W. Ed. (1981). *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*. USA, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Murphy, J. and Shipman, N. (2000). *Educational Leadership*. California: The Jossey-Bass Reader on Jossey-Bass Inc.
- Muslim, I. A. A. (1987). *Sahih Muslim Bi-Sharh Al-Nawawi, [Sahih Muslim with Explanations by Al-Nawawi]*. Cairo: Dar Al-Rayyan Lil-Turath.
- Muslim, I. A. A. (n.d.). *Sahih Muslim*. Beirut: Dar Ihya' Al-Turath Al-Arabi.
- Mustafa, I.; Al-Zayyat, A. H.; Al-Najjar, H. A. M. (1989). *Al-mo'jam Al-Waseet*. Vol. 1. Istanbul-Turkey: Dar Al-Da'wah.
- Paine, L. S. (1997). *Cases in Leadership, Ethics and Organizational Integrity: A Strategic Perspective*. USA: Irwin, McGraw-Hill.

Qur'an. *The Holy Qur'an: English Translation of the Meaning and Commentary*. Translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. (1985). Saudi Arabia: Al-Madinah al-Munawwarah King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (2001). *Leadership What's in it for School?*. London: Routedge Falmer.

Spitzer, R. J. (2000). *The Spirit of Leadership: Optimizing Creativity and Change in Organizations*. USA: Executive Excellence Publishing.