THE ISLAMIC CALCULATED APPROACH TOWARDS ACHIEVING EXCELLENT LEADERSHIP AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

ABAMOLE, MURTADAH SHU'AIB
DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC STUDIES, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF ABUJA, P.M.B. 117, ABUJA-NIGERIA, babamole.murtadah@uniabuja.edu.ng

KEYWORDS
Calculated approach, Excellent leadership, Good-Governance, Policymaking, Politics, Democracy, Voting, Electioneering

ABSTRACT
The paper discusses the Islamic calculated approach towards leadership prowess, good governance, electioneering, policymaking, vis-à-vis the responsibilities of the Muslims to participate in the general elections of their various localities due to the modern system of choosing leaders called; democracy. The study aims at examining these concepts in relation to their positive impact and negative effects from the Shari'ah viewpoints. The essential elements of leadership, operational principles of good governance, roles of a dynamic leader in policymaking, together with the Islamic stand on why taqwah should be prioritized when it comes to governance, and why insecurity should be regarded as the major duty of every good leader; all these were extensively discussed in this paper. The write-up however, highlighted some indispensable positions of Islam on achieving excellent leadership and good governance for the indigent masses. The study finally concludes and recommends some practical points to be adopted by the leaders of every given society to be working with; for a sustainable growth and imperishable development. Though, many articles have been written on this concept before but, there is no any research (be it empirical or, non-empirical) that is purely done with Islamic approach (throughout) like this work. Nevertheless, as non-empirical research, the paper only builds on the works of other Scholars and Researchers on the subject-matter, just to improve their submissions on the theory; according to Islam.

Introduction:

Excellent leadership prowess is not only playing a vital role in the development of a given Nation but also, in reshaping its citizens' lives. In Islam, the greatest leaders that are worthy of emulations are the Prophets / Messengers of Allah, due to their sincerity(al-Ikhlaas), truthfulness(as-Sidqu), trustworthiness(al-'Amaanah), bravery(ash-Shujaa'ah), modesty(at-Tawaadu'i), integrity(al-Istiqaamah) and consultative strategy(ash-Shuurah) among others. So, from their teachings and exemplary lifestyles, we learnt and emulated a lot of lessons on how to lead and govern. In Suratu'l-'An'aam (Q6: 90), Allah says about them that:

" أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ فَبِهُدَاهُمُ اقْتَدِهْ قُل لَّا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرَىٰ لِلْعَالَمِينَ "

"Those were the ones (Prophets/Messengers) who received Allah's guidance (in all affairs), so from

their guidance take an example (thus; follow the guidance that they received) …".

Elsewhere in Suratu'l-'Ahzaab (Q33: 21), Allah specifically declared that there are a lot of unique Leadership Qualities to be followed and emulated in the life-style of Prophet Muhammad(pbuh); who remains our amazing role model when it comes to leadership and governance attributes, He says:

" لَّقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا "

"Indeed, you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the last-day, and remembers Allah often".

Series of studies have already been conducted by different researchers on the subject-matter at various times, locations and areas of interest such as: Mawardiy, 1978; Albaniy, 1995; Qaysaraniy, 1980; Qardawiy, 1973 & 2011; Coby, 1986; Khan, 1990; an-Nawawiy, 1989; Larry, 2004; Mayowa, 2009; Khurshid, 2007; Fethullah, 2006; Lewis, 2014; Zafar & Mervyn, 2009; Khaled, 2003; Abdulfarhan, 2013; Abdulkarim, Fadil & etal, 2019; Makhtoum, 2012; Ahmadzai, 2015; Manzooruddin, 2007; Bashir & Sharif, 2020; Mustafa, 2015; Sulaiman, 2012; Gusau, 2018 & 2019; Sanusi, 2015; Mohamad, 2017; Darwish, 2015; and Badron, 2020 among others. Some of these works are purely conventional studies by the West, and very few of it were briefly conceptualized with Islamic proofs even, by some of these Muslim Researchers in their various related studies. Meaning that, this writeup was mainly conducted to review the works of early scholars on the subject-matter, and to improve their submissions on it from the Shari'ah point of view. Thus, there is no any research work previously done on the subject-matter with Islamic approach (throughout) like this study.

Therefore, the research became imperative due to some leadership challenges or governance failure facing the world today, which is probably caused by many factors like; lack of truthfulness & trustworthiness; lack of transparency & accountability; lack of infrastructural facilities & social amenities; worst economy that causes inflation, poverty and unemployment; increased corruption rate & insecurity (i.e; terrorism, kidnapping, banditry, farmer-herder conflicts, etcetera); lack of honesty, integrity, visionary and dynamic leaders amongst others… All of which hinders growth and development of a given society, and make this research a necessary way-out from the Islamic point of view.

Conceptual Clarification

When the conventional method of leadership and governance failed everybody, the next line of action is to switch or look for a result-oriented alternative through Islam. For lack of proper understanding and strict implementation of the Islamic calculated approach towards achieving excellent leadership and good governance leads many communities/nations to serious sufferings and developmental setback. Because, Islam viewed, approached and conceptualized the systems in a more detailed and elaborated way, as distinctively elucidated in this study. Thus, from the Islamic outlook, this study analytically discusses everything that humanities needed to know in achieving excellent leadership and good governance.

Research Methodology:

The very method adopted in the course of this non-empirical research was by basing the work on the available facts, findings and sources of information, all of which were gathered from the library books, internet searches and other relevant places. The primary data were obtained from the Kitaab and Sunnah, while the secondary data were retrieved from the reviewed textbooks, documents, journals and other published and unpublished materials. All of which were carefully studied, scrutinized, harmonized and utilized together to produce this piece of writeup.

Definitions of Leadership, Governance, Democracy, Politics, Electioneering and Voting by some Scholars:

There are many definitions on the terms; leadership, governance, democracy, politics, electioneering and voting by some prominent figures / personalities aside the Shari'ah and dictionaries' submissions, amongst which are:-

i. "Leadership is the capacity to translate visions into reality. It is all about articulating visions, embodying values and creating the environment within which missions can be accomplished. As a result, a true leadership must be a determined servant-leader and dedicated decision-maker in achieving the expectative development". - (Warren-Bennis, 1993 & Richards, 1986)

ii. "Leadership is the ability to evaluate and forecast a long-term plan/policy, and influence the followers towards the achievement of the said strategy. A good leader shapes a vision which gives point to the works of others. Thus, a leader is simply a dealer in hope". - (Mayowa, 2009)

iii. "Leadership revolves around visions, ideas and directions. A great leader must be capable of inspiring his followers to do things of which he himself starts doing first! So as to take his people to where they ought to be". - (Rosalyn-Carter, 1977)

iv. "Leadership is a process of giving meaningful direction to collective efforts, in order to attain/achieve a specified, common and set of goals". - (Northouse, 2004)

v. Leadership according to Islam, is a sacred position that can solve the problems of humanity and guide them from the brink of destruction to the eternal way of Allah. It is a psychological contract between a leader and his followers based on the principles of Taqwa (Conscious of Allah/Humility), Trust ('Amaanah), Justice ('Adaalah), Knowledge & Wisdom (al-'Ilm wa'l-Hikmah), Mutual Consultation (Shura), Transparency (Shaffaafiyyah) and Accountability (Ihtisaab/Mas'uuliyyah) among others. - (See: Khan, 1990; Mustafa, 2015; Gusau, 2019; Abdulkarim & Fadil, 2019 for more details)

While governance can be generally defined as: "The system by which entities are directed, overseeing and controlled. It is concerned with structure and processes for decision making, accountability and behavior at the top of an entity. Governance influences how an organized society's objectives are set and achieved. It is a system and process of which successful implementation requires a systematic approach that incorporates strategic planning". - (https://governancetoday.com)

According to 'The Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools - taapcs.ca': "Governance is what a government does. It is the act of governing! Governance relates to consistent management, cohesive policies, procedures and decision-rights for a given area of responsibility".

Meanwhile, according to Islam, the cardinal principles of governance is to rule by what Allah has prescribed for everyone with regards to duties, responsibilities, obligations, perfection, justice, brotherhood and mutual deliberation which are linked with the Islamic rule of law. It is however, regarded as the blueprint or, Islamic model of good governance. - (Zafar & Mervyn, 2020)

In his own statement, the embattled Emir of Kano (HRH. Sanusi Lamido Sanusi-II) put it in this way: "Leadership is the assumption of responsibility from the protection of the religion of Allah and the smooth running of all affairs, in line with the all-embracing nature of Islam that seeks to regulate the totality of human life. A leader with a proper vision and decisive action is crucial for development. A good leader is the primary force in institutional change and he can build other necessary systems. It is glaring that leadership and governance point to the same thing which is guiding and directing. However, good governance is predicated on principle centered leadership. Thus, leadership is the pivot around which good governance revolves". - (Sanusi, 2015; in Addiya' Magazine)

Generally, leadership and governance are two distinct but related concepts. Leadership is about setting a direction and inspiring others to follow. It's about making decisions, taking actions and motivating others to do so. Governance on the other hand is all about ensuring that an organization or society is run in an effective and efficient manner. It is about putting in place the systems and processes that will ensure that an entity achieves its set of goals and objectives. Thus, leadership and governance are both essential for the success of any society or, organization. - (Olivia, 2022)

Democracy too, literally remains the system of choosing or replacing the government by the

peoples' majority power through free & fair elections. Thus, it's a way of governing that depends on the will of the people. Correspondingly, in the most accepted definition used by the 16th President of the United States of America (Abraham Lincoln) in 1863: "Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, and for the people". - (Larry, 2004)

This democracy is a system that is contrary to the Islamic dictates because here, authority is given to someone(s) other than Allah (i.e; the Executives, Legislators and members of the Judiciary), and whatever their majority agreed upon becomes laws/constitutions that are binding on the whole citizens of that nation, even if it's in contrary to the common sense or, with the religious teachings, like; allowing abortion, legalizing same-sex marriage, permitting gambling, opening of beer parlors/prostitution centers and accepting usurious interest (Riba) to flow among others, on which the rulings of Shari'ah on each has been abolished in the name of democracy. Islam frowns at all of these democratic freedoms because, they are contrary to the provisions of Allah's will to Mankind. - (Fethullah, 2006; & Khaled, 2003)

However, Politics according to Wikipedia (2014) is: "The process or practice of persuading other people on things against their civic rights". It is the activities involved in using power in public life. In his own view, Max-Weber (1989) as retrieved from: onlinelibrary.wiley.com says: "Politics means striving for a share of influence on the distribution of Power and Independent Leadership Activities. That is, Politics is a constant struggle for power of which to get it acquired, one need to use any type of means, methods or, tactics and that is Power-Politics". On the other hand, Aristotle; the father of Politics in the ancient Greek submitted that: "The art of guiding, influencing, winning and holding control over a government policy is Politics". Meaning that: Politics is a Philosophy of dealing with human affairs. - (Merriam, 1986)

Concomitantly, in practicing the real Siyaasah, Muslims were commanded to uphold justice and fairness with all and sundry, if they truly want to promote public interest as established through Shura and all other leadership principles that reflect Islam more than Western liberal values; exactly as derived from the Kitaab and Sunnah. - (Abdulfarhan, 2013; & Qardawiy, 2011)

The word Electioneering also means: "The activities that Politicians and their Supporters carry-out in order to persuade people to choose/vote for their political party in an election, i.e; CAMPAIGNING" - (Collins Advanced Learners' Dictionary, 2008). Although, the action is against this popular hadith that seriously warned against being so desperate to become a leader or, leading by force. It says:

عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ سَمُرَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ لِي النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَا عَبْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنَ سَمُرَةَ! "لَا تَسْأَلْ الْإِمَارَةَ فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ أُعْطِيتَهَا عَنْ مَسْأَلَةٍ وُكِلْتَ إِلَيْهَا وَإِنْ أُعْطِيتَهَا عَنْ غَيْرِ مَسْأَلَةٍ أُعِنْتَ عَلَيْهَا".

Abdu'r-Rahman ibn Samurah reported that: The Prophet(pbuh) said to me: "O Abdu'r-Rahman! Don't ask or, seek for any political power! If it(the authority) is given to you based on your request, you will be held fully responsible for it (without any divine help). But, if it(the post) is given to you without you vying for it, you will be helped by Allah in it (all the tasks involved)". - (Ṣaḥeeḥu'l-Bukhariy: 7146 & Ṣaḥeeḥu Muslim: 1652)

Although based on the aforementioned hadith, Muslim Jurists seriously and extensively debated the conditions that makes vying for political power Mustahab at-times, Wajib at-times and Haram at-times. For the Qur'an itself did not specify a particular form of government but, it did identify a set of social and political values that are central to Muslim polity such as; protecting human dignity, pursuing justice through social cooperation, establishing a non-autocratic method of governance, and institutionalizing compassion in social interactions, among others. So, Muslims today ought to endorse the form of government that is most effective in helping them promote all these values. - (Khaled, 2003)

Voting is another point that means: "A method by which the electorates convene together to officially choose their representatives" - (Park, 2021). Accordingly, voting is the system of picking or choosing the best, trustworthy and most preferred candidate as a leader, through a process called: Election. Al-Ajlaan defined voting or, elections as: "A

method by which citizens or, some of them choose whom they are satisfied with to represent them as their leaders". Analogically, Prophet Muhammad(pbuh) has ordered in the hadiths of Abu-Sa'eed & Abu-Hurayrah-rta (as was recorded in; Sunan 'Abiy-Da'ud) that reads:

"إذا خرج ثلاثة في سفر فَلْيُؤَمِّرُوا أحدهم"

"When three people set out on a journey, they should appoint one of them as their leader".

And Allah, in Suratu'l-Ma'idah (Q5: 2) also said:

وَتَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى ٱلۡبِرِّ وَٱلتَّقۡوَىٰۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُواْ عَلَى ٱلۡإِثۡمِ وَٱلۡعُدۡوَٰنِۚ ".

"And cooperate (help one another) in righteousness and piety, and never cooperate in sin and transgression…".

Going by the above Hadith and 'Aayah, if the Electioneering processes up to Voting level leads good people to positions of influence in decision-making as required by the Shari'ah then, their elections by that consensus is part of cooperation in righteousness which Islam is preaching about and supporting, otherwise… Sheikh Yusuf al-Qardawiy views that: "Elections may be Wajib 'obligatory' for the Muslims if their votes would aid the trustworthy and competent persons in winning, as his refusal to participate in the process and vote could also result to victory of the incompetent person(s)". - (al-Qardawiy, 1973)

In addition to the aforementioned points, choosing a leader in Islam is either by; consensus or, by consultation or, by the current leader's nomination or, to be selected by force (if he merits it) or, to be selected by the group called: Majlisu'sh-Shuurah, etcetera. - Retrieved from: (https://azislam.com/tips-about-leadership-according-to-quran)

But, if a country is not governed by the Shari'ah maybe because, it's a secular state like Nigeria, most of the Scholars hold opinion of participation in voting or elections, for it is now a Daruuriy 'necessity' to prevent the monopoly of wicked secularists and incompetent leaders from being in power; which is actually the norm today in Nigeria's political setting or, context. As it's well established in one of the Fundamental Rules of 'Usuulu'l-Fiqh that in Islam: "*necessities at times, dictates acceptance or, permit prohibitions or, removes restrictions* – الضرورات تبيح المحظورات" - (Qaanuuni'l-Mu'aamalaati'l-Madeenah, 1984: 30).

On this note, we say:

رَبَّنَآ أَخۡرِجۡنَا مِنۡ هَٰذِهِ ٱلۡقَرۡيَةِ ٱلظَّالِمِ أَهۡلُهَا وَٱجۡعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيّٗا وَٱجۡعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرٗا".

"Our Lord! Rescue us from this town; whose population are oppressors and give us from Yourself a guardian, and give us from Yourself a vindicator". - Suratu'n-Nisaa'i (Q4: 75)

Abu'l-Hassan, Ali Ibn Muhammad al-Mawardiy (1978) also said: "Politics is not Munkar, it is a noble virtuous that is permissible in Islam, embrace it!". Thus, our Religion enables Politics par excellence, if allowed to be practiced base on the Shari'ah principles. So, why not supporting it?! - (al-Ahkaamu'l-Sultaaniyyah)

Qardawiy further posit that: "Prophet Muhammad as Head of the Nation and Imam of the Ummah, was a Leader as well but, he governed with the divine constitution throughout. His Khulafa'u'r-Rashiduun were also Leaders following the Sunnah by establishing a just administration". Elsewhere he said: "Leadership is all about Public Freedom and not by deceit/oppression as it is in almost everywhere today". To him also; "Democracy is the simplest and proper way to achieve the aims of a noble life. It is an avenue for having the right to freely choose a leader. It is allowed if it's absolute and not contradicting the Shari'ah rules, principles and sources".

Leadership according to the Kitaab & Sunnah:

As the basis of all Islamic Culture, the Qur'an clearly stated that leadership on earth started at the time of the creation of Adam(A.S), as testified by Allah Himself in Suratu'l-Baqarah (Q2: 30) that reads:

" وَإِذۡ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلۡمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٞ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ خَلِيفَةٗۖ قَالُوٓاْ أَتَجۡعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفۡسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسۡفِكُ ٱلدِّمَآءَ وَنَحۡنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمۡدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَۖ قَالَ إِنِّيٓ أَعۡلَمُ مَا لَا تَعۡلَمُونَ ".

"And when your Lord said to the Angels, I am going to place in the earth a Khaleefah (Successor), they said: Will You place on it those that will make mischief in it and shed blood?, and we celebrate Your praise and extol Your holiness. He said: Surely, I know what you don't know".

Also, in Suratu-Yunus (Q10: 14), He says:

" ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَـٰكُمْ خَلَـٰٓئِفَ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِمْ لِنَنظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ "

"And later made you(mankind), successors on earth after them so that We may see how you act / lead"

Thus, leadership is about actions more than it is about titles. The Qur'an extensively emphasizes various Leadership virtues and qualities in the Histories of the Prophets and Messengers of Allah.

Hadith also consists of many authentic sets of traditions of Prophet Muhammad(pbuh) on the concept of Leadership and Governance. For example, in a very sound and most authentic Hadith of Abdullah Ibn Umar(rta), the Prophet(pbuh) equated all human race on earth as representatives of Allah, and all will be accountable for their Leadership roles. Thus, even on a personal level, we are all responsible for what we and whoever is under us are doing, he said:

" أَلَا كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ فَالْإِمَامُ الَّذِي عَلَى النَّاسِ رَاعٍ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ وَالْمَرْأَةُ رَاعِيَةٌ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِ زَوْجِهَا وَوَلَدِهِ وَهِيَ مَسْئُولَةٌ عَنْهُمْ وَعَبْدُ الرَّجُلِ رَاعٍ عَلَى مَالِ سَيِّدِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْهُ أَلَا فَكُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ ".

"Listen! You are all Shepherd, and everyone of you will be asked about his responsibilities… The Imam(leader) of the people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects; a man is the guardian of his family(household) and is accountable for his subjects; a woman is the guardian of her husband's home and of his children and is responsible for them; slave of a man is a guardian of his master's property and is responsible for it. Surely, everyone of you is a shepherd and everyone of you will be asked about his responsibilities". - (Saheehu Bukhaariy: 7138 & Muslim: 1829)

Subsequently, in an authentic Hadith, the Prophet(pbuh) was also reported to have declared that:

عن معقل بن يسار، عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "ما من عبد استرعاه الله رعية فلم يحطها بنصيحة إلا لم يجد رائحة الجنة". وفي رواية أخرى، قال: "إلا حرم الله عليه الجنة". متفق عليه

Ma'qil Bn Yasaar(rta) reported that: The Messenger of Allah(pbuh) said: "No servant is given a position of authority by Allah and he does not fulfill its duties sagaciously (incompetent leaders) except that he will never be allowed to ever smell/perceive the fragrance of Paradise." Not to talk of entering it! In another narration, the Prophet said: "Allah will forbid him from entering the Paradise." - (Bukhariy: 6731 & Muslim: 142)

Again, in another tradition of Abu-Dharril'l-Ghifaariy(rta) , Prophet Muhammad(pbuh) said:

عن أبي ذر الغفاري قال: قلت يا رسول الله! ألا تستعملني؟ قال: فضرب بيده على منكبي ثم قال: "يا أبا ذر! إنك ضعيف، وإنها أمانة. وإنها يوم القيامة خزي وندامة، إلا من أخذها بحقها وأدى الذي عليه فيها". صحيح مسلم

Abu-Dharril'l-Ghifaariy(rta) said: "I said to the Prophet(pbuh), O Messenger of Allah, will you not appoint me a Leader to a public office over a group of people? He stroked my shoulder with his hand and said: "O Abu-Dharr, you are weak, and leadership is a trust! And on the day of Judgement, it is going to be a cause of shame and regret except for those who rightly claim it and properly fulfil their duties thereon". - (Muslim: 1825)

Meaning that; leadership according to Islam, is based on the principles of Taqwa (Conscious of Allah/Humility), Trust ('Amaanah), Justice ('Adaalah), Knowledge & Wisdom (al-'Ilm wa'l-

Hikmah), Mutual Consultation (Shura), Transparency (Shaffaafiyyah) and Accountability (Ihtisaab/Mas'uuliyyah) among others. - (Khan, 1990)

By and large, Islam based leadership on trust and obligations. A leader must be a 'Servant-Leader' whether political, religious or, otherwise. And his followers must also, gladly and willingly accept his authority. Leadership in Islam is however, basically centered on excellence, competence and not on hereditary as it is in many places today. Islam is not interested in the titles of leadership but, in the qualitative structures of administration. And for the smooth running of leader-follower interrelationship as far as Islam is concerned, God-consciousness (at-Taqwah), Competency (al-Kafaa'ah), Mutual consultation (ash-Shuurah), Consideration (an-Nadharu/al-I'itibaar), Accountability (Mas'uuliyyah), Trust ('Amaanah) and so forth, are the most essential needed keys to achieve huge Success in Good-Governance! - (Abdulkarim, Fadil, etal, 2019)

Consequently, leadership sets the direction and make sure that it happens, while governance is the accountability for that. Globally, competent leadership and governance are recognized as key to economic and political success of every given nation.

Fundamental Analyses of Excellent Leadership and Good-Governance in the light of Shari'ah:

1. Rule of Law, Leniency and Mutual Consultation (Shuurah). In Suratu Aal-Imraan(Q3: 159), Allah says:

"فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ ٱلْقَلْبِ لَٱنفَضُّوا۟ مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۖ فَٱعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَٱسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِى ٱلْأَمْرِ ۖ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ".

"It is out of Allah's mercy that you ˹O Prophet˺ have been lenient with them. Had you been cruel or hard-hearted, they would have certainly abandoned you. So, pardon them, ask Allah's forgiveness for them, and consult with them in ˹conducting˺ matters. Once you make a decision, put your trust in Allah. Surely, Allah loves those who trust in Him".

2. Khilaafah (Successorship) which must be by Selection based on Merit and Qualification (as far as Islam is concerned), and not by lobbying or, through hereditary as the case is in everywhere today. It is generally regarded as one the greatest trials usually set by Allah on His chosen slaves. In Suratu'l-An'am (Q6: 165), He says:

"وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَٰٓئِفَ ٱلْأَرْضِ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَٰتٍ لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِى مَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ سَرِيعُ ٱلْعِقَابِ وَإِنَّهُۥ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ".

"It is He Who has made you successors (inheritors) of the earth, and has raised you in ranks; some above others, that He may try you in the gifts He has given you. Surely, your Lord is quick in punishment, and He is indeed Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful".

Q38:26 further confirm this by passing a message to the entire world through Prophet Da'ud (*A.S*).

3. Leadership is 'Amaanah of which Allah want us to strongly uphold. In Suratu'n-Nisa'i (Q4: 58), He says:

"إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تُؤَدُّوا۟ ٱلْأَمَٰنَٰتِ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُم بَيْنَ ٱلنَّاسِ أَن تَحْكُمُوا۟ بِٱلْعَدْلِ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُم بِهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًۢا بَصِيرًا".

"Indeed, Allah commands you to return trusts to their rightful owners; and that when you judge between people, judge with fairness(justice). What a noble commandment from Allah to you! Surely, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing".

Likewise, in Suratu'l-Anfaal (Q8: 27) Allah seriously warned us never to betray Him through it, He says:

"يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ لَا تَخُونُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوٓاْ أَمَـٰنَـٰتِكُمۡ وَأَنتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُونَ".

"O believers! Do not betray Allah and the Messenger, nor betray your trusts while you know".

4. Though, Power belongs to Allah but, lead well whenever you are chosen or, called upon to lead in whatever capacity and don't ever be over rejoice on your leadership call. In Suratu Aal-Imraan (Q3: 26), Allah says:

"قُلِ ٱللَّهُمَّ مَـٰلِكَ ٱلۡمُلۡكِ تُؤۡتِي ٱلۡمُلۡكَ مَن تَشَآءُ وَتَنزِعُ ٱلۡمُلۡكَ مِمَّن تَشَآءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَن تَشَآءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَن تَشَآءُۖ بِيَدِكَ ٱلۡخَيۡرُۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيۡءٖ قَدِيرٞ".

Say; O Prophet: "O Allah! Lord over all authorities! You give authority to whoever You please and remove it from who You please; You honour whoever You please and disgrace who You please - all good is in Your Hands. Surely, You alone are Most Capable of everything".

To buttress this further, elsewhere as earlier quoted in same Aal-Imraan (Q3: 159), Allah says:

"فَبِمَا رَحۡمَةٖ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمۡۖ وَلَوۡ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ ٱلۡقَلۡبِ لَٱنفَضُّواْ مِنۡ حَوۡلِكَۖ فَٱعۡفُ عَنۡهُمۡ وَٱسۡتَغۡفِرۡ لَهُمۡ وَشَاوِرۡهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَمۡرِۖ فَإِذَا عَزَمۡتَ فَتَوَكَّلۡ عَلَى ٱللَّهِۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُتَوَكِّلِينَ".

"It is out of Allah's mercy that you ˹O Prophet˺ have been lenient with them. Had you been cruel or hard-hearted, they would have certainly abandoned you. So, pardon them, ask Allah's forgiveness for them, and consult with them in ˹conducting˺ matters. Once you make a decision, put your trust in Allah. Surely Allah loves those who trust in Him".

And in Suratu'l-Hadeed (Q57: 23), Allah outrightly declared why Power and Leadership positions are not something to be rejoice on but rather, a divine call to serve humanities:

" لِّكَيۡلَا تَأۡسَوۡاْ عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمۡ وَلَا تَفۡرَحُواْ بِمَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمۡۗ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخۡتَالٖ فَخُورٍ".

"'We let you know this': So that you neither grieve over what you have missed nor boast over what He has granted you. For Allah does not like whoever is arrogant, boastful".

5. Transparency and Openness in all Public Affairs. For details, see the longest verse of al-Qur'an as contained in Suratu'l-Baqarah (Q2: 282):

" يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا تَدَايَنتُم بِدَيۡنٍ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٖ مُّسَمّٗى فَٱكۡتُبُوهُۚ وَلۡيَكۡتُب بَّيۡنَكُمۡ كَاتِبُۢ بِٱلۡعَدۡلِۚ وَلَا يَأۡبَ كَاتِبٌ أَن يَكۡتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ ٱللَّهُۚ فَلۡيَكۡتُبۡ وَلۡيُمۡلِلِ ٱلَّذِي عَلَيۡهِ ٱلۡحَقُّ وَلۡيَتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ رَبَّهُۥ وَلَا يَبۡخَسۡ مِنۡهُ شَيۡـٔٗاۚ فَإِن كَانَ ٱلَّذِي عَلَيۡهِ ٱلۡحَقُّ سَفِيهًا أَوۡ ضَعِيفًا أَوۡ لَا يَسۡتَطِيعُ أَن يُمِلَّ هُوَ فَلۡيُمۡلِلۡ وَلِيُّهُۥ بِٱلۡعَدۡلِۚ وَٱسۡتَشۡهِدُواْ شَهِيدَيۡنِ مِن رِّجَالِكُمۡۖ فَإِن لَّمۡ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيۡنِ فَرَجُلٞ وَٱمۡرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن تَرۡضَوۡنَ مِنَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءِ أَن تَضِلَّ إِحۡدَىٰهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحۡدَىٰهُمَا ٱلۡأُخۡرَىٰۚ وَلَا يَأۡبَ ٱلشُّهَدَآءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُواْۚ وَلَا تَسۡـَٔمُوٓاْ أَن تَكۡتُبُوهُ صَغِيرًا أَوۡ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلِهِۦۚ ذَٰلِكُمۡ أَقۡسَطُ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ وَأَقۡوَمُ لِلشَّهَـٰدَةِ وَأَدۡنَىٰٓ أَلَّا تَرۡتَابُوٓاْ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُونَ تِجَـٰرَةً حَاضِرَةٗ تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيۡنَكُمۡ فَلَيۡسَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ جُنَاحٌ أَلَّا تَكۡتُبُوهَاۗ وَأَشۡهِدُوٓاْ إِذَا تَبَايَعۡتُمۡۚ وَلَا يُضَآرَّ كَاتِبٞ وَلَا شَهِيدٞۚ وَإِن تَفۡعَلُواْ فَإِنَّهُۥ فُسُوقُۢ بِكُمۡۗ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَۖ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ ٱللَّهُۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمٞ ".

"O believers! When you contract a loan for a fixed period of time, commit it to writing. Let the scribe maintain justice between the parties. The scribe should not refuse to write as Allah has taught them to write. They will write what the debtor dictates, bearing Allah in mind and not defrauding the debt. If the debtor is incompetent, weak, or unable to dictate, let their guardian dictate for them with justice. Call upon two of your men to witness. If two men cannot be found, then one man and two women of your choice will witness—so if one of the women forgets the other may remind her. The witnesses must not refuse when they are summoned. You must not be against writing ˹contracts˺ for a fixed period—whether the sum is small or great. This is more

just ˹for you˺ in the sight of Allah, and more convenient to establish evidence and remove doubts. However, if you conduct an immediate transaction among yourselves, then there is no need for you to record it, but call upon witnesses when a deal is finalized. Let no harm come to the scribe or witnesses. If you do, then you have gravely exceeded ˹your limits˺. Be mindful of Allah, for Allah ˹is the One Who˺ teaches you. And Allah has ˹perfect˺ knowledge of all things".

6. Accountability (Mas'uuliyyah/Hisaab). Suratu'l-Qiyaamah (Q75: 13-15) testifies to this:

" يُنَبَّأُ الْإِنسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَأَخَّرَ * بَلِ الْإِنسَانُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ بَصِيرَةٌ * وَلَوْ أَلْقَىٰ مَعَاذِيرَهُ "

*"On that Day, man shall be informed of what he sent forward and what he left behind * Nay! Man shall be a witness against himself * Even though, he may [outwardly] put forth his excuses".*

And the earlier quoted hadith is also a pointer to this assertion, it says:

" أَلَا كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِه ".

"Listen! You are all Shepherd, and everyone of you will be asked about his responsibilities. – (Saheehu Bukhaariy: 7138 & Muslim: 1829)

7. Economic, Social and Financial justice (equal treatment). For examples; circulation of Food, Job, Shelter and Security among others, for all the Citizens. In Suratu'l-Hashr (Q59: 7), Allah says:

" مَّآ أَفَآءَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِۦ مِنْ أَهْلِ ٱلْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِى ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ وَٱلْيَتَـٰمَىٰ وَٱلْمَسَـٰكِينِ وَٱبْنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ كَىْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةًۢ بَيْنَ ٱلْأَغْنِيَآءِ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَمَآ ءَاتَىٰكُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَىٰكُمْ عَنْهُ فَٱنتَهُوا۟ ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلْعِقَابِ ".

"What Allah has bestowed on His Messenger (and taken away) from the people of the townships, belongs to Allah, to His Messenger and to kindred and orphans, to the needy and the wayfarer; In order that it may not (merely) make a circuit between the wealthy ones among you. So, take what the Messenger assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you. And fear Allah; for Allah is strict in Punishment".

Elsewhere again, in Suratu'n-Nahl (Q16: 90), Allah says:

" إِنَّ اللهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَآئِ ذِى الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَآءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ".

"Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives. And forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps, you will be reminded".

8. Equity and Peaceful Co-existence (Ta'aayushu's-Silmiyyu). Thus, we are all one, irrespective of our skin colour, race, clan, tribe, religion, social status and etc. In Suratu'l-Hujraat (Q49: 13), Allah says:

" يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَـٰكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَـٰكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَآئِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوٓا۟ ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ".

"O mankind! Indeed, We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know each other. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted".

9. Al-'Amru Bi'l-Ma'ruuf Wa'n-Nahyu 'Ani'l-Munkar. In Suratu Aal-Imraan (Q3: 104), Allah says:

" وَلْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى ٱلْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِٱلْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ ٱلْمُنكَرِ ۚ وَأُو۟لَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُفْلِحُونَ ".

"And let there be from among you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful".

Likewise, in an Authentic Hadith, the Prophet(pbuh) was reported to have said:

"How will it be for you(as a Leader), when your Women will commit Sins, and your Youths will transgress, and you will not order for acknowledged virtues nor forbid from sins?" It was said to him: "Will that happen O Messenger of Allah?" Then he said: Yes! Then he said: "How will it be for you(as a Leader), when you order for Sins and forbid from acknowledged virtues?" Then it was said to him again: "O Messenger of Allah! Will that happen?" Then he said: "Yes, even worse than that! How will it be for you when you perceive acknowledged virtue as Sin, and perceive Sin as acknowledged virtue?". – Muslim: 4542, as quoted in: (Ahmadzai, 2015)

Operational Principles of Excellent Leadership and Good-Governance according to Islam:

Islam provides us with variety of virtues which serves as a major tool for Good-Governance or, Leadership Qualities that everyone aspiring to lead or to govern in whatever capacity must possess, and these includes: -

1. Honesty and Trustworthiness {Fulfilment of all Trusts - *as-Sidqu wa'l-'Amaanah}*. As says Allah in Suratu'n-Nisaa'i (Q4: 58): **"إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأۡمُرُكُمۡ أَن تُؤَدُّواْ ٱلۡأَمَٰنَٰتِ إِلَىٰٓ أَهۡلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمۡتُم بَيۡنَ ٱلنَّاسِ أَن تَحۡكُمُواْ بِٱلۡعَدۡلِۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُم بِهِۦٓۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعَۢا بَصِيرٗا"** - *"Indeed, Allah commands you to return trusts to their rightful owners and that when you judge between people, judge with fairness. What a noble commandment from Allah to you! Surely Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing".*

2. Exercise of Justice. As indicated to by Allah in Suratu'l-Maa'idah (Q5: 8) which reads: **"يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُونُواْ قَوَّٰمِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَآءَ بِٱلۡقِسۡطِۖ وَلَا يَجۡرِمَنَّكُمۡ شَنَـَٔانُ قَوۡمٍ عَلَىٰٓ أَلَّا تَعۡدِلُواْۚ ٱعۡدِلُواْ هُوَ أَقۡرَبُ لِلتَّقۡوَىٰۖ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرُۢ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ"** - *"O believers! Stand firm for Allah by being upright and bear true testimony with justice. Do not let the hatred of a people lead you to injustice. Be just! That is closer to piety. And be mindful of Allah. Surely, Allah is All-Aware of what you do".*
To buttress this further, in Suratu'n-Nisaa'i (Q4: 135), He submitted that: **"يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُونُواْ قَوَّٰمِينَ بِٱلۡقِسۡطِ شُهَدَآءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوۡ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمۡ أَوِ ٱلۡوَٰلِدَيۡنِ وَٱلۡأَقۡرَبِينَۚ إِن يَكُنۡ غَنِيًّا أَوۡ فَقِيرٗا فَٱللَّهُ أَوۡلَىٰ بِهِمَاۖ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُواْ ٱلۡهَوَىٰٓ أَن تَعۡدِلُواْۚ وَإِن تَلۡوُۥٓاْ أَوۡ تُعۡرِضُواْ فَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُونَ خَبِيرٗا"**. - *"O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for justice, witnesses for Allāh, even if it be against yourselves or, your parents and near relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allāh is more worthy of both. So, follow not personal inclination[desires], lest you not be just. And if you distort [your testimony] or refuse [to give it], then indeed Allāh is ever, of what you do, Aware".*

3. Gentleness, humbleness, patience, kindness, tolerance, perseverance, pardoning and consultation. For instance, concerning Prophet Muhammad-pbuh, in Suratu'l-Anbiyaa'i (Q21: 107), Allah declared that: **"وَمَآ أَرۡسَلۡنَٰكَ إِلَّا رَحۡمَةٗ لِّلۡعَٰلَمِينَ"** - *"And We have not sent you ˹O Prophet˺ but, as a mercy for the whole world".*
And in Suratu Aal-Imraan (Q3: 159), He proceeded to have said: **" فَبِمَا رَحۡمَةٖ مِّنَ ٱللَّهِ لِنتَ لَهُمۡۖ وَلَوۡ كُنتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ ٱلۡقَلۡبِ لَٱنفَضُّواْ مِنۡ حَوۡلِكَۖ فَٱعۡفُ عَنۡهُمۡ وَٱسۡتَغۡفِرۡ لَهُمۡ وَشَاوِرۡهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَمۡرِۖ فَإِذَا عَزَمۡتَ فَتَوَكَّلۡ عَلَى ٱللَّهِۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُتَوَكِّلِينَ "**. - *"So, by mercy from Allāh, [O Muḥammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. So, pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the affair. And when you have decided, then rely upon*

Allāh. Indeed, Allāh loves those who rely [upon Him].

4. Integrity, modesty and role-modelling. As mentioned Allah in Suratu'l-Ahzaab (Q33: 21) that reads: **" لَّقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ ٱللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَ وَذَكَرَ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ".** - *"Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for whoever has hope in Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah often"*.

5. Bravery, commitment and courageous - (*ash-Shujaa'u*). In Suratu'sh-Shuurah (Q42: 43), Allah said: **"وَلَمَن صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ ٱلْأُمُورِ".** - *"And whoever endures patiently and forgives, these most surely are actions due to courage"*.

In Aal-Imraan (Q3: 200), He urged by saying: **" يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱصْبِرُواْ وَصَابِرُواْ وَرَابِطُواْ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ "** - *"O believers! Patiently endure, persevere, stand on guard, and be mindful of Allah, so you may be successful"*.

Again, in Q2: 155-157, He says: **" وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُم بِشَىْءٍ مِّنَ ٱلْخَوْفِ وَٱلْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ ٱلْأَمْوَٰلِ وَٱلْأَنفُسِ وَٱلثَّمَرَٰتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ ٱلصَّـٰبِرِينَ ٱلَّذِينَ إِذَآ أَصَـٰبَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالُوٓاْ إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّآ إِلَيْهِ رَٰجِعُونَ أُوْلَـٰٓئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَٰتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُوْلَـٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْمُهْتَدُونَ".** - *"We will certainly test you with a touch of fear and famine and loss of property, life, and crops. Give good news to those who patiently endure. who, when faced with a disaster, say, "Surely to Allah we belong and to Him we will ˹all˺ return. They are the ones who will receive Allah's blessings and mercy. And it is they who are ˹rightly˺ guided"*.

And in Suratu'l-Maa'idah (Q9: 51), Allah said: **" قُل لَّن يُصِيبَنَآ إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ ٱللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَىٰنَا ۚ وَعَلَى ٱللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ "** - *"Say: Nothing will ever befall us except what Allah has destined for us. He is our Protector. So, in Allah let the believers put their trust*".

6. Servant-Leader and forgiveness of the led misconducts: *"Sayyidu'l-Qawm, Khaadimuhum"* - *"Leader of the people is their Chief-Servant"*. - Though, this Hadith was rated *Da'eef* by Shaykh al-Baniy in *Silsilatu-Da'eefah*.

7. Equality before the Law (*al-'Adaalah*), Consideration(*al-'I'itibaar*) and creating sense of togetherness (*al-'Ittihaad*).

8. Humility *(at-Tawaadu'u)*, Fairness *(al-Insaafu)* and Social Justice *(al-'Adaalatu'l-Ijtimaa'iyyah)*.

9. Observance of righteousness and uprightness(*al-Istiqaamah*). Hear what Allah said in Suratu'l-Maa'idah (Q5: 8): **" يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُونُواْ قَوَّٰمِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَآءَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۖ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَـَٔانُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰٓ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُواْ ۚ ٱعْدِلُواْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ".** - *"O believers! Stand firm for Allah and bear true testimony. Do not let the hatred of a people lead you to injustice. Be just! That is closer to righteousness. And be mindful of Allah. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what you do"*.

10. Creativity (being an innovator). As says Allah again, in Q9: 128: **" لَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُم بِٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْاْ فَقُلْ حَسْبِىَ ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَـٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ ۖ وَهُوَ رَبُّ ٱلْعَرْشِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ "** - *"There certainly has come to you a messenger from among yourselves. He is concerned by your suffering, anxious for your well-being, and gracious and merciful to the believers. But if they turn away, then say 'O Prophet': Allah is sufficient for me. There is no god ˹worthy of worship˺ except Him. In Him I put my trust. And He is the Lord of the Mighty Throne"*.

11. Accountability (*Mas'uuliyyah*). As testified to by Allah in Suratu'l-Qiyaamah (Q75: 13-15): **" يُنَبَّأُ ٱلْإِنسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍۭ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَأَخَّرَ بَلِ ٱلْإِنسَانُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِۦ بَصِيرَةٌ ".**

"Man will be informed that Day of what he sent ahead and kept back. Rather, man, against himself, will be a witness".

Meanwhile, for us to achieve an effective leadership, good governance and peaceful co-existence among ourselves as citizens of the part of the world that we occupied (which consists of diverse cultures, tribes and religions), good leaders that will be strictly adhering to the divine principles, regulations and rules of law are needed; who will also be a Straight-forward person, a Motivator, discharger of duty engagements, a Result-getter and someone who will abstain himself from deceits and corrupt practices exactly as exemplified by the Prophet (pbuh) by placing Service before Self-interest. -*(*Bashir & Sharif, 2020; Lewis, 2014)

However, for Peace to reign in a multireligious lands where democracy is being practiced and for the Muslims of such locality to experience excellent leadership and achieve good governance before, during and even after their elections as far as Islam is concerned, it is the duty of every (to be) Leader to make sure that:

1. No compulsion nor insult would be entertained from any religion. See; Q2:256, Q6:108, Q10:99, Q16:93.
2. No any act of Extremism/Terrorism would be welcomed by any religion. See; (Q8: 25, Q109).
3. No unjust killing in the name of Jihaad or, whatsoever would be entertained or allowed. See; (Q5: 32).
4. Nobody should see himself as enemy of another person due to your natural differences / political affiliations. See; (Q49: 13).
5. Nobody should unleash any act that could cause disunity, create insecurity, trigger war and/or lead to backwardness amongst the citizens. See; (Q16: 90 & Q3: 103).
6. No political thuggery, killing, apathy and ballot box snatching would be accepted anymore (See the concluding part of this verse Q7: 85 and these verses Q5: 33-34 for details). Also, Bukhariy & Muslim in another authentic hadith of Abu-Hurayrah (rta), reported the Prophet (pbuh) to have said: ***"Whoever takes up arms against us is not one of us, and whoever cheats/deceives us is not one of us".*** -(Riyaadu's-Saliheen: 1579)
7. There should be no (more) spreading of mischief nor, disturbance of public peace on the land, such as: Kidnapping, Killing, Rapping, Banditry, Vandalism, Racism and all other criminal acts in the name of Politics / Power. See; (Q2: 11-12). The punishment of which is also contained in Q5: 32–34.

Responsibilities of a Dynamic Leader in achieving Good-Governance:

- Ability to manage Crisis / Disaster for Sustainable Development. Even though, it has been mandated that we shall be tried by Allah (in all ramifications) as contained in Q2: 155-157, Q2: 214 and Q29: 1-3.
- To have good communication skills and ability to change people's negative attitudes.
- A great leader must always embrace truth and value other's opinions.
- Think before you speak and be ready to take full responsibility of all problems.
- To have a great plan, and be optimistic / realistic towards achieving those plans.
- To provide a vision and set a goal.
- To talk less, act well and consult widely as earlier mentioned, before making any decision.
- To be an effective Role-Model for others, as said Allah in Suratu'l-Ahzaab (Q33:21).
- To be inspiring, encouraging and motivating people to take action!
- Ability to forgive and forget people's fault, as declared Allah in Suratu'l-A'raaf (Q7:199).
- Encourage feedback and empower your lieutenants / managers / subordinates, etc. -(Mohamad, 2017)

Security; as a major duty of every good leader:

As the only Religion that symbolizes "PEACE", Islam totally kicked against Aggression, Violence and Insecurity. Allah (SWT) in various Qur'anic verses has encouraged the establishment of Peace and Unity. He has told the Muslims to be moderate in their behaviours, and to adopt the qualities of kindness, tolerance, love and respect for other people's lives. - (Gusau, 2018)

In Suratu'l-'An'aam (Q6: 82), Allah says:

" ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ وَلَمۡ يَلۡبِسُوٓاْ إِيمَٰنَهُم بِظُلۡمٍ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ ٱلۡأَمۡنُ وَهُم مُّهۡتَدُونَ "

"They who believe and do not mix their belief with injustice – those will have security, and they are [rightly] guided".

Again, in Suratu'l-Ma'idah (Q5: 32), Allah says:

"مِنۡ أَجۡلِ ذَٰلِكَ كَتَبۡنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِيٓ إِسۡرَٰٓءِيلَ أَنَّهُۥ مَن قَتَلَ نَفۡسَۢا بِغَيۡرِ نَفۡسٍ أَوۡ فَسَادٖ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ ٱلنَّاسَ جَمِيعٗا وَمَنۡ أَحۡيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَآ أَحۡيَا ٱلنَّاسَ جَمِيعٗا وَلَقَدۡ جَآءَتۡهُمۡ رُسُلُنَا بِٱلۡبَيِّنَٰتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرٗا مِّنۡهُم بَعۡدَ ذَٰلِكَ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ لَمُسۡرِفُونَ".

"Because of that, We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely. And our messengers had certainly come to them with clear proofs. Then indeed many of them, [even] after that, throughout the land, were transgressors".

This also, is in a sharp line with what the Prophet (pbuh) said in another Hadith that reads:

" الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ النَّاسُ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُ مَنْ أَمِنَهُ النَّاسُ عَلَى دِمَائِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ "

"A true submitter (Muslim) is the one from whose tongue and hand others are safe. And a true believer (Mu'min) is he from whom other people's lives and wealth/properties are safe". - (an-Nasa'i: 4995)

Thus, every potential leader must take Security issue as their major priority and every follower too, must serve as a Security-Watchdog for their leaders. So as to jointly or, firmly establish *Unity, Faith, Peace, and Progress* in that locality, state or nation (Qardawiy, 2011). It is in achieving this national security that all other infrastructures (such as; agriculture and food security, quality education, energy sufficiency in power and petroleum products, entrepreneurship and industrialization, affordable healthcare, wealth creation and employment, mass transportation and etcetera) will start functioning and function well, in order to solve the economy problems and reduce the poverty rate of that given society (Manzooruddin, 2007).

God-Consciousness as a Panacea for achieving Good Leadership and Just Governance:

Undoubtedly, undiluted belief in Allah and total submission to His commands by every ruler, will absolutely leads him too to God's discovery, consciousness and to all sorts of just behaviors. Obviously, it is a common norm in Islamic teachings that there is no any other act of religious worship that is so greater to Allah and more rewarding than good leadership and/or just governance (Badron, 2020). In a very popular hadith, the Prophet (pbuh) was reported by 'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas (rta) to have said:

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: **" يَوْمٌ مِنْ إِمَامٍ عَدْلٍ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ عِبَادَةِ سِتِّينَ سَنَةً، وَحَدٌّ يُقَامُ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِحَقِّهِ أَزْكَى فِيهَا مِنْ مَطَرِ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْمًا ".**

Ibn Abbas (rta) reported: The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: "A Day of just leadership by a just ruler is better than the continual sixty years of worship, and a legal limit properly established in the land is purer to Allah than forty days of rain". - (al-Sunan al-Kubrá: 16139)

In another tradition, Abiy-Sa'eed al-Khudriyy (rta), also related that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: "إِنَّ أَحَبَّ النَّاسِ إِلَى اللَّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَأَدْنَاهُمْ مِنْهُ مَجْلِسًا إِمَامٌ عَادِلٌ وَأَبْغَضَ النَّاسِ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَأَبْعَدَهُمْ مِنْهُ مَجْلِسًا إِمَامٌ جَائِرٌ".

Abu Sa'eed (rta) reported that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: "Verily, the most beloved of people to Allah on the Day of Resurrection and the nearest (closest) to Him will be the just leader. And the most hated of people to Allah and the furthest from Him will be the tyrannical (unjust) leader." - (Tirmidhīy: 1329).

And lastly, he (pbuh) in another sound hadith, declared that:

"مَا مِنْ أَمِيرٍ يَلِي أَمْرَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ثُمَّ لاَ يَجْهَدُ لَهُمْ وَيَنْصَحُ إِلاَّ لَمْ يَدْخُلْ مَعَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ"

It has been narrated on the authority of Abu Malik that 'Ubaidullah Ibn Ziyad visited Ma'qil Ibn Yaseer in the latter's illness who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) saying: "A ruler who (after having obtained control over the affairs of the Muslims) does not strive for their betterment and did not serve them sincerely shall never enter Paradise with them (the Ummah)". - (Muslim: 4502)

Conclusion and Recommendations:

It is our civic rights and collective obligations as Muslims to join hands with other meaningful non-Muslim citizens of our various nations to choose visionary leaders that will make that our community / society to become great and be more advanced because, this electoral or voting system (as far as Islam is concerned), is just a mere PROCESS of choosing leaders and not a SYSTEM of governance! Thus, the situation that we (the Muslims) met ourselves in the world today, turned all these electoral and electioneering processes a necessity for us. As "***necessity dictates acceptance or removes restrictions***" - **"الضرورة تملي القبول أو تزيل القيود"** in Islam**.**

The thrust at which this piece of study was conducted is that, Islam itself has polity embedded within it, of which if properly implemented, it will improve in relieving most of our social and societal problems particularly, here in Nigeria. Otherwise, we would all pay for the consequences. As says Allah in Suratu'l-'Anfaal (Q8:25):

" وَٱتَّقُواْ فِتۡنَةٗ لَّا تُصِيبَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُواْ مِنكُمۡ خَآصَّةٗۖ وَٱعۡلَمُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ شَدِيدُ ٱلۡعِقَابِ".

"And fear an affliction which may not strike only those who have wronged among you in particular; and know that Allah is severe in requiting (evil)".

Therefore, for us to ever experience good governance and have sustainable development as we always aspire in our various countries, all hands must be on deck by doing away with ethno-religious sentiments, political bigotry, insecurity, corruption and poverty issues amongst others! This is in a sharp line with what Haarithah Ibn Wahb(rta) reported from Prophet Muhammad(pbuh) that reads:

" ألا أُخْبِركم بأهل الجنة؟ كلُّ ضعيفٍ مُتَضَعَّف، لو أقسم على الله لَأَبَرَّهُ، ألا أُخبِركم بأهل النَّار؟ كلُّ عُتُلٍّ جَوَّاظٍ مُسْتَكْبِرٍ". (متفق عليه)

"Should I not inform you about the people of Paradise? Every weak(poor) and maltreated person who is looked down upon; if he were to make an oath in the name of Allah, He (Allah) would fulfill it." He then said: "Should I not inform you about the people of Hellfire? Every cruel(tyrant), greedy(veto), and arrogant(wicked) person". 'Agreed upon!' - (Riyaadu's-Saliheen: 252)

That is why in this paper, we opined that; despite the fact that we are not in an Islamic state, yet, it is the duty of every dynamic leader to ensure a

credible electoral system for its citizens, and it is the role of every individual as well (most especially, the Muslims), to actively participate in all the electioneering activities of their jurisdictions or geographical locations, get their permanent voters' card (pvc) done, and fully engage in all the voting processes of electing leaders that will bring good governance to that community, if it's that peaceful as ever expected - (Babamole, 2023).

To achieve good-governance as we ever aspired, this study therefore established the following recommendations:

i. Leaders must make sure that they thoroughly fight all the financial crimes and block all the corruption leakages holistically.
ii. Leaders must also make sure that they effectively manage the public fund kept / entrusted under them with honesty and sincerity.
iii. Leaders must avoid cheating, deceit, greediness, miserliness and extravagant life in their dealings with the masses.
iv. Leaders must be transparent in all their financial reports and be committed to equitable distribution of the state resources.
v. Again, leaders must make sure that they balance the circulation of wealth up; to reach all the citizens perhaps, through the institution of Zakkah & Sadaqah.
vi. Leaders must be truthful, just and fair to all and sundry irrespective of their differences.
vii. Leaders must never lie in their manifestos (before, during and after being elected). See; Q61: 2-3.
viii. In decision-making, leaders must consult first through the Majlisu'sh-Shuurah, and must administer the outcome through the office of the Muhtasib (Law Enforcers) as far as Islam is concerned.
ix. And any bad / unjust leader should be suspended, impeached or even, allowed to face the wrath of Law. For the power to hire and fire, appoint and remove lies in the hands of the poor masses that these leaders are persecuting, harassing and oppressing anyhow (after getting to Power). So, don't sell your right and don't waste your vote!

References

Abdulfarhan, S.A. (2013). *As-Siyasatu'sh-Shar'iyyah fiy Kitabi Fathu'l-Bari li Ibn Hajar al-Asqalaniy*. Cairo: Daussalam Publications.

Abdulkarim, A., Fadil, C., etal. (2019). A review of Islamic Perspectives on Leadership. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management (IJSRM), 7(11), 574-578.* Valley International Press. Retrieved from; https://www.researchgate.net DOI: 10.18535/ijsrm/v7i11.sh02

Abdullah, Y.A. (1937). *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary*. New-Delhi-India: Good Word Books Publisher.

Ahmadzai, A.A. (2015, March 29). *Principles of Good Governance in Islam*. Retrieved from; https://www.linkedin.com on 24th- April, 2025

Albaniy, M.N. (1995). *Silsilatu Ahadithu'd-Da'eefah wa'l-Mawdu'ah*. Riyaad: Maktabatu'l-Ma'aarif.

Al-Muntada, I. (1997). *The Qur'an: Arabic text with corresponding English meanings. (5th Edition)*. Riyadh, Saudi-Arabia: AbulQasim Publishing House, and translated by Saheeh International.

An-Nawawiy, Y.S. (1989). *Riyaadu's-Saliheen*. Riyad: Darussalam Publishers.

Babamole, M.S. (2023). Strategic Communication in Leadership and Good-Governance: The Islamic Way. *Being a Paper presented at the National Conference, organized by the Department of Islamic Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Abuja*.

Retrieved as uploaded by the author from: https://www.academia.edu

Badron, M.S. (2020). *Islam, Justice and Good Governance*. Retrieved from; https://www.ikim.gov.my on 3rd-May, 2025

Bashir, A., & Sharif, M.F. (2020). Leadership in Islam: Views, Methods and Suggestions in the Nigerian Islamic Organization. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business & Social Sciences (IJARBSS), 10(3), 174-182.* DOI: 10.6007/IJARBSS/v10-i3/7036

Coby, J.P. (1986). Aristotle's Four Conceptions of Politics. *JSTOR Journal Article. 39(3), 480-503*. Sage Publications Inc., University of Utah. Retrieved from; https://journal.sagepub.com DOI: 10.1177/106591298603900309

Darwish, A.A. (2015). *Principles of Good Governance in Islam*. Kabul-Afghanistan: Al-Huda Press.

Fethullah, G. (2006). *A Comparative approach to Islam and Democracy*. New-York: I.B Tauris. In the new voice of Islam; reforming politics and modernity.

Gusau, M. (2018, August 3). *The Dangers of Insecurity and How Islam Promotes Peace in the Society*. https://opinion.premiumtimesng.com on 19th- April, 2025

Gusau, M. (2019, February 15). *The Qualities of Good Leader in Islam*. Via https://opinion.premiumtimesng.com on 2nd-May, 2025

Khaled, A.F. (2003, February 2). *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy*. www.bostonreview.net/forum/khaled 2003 on 24th-April, 2025

Khurshid, A. (2007). *Islam and Democracy: Some Conceptual and Contemporary Dimensions*. Islamabad- Pakistan: Institute of Political Studies.

Lewis, M.K. (2014). *Principles of Islamic Corporate Governance*. UK-Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing. In Islam and Economic Life handbook.

Makhtoum, M.R. (2012). *My Vision: Challenges in the Race for Excellence*. U.A.E-Dubai: Emirates Printing Press.

Manzooruddin, A. (2007). *Islamic Political System in the Modern Age: Theory & Practice*. New-Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors.

Mawardiy, A.M. (1978). *al-Ahkaamu'l-Sultaaniyyah*. Beirut-Lebanon: Daru't-Thaqafah Publications.

Mayowa, A. (2009, January 17). *Definitions of Leadership by Scholars*. https://adeoyemayowaleadership.blogspot.com on 17th-April, 2025

Mohamad, I.Y. (2017). Good Governance according to Islamic Perspective. *FIAT Justisia: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum, 11(3): 200-230*. Retrieved from; https://doi.org/10.25041/fiatjustisia.v11no1.696.

Mustafa, M. (2015). *Concept of Leadership and the Quality of a good leader in Islam*. Dhaka: Doi Publications.

Qardawiy, Y. (1973). *Fiqhu'd-Dawlah*. Malaysia: Maktabah al-Qardhawi Printing Press.

Qardawiy, Y. (2011). *Siyasatu'sh-Shar'iyyah fi Daw'in-Nususu'sh-Shar'iyyah wa Maqaasidiha*. Cairo: Maktabat Wahbah.

Qaysaraniy, M.T. (1980). *Kutubu's-Sittah / Sihahu-Sittah (The Authentic Six)*. Riyad: Darussalam Publishers. Uploaded Online in 2018 by Umair Mirza.

Sanusi, L.S. (2015, June 21). *Leadership and Good Governance in Islam*. Abuja-Nigeria: Addiya' Magazine: An annual publication of Muslim Corpers' Association of Nigeria (MCAN)

Sulaiman, J. (2012). *Towards Diffusing Religious Tension in the Polity: Islam & Politics in Nigeria (1903 - 1983)*. Ilorin-Nigeria: Lavgark Publications.

Zafar, I., & Mervyn, K.L. (2009). *An Islamic Perspective on Governance*. UK-Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.