

CHAPTER 5

Closure

The basic concepts underlying Islamic leadership were stated in the Quran more than 1400 years ago. Quranic verses established, in broad terms, the characteristics of an effective leader from the point of view of Islam. The Prophet (pbuh) acted as a role model for Muslims and showed them how to apply these basic concepts in real life. Early Muslim leaders followed in the footsteps of the Prophet (pbuh). Muslim scholars started to write about leadership and organization as early as the eleventh century. They developed leadership models based on their understandings of the Quran and the tradition of the Prophet (pbuh) as well as on the biographies of successful leaders. A review of Islamic literature on leadership shows that leadership is considered a central construct of an Islamic society. It is a collective duty for the members of the society and a responsibility entrusted to the individuals who are chosen to undertake it. It is also a contract between the leader and the followers. Obedience of the followers is traded for the pledge of the leaders to follow Islamic law in their transactions. Leaders are accountable to God and to their followers. Followers' active participation is mandated through consultation. Leadership is practiced at different levels. Political leadership is practiced at the level of an Amir, Imam, or Khalifa. Every member of the society who is in a position of trust is considered to be a leader.

Scholars dealt with the concept of Khilafa in great

detail. Although there is evidence that early Muslims were interested in the application of organization theory to all types of leadership, however, most of the available literature focused on the study of Khilafa. This phenomenon may have arisen because of the absence of effective Muslim leadership in many instances. Muslim scholars were always using the example set by the Prophet (pbuh) and the early Muslim leaders who followed in his footsteps. They set the bar high. Many of the Muslim leaders who followed the first era of Khilafa failed to pass the standards set before. Muslim scholars wanted to remind the Muslim leaders that they should meet these standards. Many of the principles developed for political leadership can be extended to other levels of leadership. The scholars may have also felt that political leadership in Islam has unique features that cannot be borrowed from other systems. Organizational leadership is not unique and can benefit from models developed in other systems according to the fundamental principle in Fiqh that all human transactions are considered allowable except those who are considered unlawful by Islamic law. The general application of this principle means that Muslims can use any leadership model developed by others if it does not contravene Islamic law. Although, religious principles are used as bases for political leadership in Islam, political leadership is not a theocratic leadership. The Khalifa is not the vicegerent of God on earth. The Khalifa is a fallible human being who is accountable to God and to his followers. The Khalifa should consult with people or their chosen representative when making decisions that affect the lives of people. People are commanded to offer advice

to the Khalifa and to participate actively in the selection of and in offering advice to the leader. An effective leader has to be resolute and firm in making decisions to achieve the objective *“Consult them in the conduct of affairs, but when you make a resolution then be firm in implementing your resolution and put your trust in God”* [3:159]. The Prophet (pbuh) and his successors provide vivid applications for this principle.

There are strong similarities between the leadership model in Islam and certain features of the modern servant, participative, transformational, and ethical leadership models.

It is interesting to note the similarities between Ibn Taymiyyah’s organizational model developed in the fourteenth century and contemporary organizational models. Modern concepts of initiating structure and consideration can be compared with Ibn Taymiyyah’s concepts of ability and integrity. Ibn Taymiyyah even refers to the effect of the situation on leadership requirements. Although the authors of this article were not able to gain full access to the Arabic literature on leadership, but there is a strong evidence of a lack of research in the area of general organizational theory. There is a need to develop organizational concepts of early Islamic scholars into a full fledged theory that can be applied today.

A new model of Islamic leadership has been presented. The 4C model developed in this book has four dimensions: Consciousness of God, Competency, Consultation, and

Consideration. Support for the dimensions of the model from Quran and the Tradition of the Prophet (pbuh) has been cited. The common features between the suggested model and the modern secular leadership theory have been highlighted. The model also has five operating principles which are derived from the Quran and the tradition. These are Ihsan (excellence), Justice, honoring the pledge, resoluteness, and acceptance by the followers. It should be mentioned that the dimension of consciousness of God provides a framework for the model and a context for the other dimensions and operating principles. The authors believe the model to be practical, easy to understand, and implement. It can be used by leaders at any level to improve the effectiveness of their leadership.

Although there are common features between the suggested Islamic leadership model and modern leadership models, but there is also a fundamental difference. The dimension of consciousness of God is specific to the Islamic model. It provides a framework and a context for the other dimensions and operating principles of the model. It provides an Islamic context for the use of some of the elements of modern leadership theory. In addition, the consciousness of God brings a balance between spirituality and materialism to the model. Islam considers human beings to have a body and a soul. The golden rule in Islam is to keep the body and soul in harmony and maintain a balance between the needs of both. Moderation is a fundamental principle of an Islamic way of life. Moderation is mandated in all what a Muslim does. Moderation means that a Muslim should maintain a

justly balanced life style. It applies to what a person does, what a person feels, and how a person behaves. People's behavior is affected by needs of both the soul and the body. Description of human behavior on the basis of material data only will provide inaccurate models. The dimension of the consciousness of God fills this gap.

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