



## Good Governance in Western and Islāmic Traditions: A Comparative Study

Mohammad Abdul Halim & Noor Mohammad Osmani

### GOOD GOVERNANCE IN WESTERN AND ISLĀMIC TRADITIONS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Mohammad Abdul Halim\*

&

Noor Mohammad Osmani\*\*

#### ABSTRACT

The issue of effective governance stands as an enduring and global concern, and international organizations play a vital role in assisting nations in reforming their bureaucracies and public services while championing the cause of sound governance. The application and evolution of principles underpinning good governance hold paramount significance for both countries and organizations, serving as the bedrock for proficient leadership and administration. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that enhancing the efficacy of good governance requires more than just the mere establishment of structures and regulations. This study seeks to juxtapose Western concepts of good governance with those of Islāmic governance, aiming to identify commonalities and distinctions. By doing so, it aspires to furnish practitioners and policymakers with insights into cross-cultural learning and the formulation of inclusive governance frameworks, with a particular emphasis on those advocated by UNESCAP. The research methodology employed in this article relied on a library-based approach, incorporating references from the Holy Qur'an, Hadith, significant literary works, and web sources. Data were meticulously gathered and analysed through a narrative qualitative method. In conclusion, the tradition of Islāmic governance is characterized by principles such as *Sharī'ah*, *Itqān* (precision), *tawazun* (balance), *ta'awun* (collaboration), *'adl* (justice), *bayān* (transparency), *Shūrā* (consultation), and *mas'uliyah* (accountability), as well as *at-Tabāyun* (explanation). This scholarly investigation aims to explore the parallels and disparities in the classification and comprehension of attributes associated with good governance between Western perspectives and Islāmic governance principles. The primary focus of this study centers on the examination of governance perceptions and models within Western and Islāmic contexts.

Keywords: Western good governance, Islāmic governance, Characteristics, UNESCAP.

\* PhD Researcher, Dept. of Qur'an and Sunnah Studies, AbdulHamid AbuSulayman Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia. [ahalimiu@gmail.com](mailto:ahalimiu@gmail.com)

\*\*Associate Professor, Department of Qur'an and Sunnah Studies, AbdulHamid AbuSulayman Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia. [abusajid@iiu.edu.my](mailto:abusajid@iiu.edu.my)



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### INTRODUCTION

This research article delves into the intellectual dialogues of the 1980s and 1990s, particularly during the period when the term "governance" gained prominence within development circles and assumed a pivotal role in the global discourse on public policies. While the concept of governance has roots in history, it has acquired contemporary significance. International scholars and practitioners frequently employ this term to encapsulate a holistic view of structures and procedures spanning both the public and private sectors. In contrast, renowned authors sometimes employ the terms "governance" and "government" interchangeably.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the ongoing challenge of enhancing electronic governance has persisted globally for decades.

Esteemed international organizations such as the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) actively advocate for the enhancement of good governance to bolster the efficiency of bureaucratic systems and public services. Various concepts and attributes are presented, which governments then adopt and adapt to their specific needs and contexts.<sup>2</sup> However, in contemporary times, the absence of good governance manifests across multiple dimensions, including the political sphere, leading to corruption among politicians, often stemming from a lack of understanding and application of Islāmic principles. Nonetheless, Allah SWT and the Prophet SWT have provided comprehensive guidelines on governance and the organization of various institutions. This article seeks to elucidate the concept of good governance while exploring the parallels and disparities between Western and Islāmic frameworks of good governance.

### THE CONCEPT OF GOVERNANCE

The term "governance," derived from the Latin word '*gubernare*,'<sup>3</sup> encompasses an orientation towards society that transcends traditional distinctions between the public and private realms. It encompasses a broad spectrum of areas, including politics, economics, social justice, and

<sup>1</sup> Thomas G. Weiss, "Governance, Good Governance and Global Governance: Conceptual and Actual Challenges," *Third World Quarterly* 21, no. 5 (2000): 5, <https://doi.org/10.1080/713701075>.

<sup>2</sup> Wisber Wiryanto, "The Comparison of UNESCAP'S Characteristics of Good Governance and Islāmic Characteristics of Governance for Public Services Reform in Indonesia," *Hasanuddin Economics and Business Review* 2, no. 2 (2018): 2, <https://doi.org/10.26487/hebr.v%vi%i.1545>.

<sup>3</sup> Adrian Cadbury, "The Committee of Financial Aspects of Corporate Governance" (London, 1992).



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public administration, with a particular focus on corporate governance.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, a state's ability to meet its citizens' needs hinges on the rules, practices, and behaviours governing interests, resource allocation, and the exercise of authority. This encompasses social and political institutions, and the emergence of good governance is intricately linked to the complex political institutions within society.<sup>5</sup>

The World Bank defines governance as a government's capacity and willingness to employ its authority to formulate, implement, and enforce policies while effectively managing its economic and social development tools. It also entails the establishment of a consistent legislative framework aimed at ensuring social and economic progress, including principles such as fairness, respect for rights, and equality. Transparency is another key facet of good governance, encompassing accessibility to information.<sup>6</sup> In this research study, we examine three categories of crime rates spanning the years 1996 to 2009: total crime, violent crime, and property crime. Additionally, we assess six dimensions of good governance: voice and accountability, political stability, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and anti-corruption. These metrics serve to evaluate the governance landscape during the specified timeframe.<sup>7</sup>

Furthermore, the concept of good governance enjoys widespread acceptance in various academic disciplines, including law, social sciences, and economics. The overarching aim is to formulate rules oriented towards societal objectives and foster a global understanding of the law. Each discipline offers its unique perspective on good governance, and interdisciplinary approaches facilitate the development of a comprehensive strategy aimed at maximizing social benefits. Such approaches often raise questions concerning government institutions and policies designed to safeguard individuals from potential abuse.<sup>8</sup>

### GOOD GOVERNANCE FROM THE WESTERN PERSPECTIVE

When examining governance from a Western perspective, it is seen as a set of characteristics commonly associated with a national administrative system. In the Western context, there

<sup>4</sup> G Stoker, "Governance as Theory," *International Social Science Journal*, no. 155 (1998): 155; Zulkifli HASAN, "Corporate Governance from Western and Islāmic Perspectives," in *Annual London Conference on Money, Economy and Management in 3rd-4th July 2008*, vol. 53 (South Kensington: University of Durham, 2008), 3.

<sup>5</sup> Henk Addink, *Good Governance: Concept and Context*, 1st ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

<sup>6</sup> Weiss, "Governance, Good Governance and Global Governance: Conceptual and Actual Challenges."

<sup>7</sup> Muzafar Shah Habibullah and Baharom Abdul Hamid, "Good Governance and Crime Rates in Malaysia," *International Journal of Social Economics* 43, no. 3 (2016): 309, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSE-05-2014-0096>.

<sup>8</sup> Addink, *Good Governance: Concept and Context*.



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exists a substantial body of literature on governance, covering its various dimensions.<sup>9</sup> The term "governance" first appeared in academic discourse before gaining global recognition, as pointed out by Morten Bøas. Within economic literature, the concept of good governance is frequently employed to analyse the behaviour of corporations at the micro level.<sup>10</sup> According to Goran Hyden, its primary application lies in the regulation of state agencies, public institutions, and private entities working toward societal objectives.<sup>11</sup>

In the realm of international relations, scholars and practitioners use "governance" to refer to a broader concept that extends beyond the actions of governments. According to the Commission on Global Governance, governance involves the collaborative management of public affairs by individuals and organizations, emphasizing cooperation and the balancing of diverse interests. Distinguished scholar James Rosenau asserts that governance encompasses a range of mechanisms and strategies for achieving objectives.<sup>12</sup> Over the past two decades, the terms "governance" and "good governance" have garnered significant attention from researchers. These terms have dominated discussions related to development, research agendas, and projects supported by public and commercial banks, as well as bilateral donors since the early 1980s. Prominent scholars and influential commissions have frequently employed these terms to address contemporary global challenges.<sup>13</sup> The discussion above underscores the impact of ideas and concepts across various fields and underscores the influence of economists and political philosophers. It seeks to rectify a crucial omission in the field of international relations by examining the evolution of governance, good governance, and global governance while analysing the role of the United Nations in this context.<sup>14</sup>

In political science, good governance is a well-studied concept, yet there remains a need for more evidence of its impact on economic and social development and overall well-being. This highlights the necessity of comprehending governance holistically, moving beyond conventional indicators.<sup>15</sup> While good governance is a term used in political discourse, its

<sup>9</sup> Zafar Iqbal and Mervyn K. Lewis, *An Islāmic Perspective on Governance*, ed. Mervyn K. Lewis, *New Horizons in Money and Finance* (Cheltenham UK and Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2009), xv, <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781848449220>.

<sup>10</sup> Morten Bøas, "Governance as Multilateral Development Bank Policy: The Cases of the African Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank," *European Journal of Development Research* 10, no. 2 (1998): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09578819808426720>.

<sup>11</sup> Weiss, "Governance, Good Governance and Global Governance: Conceptual and Actual Challenges."

<sup>12</sup> Weiss.

<sup>13</sup> Weiss.

<sup>14</sup> Weiss.

<sup>15</sup> Efstratia Arampatzi et al., "Unhappy Development: Dissatisfaction With Life on the Eve of the Arab Spring," *Review of Income and Wealth* 64, no. October (2018): S80–113, <https://doi.org/10.1111/roiw.12388>.





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absence can manifest in inadequate housing standards, unethical work practices, nepotism, corruption, a flawed legal system, and the abuse of political power.<sup>16</sup> For example, in the Middle East and North Africa, research indicates a significant negative correlation between life satisfaction and deteriorating housing standards, unethical work practices, nepotism, and corruption. Despite economic and social advancements over several decades, life satisfaction in numerous emerging Arab nations has seen limited improvement, a phenomenon termed "unhappy progress."

Similarly, the increasing discontent with living standards has contributed to a decline in subjective well-being over the century, accompanied by deteriorating labour market conditions, including higher unemployment and reduced self-reported earnings. Perceptions of corruption have become increasingly critical to people's overall satisfaction, particularly in countries that witnessed the Arab Spring uprisings.<sup>17</sup> This situation is mirrored in other developing Asian and African countries. Democratic governance plays a pivotal role in addressing political and economic affairs, the two fundamental pillars of progress,<sup>18</sup> and thus, good governance is a prevalent concern in addressing these sectors.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, the concept of "good governance" is a crucial and topical subject<sup>20</sup> in both socio-political and corporate realms in the modern world. Good governance encompasses a set of principles and rules<sup>21</sup>, with the rule of law being a vital component that resembles effective governance. Some key features include limited participation of local governments, formalized frameworks and legislation, de politicisation of competent elected officials in hierarchical governance, efficient implementation of programs and resources (especially in education and technology), controlled budgets, cost-effectiveness, responsiveness, openness, equality, and democracy. Policies are designed to be secure and trustworthy, with a pro-business orientation and efficient administration.<sup>22</sup> Conversely, ineffective government regulation and lax enforcement of property rights laws are generally viewed as indicators of poor governance.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Carothers and Diane De Gramont, *Aiding Governance in Developing Countries Progress Amid Uncertainties, Democracy and Rule of Law* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2011).

<sup>17</sup> Arampatzi et al., "Unhappy Development: Dissatisfaction With Life on the Eve of the Arab Spring."

<sup>18</sup> The White House, "The National Security Strategy United States of America" (Washington DC, 2002).

<sup>19</sup> Veerle van Doeveren, "The Good Governance Agenda: Beyond Indicators without Theory," *Public Integrity* 13, no. 4 (2011): 4, <https://doi.org/10.2753/PIN1099-9922130401>.

<sup>20</sup> Weiss, "Governance, Good Governance and Global Governance: Conceptual and Actual Challenges."

<sup>21</sup> van Doeveren, "The Good Governance Agenda: Beyond Indicators without Theory."

<sup>22</sup> Matt Andrews, "The Good Governance Agenda: Beyond Indicators without Theory," *Oxford Development Studies* 36, no. 4 (2008): 379–407, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13600810802455120>.

<sup>23</sup> Weiss, "Governance, Good Governance and Global Governance: Conceptual and Actual Challenges."

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### CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE FROM THE WESTERN PERSPECTIVE

Various scholars hold differing views on the principles and features of good governance, which may evolve based on context and application. Fundamental characteristics of good governance revolve around political and administrative aspects of state affairs, although discussions extend to governance within NGOs, banks, and multinational corporations. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) offers a set of widely accepted principles, albeit with minor variations. These principles have garnered substantial evidence for their universal recognition.



Table-1: Characteristics of Good Governance<sup>24</sup>

These characteristics and guiding principles of good governance can be organized into related categories:

**Consensus-Oriented:** Good governance strives to balance the interests of multiple actors and viewpoints within a given cultural context. Sustainable human development necessitates a

<sup>24</sup> John Graham, Bruce Amos, and Tim Plumptre, "Principles for Good Governance in the 21 St Century," *Governance An International Journal Of Policy And Administration* (Ontario, Canada, 2003).



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comprehensive, forward-looking strategy that considers historical, cultural, and social dimensions unique to a society or community.<sup>25</sup>

**Participation:** Effective governance requires active participation from all genders, encompassing both direct engagement and legal representation. While representative democracy has its merits, it may not adequately account for marginalized groups. Deep knowledge is essential to enable meaningful contributions to governance processes, emphasizing both organizational independence and freedom of opinion.<sup>26</sup>

**Responsiveness:** Good governance mandates that institutions and processes make concerted efforts to consider the interests of all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe. Responsiveness is a pivotal principle, serving as a cross-cutting catalyst for progress.<sup>27</sup>

**Transparency:** Transparency in governance entails adhering to decision-making processes, compliance with laws and regulations, and providing accessible, understandable information to those affected by these decisions. It necessitates the availability of sufficient information presented clearly to ensure transparency and comprehension among stakeholders.<sup>28</sup>

**Accountability:** Fundamental to good governance, accountability requires transparency and adherence to the rule of law by official institutions and non-state actors, including the business sector and civil society organizations. Whether decisions or actions are internal or external, accountability hinges on the responsibility of companies or institutions towards those affected by their actions.<sup>29</sup>

**Equity and Inclusiveness:** The well-being of a society hinges on the inclusion of every individual and the prevention of their exclusion from mainstream society. Enhancing the well-

<sup>25</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), "What Is Good Governance?," *The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific*, 2009, 3, <https://www.unescap.org/resources/what-good-governance>.

<sup>26</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).

<sup>27</sup> UNDESA, "Responsive and Accountable Public Governance" (New York, 2015), 4, [https://publicadministration.un.org/publications/content/PDFs/World Public Sector Report2015.pdf](https://publicadministration.un.org/publications/content/PDFs/World%20Public%20Sector%20Report2015.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> Wiryanto, "The Comparison of UNESCAP'S Characteristics of Good Governance and Islāmic Characteristics of Governance for Public Services Reform in Indonesia," 127; United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), "What Is Good Governance?"

<sup>29</sup> Wiryanto, "The Comparison of UNESCAP'S Characteristics of Good Governance and Islāmic Characteristics of Governance for Public Services Reform in Indonesia," 127; United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), "What Is Good Governance?"



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being of vulnerable groups entails offering equal opportunities and ensuring inclusion in the social, economic, and political spheres.<sup>30</sup>

**Effectiveness and Efficiency:** Good governance involves processes and organizations that effectively meet the needs of society while optimizing resource utilization. This encompasses responsible resource management, efficient resource use, and environmental protection.<sup>31</sup>

**Rule of Law:** A just legal system, comprehensive protection of human rights (particularly those of minority groups), an independent judiciary, and a corruption-free police force are prerequisites for good governance. These elements uphold ideals of justice, equality, and fairness within a government system.<sup>32</sup>

Therefore, the Western perspective on good governance emphasizes critical values such as consensus, participation, responsiveness, transparency, accountability, justice, effectiveness, efficiency, and respect for the state of right. A comparative analysis of good governance in Western and Islāmic traditions would examine the similarities and differences in their methods of governance and the extent to which these principles agree or diverge within each culture's cultural and religious framework.

### CONCEPT OF GOOD GOVERNANCE IN ISLAM

The concept of good governance is relatively new in Western perspectives but finds its roots in the Islāmic political system. Islāmic political principles and characteristics include Ummah (the Muslim community), Khilafah (vicegerency), Sharī'ah (Islāmic law), Amānah (trustworthiness), Tawhīd (monotheism), Shūrā (consultation), and Ba'yah (pledge of allegiance).<sup>33</sup>

### ISLĀMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF GOVERNANCE

Islāmic governance, grounded in the Quran and Sunnah (teachings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad), places emphasis on key principles that align with good governance:

<sup>30</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), "What Is Good Governance?"

<sup>31</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).

<sup>32</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).

<sup>33</sup> Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Characteristics of the Islāmic State," *Islāmic Studie* 32, no. 1 (2020): 18, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20840105>.



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**Participation (Ta'āwun):** Islāmic governance encourages active collaboration and cooperation among individuals and communities. *Ta'āwun* is a strictly limited common medium in Islāmic teachings.<sup>34</sup> The word of "*Ta'āwun*" as mentioned in the *Qur'an*:

﴿وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ﴾

[And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.]<sup>35</sup>

Similarly, the *Qur'an* enjoins:

﴿وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾

[The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and establish prayer and give Zakat and obey Allah and His Messenger. Those - Allah will have mercy upon them. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise.]<sup>36</sup>

**Respect for the Rule of Law (Sharī'ah):** Islāmic governance adheres to the principles of Islāmic law, ensuring justice and equity.

The term '*Sharī'ah*' is stated in the Holy *Qur'an*:

﴿لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا﴾

[To each of you We prescribed a law and a method.]<sup>37</sup>

Similarly, Allah SWT also enjoins in Surah Al-Jathiah:

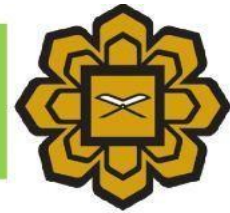
﴿ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَىٰ شَرِيعَةٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ فَاتَّبِعْهَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

<sup>34</sup> Muhammad Rizwan Junaid, "Managerial Ethics in Islāmic Framework," *International Journal of Business and Social Science* 3, no. 7 (2012): 101–15, [www.ijbssnet.com](http://www.ijbssnet.com).

<sup>35</sup> *Al-Qur'ān* (Translation by Sahih International, n.d.), 5:2.

<sup>36</sup> *Al-Qur'ān*, 9:71.

<sup>37</sup> *Al-Qur'ān*, 5:48.



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[Then We put you, [O Muhammad], on an ordained way concerning the matter [of religion]; so, follow it and do not follow the inclinations of those who do not know.]<sup>38</sup>

In fact, the public service must adhere to '*Sharī'ah*', an Islāmic administrative principle. It guides employees to achieve organizational goals while respecting moral principles. Integrating *Sharī'ah* law into the workplace improves the efficiency and reliability of Islāmic governance methods and promotes an office culture consistent with Islāmic principles.

**Transparency (Al-Bayān):** Transparency in decision-making and governance processes is essential in Islam.

The Holy Qur'ān enjoins,

﴿هَذَا بَيَانٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

[This (*Qur'ān*) is a clear statement to [all] the people and a guidance and instruction for those conscious of Allah.]<sup>39</sup>

Practically, in public service, '*Al-Bayān*' is an important characteristic of Islāmic governance. This is demonstrated by jobs and roles carried out in accordance with explicit rules to achieve administrative objectives. Members of the organization use '*Bayān*' as a moral principle in Islāmic governance. To better accomplish the aim, the organization's members must apply the '*bayan*' in their work and positions.<sup>40</sup>

**Responsiveness (At-Tabāyun):** Islāmic governance anticipates and addresses the changing needs of society.<sup>41</sup> The Qur'ān guidelines:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْحِرُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ﴾

[O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful.]<sup>42</sup>

<sup>38</sup> *Al-Qur'ān*, 45:18.

<sup>39</sup> *Al-Qur'ān*, 3:138.

<sup>40</sup> Wiryanto, "The Comparison of UNESCAP'S Characteristics of Good Governance and Islāmic Characteristics of Governance for Public Services Reform in Indonesia," 128.

<sup>41</sup> Wiryanto, 128.

<sup>42</sup> *Al-Qur'ān*, 49:6.



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This verse was revealed in response to a dishonest person who invented the idea that some people in the community were not paying Zakat. The episode highlights the importance of fact-checking and the potential impact of spreading misleading information within the Muslim community.

In addition, *At-Tabāyun* is vital in Islāmic public administration as it highlights the ethical importance of verifying information. Organizations can improve their decision-making processes and pursue their goals effectively by ensuring the accuracy of the information collected.<sup>43</sup>

**Consensus Orientation (*Shūrā*):** *Shūrā*, or consultation, is a fundamental principle of Islāmic governance, ensuring collective decision-making.

The Holy Qur'ān stated '*Shūrā*':

﴿وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ﴾

[And those who have responded to their lord and established prayer and whose affair is (determined by) consultation among themselves, and from what We have provided them, they spend.]<sup>44</sup>

Similarly, Allah SWT enjoins in Surah *Al-Imrān*:

﴿وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ مَتَىٰ ظَفَرًا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ﴾

[And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely (upon Him).]

Islam places great importance on consultation, or *shūrā*, which encourages joint decision-making. In the civil service, this is considered an attribute of Islāmic administration that leads to excellent results and achieving objectives. *Shūrā* is an ethical principle that should guide the procedures of Islāmic governance.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Wiryanto, "The Comparison of UNESCAP'S Characteristics of Good Governance and Islāmic Characteristics of Governance for Public Services Reform in Indonesia," 129.

<sup>44</sup> *Al-Qur'ān*, 42:38.

<sup>45</sup> Wiryanto, "The Comparison of UNESCAP'S Characteristics of Good Governance and Islāmic Characteristics of Governance for Public Services Reform in Indonesia," 129.



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**Equity and Inclusiveness ('Adl):** Islāmic governance promotes equity, inclusivity, and equal opportunities. Moreover, Islāmic governance provides unique insights into effective governance processes, emphasizing principles that align with the concepts of good governance.

The Holy *Qur'ān* instructs in *Surah An-Nisā*,

﴿وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ﴾

[And when you judge between people to judge with justice.]<sup>46</sup>

**Effectiveness and Efficiency (*Itqān & Tawāzun*):** Islāmic governance aims for the efficient use of resources and balanced governance.

The term '*Itqān*' is stated in *Surah An-Naml*:

﴿صُنْعَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَتَقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ إِنَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾

[(It is) the work of Allah, who perfected all things. Indeed, He is Acquainted with that which you do.]<sup>47</sup>

Also, the Arabic word *Tawāzun*, an Islāmic concept, promotes a balanced and harmonious life by respecting natural principles, avoiding waste, and promoting a cooperative, just, and virtuous life.<sup>48</sup> The term of '*Tawāzun*' as specified in *Surat Ar-Rahmān*:

﴿وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ﴾

[And the heaven He raised and imposed the balance.]<sup>49</sup>

### Mas'ūliyyah (Accountability)

Mas'ūliyyah, an Arabic term, signifies 'accountability.' It is a pivotal principle in Islāmic governance that underscores the idea of being answerable for one's actions. The Holy *Qur'ān* enjoins the term *Mas'ūliyyah* in *Surah Al-Isrā*:

<sup>46</sup> *Al-Qur'ān*, 4:58.

<sup>47</sup> *Al-Qur'ān*, 27:88.

<sup>48</sup> Wiryanto, "The Comparison of UNESCAP'S Characteristics of Good Governance and Islāmic Characteristics of Governance for Public Services Reform in Indonesia," 131.

<sup>49</sup> *Al-Qur'ān*, 5:8.

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(وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا)

[And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight, and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned.]<sup>50</sup>

In Islāmic governance, individuals and entities are held accountable for their decisions. The texts highlight the characteristics of Islāmic governance, including participation, respect for the rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, justice and inclusion, effectiveness, efficiency, and responsibility. An examination of good governance in Western and Islāmic traditions could analyse the similarities and differences in their methods of government, thereby providing insight into the benefits and challenges of integrating Islāmic ideas into modern governance frameworks. And actions, promoting transparency and responsible conduct.

### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ‘GOOD GOVERNANCE’ IN WESTERN AND ISLĀMIC CONTEXTS

A comparative study between Western characteristics of good governance and Islāmic characteristics of governance has practical value in the context of public institutions and effective administration. The following comparison illustrates the main differences:

No	The Characteristics of Good Governance	The Characteristics of Islāmic Governance
<b>1</b>	<b>Participation</b>	<b>Ta’awun</b>
	The active participation of people of both genders is a fundamental element of good governance.	Men and women who identify as believers work together to uphold justice, prohibit evil, and defend each other.
	Participation must be planned and trained.	Not to commit any misconduct or sin but cooperation or mutual service is done for right.

<sup>50</sup> Al-Qur’ān, 17:36.



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	Model may be obtained directly or through legitimate third-party organizations or agents.	Example of discussion, delegation of power, and gathering.
<b>2</b>	<b>Rule of Law</b>	<b>Sharī'ah</b>
	Fair, legitimate outlines that are imposed independently	The Holy Qur'ān and the Sunnah are the foundational sources of Islāmic practice.
	law-enforcement needs an unbiased and incorruptible police force and an authentic judiciary;	The act must be applied impartially;
	Human rights are strongly protected, especially in terms of minorities.	<i>Mu'āmalah</i> regulates interactions between citizens and the connections between human rights and duties.
<b>3</b>	<b>Transparency</b>	<b>Bayān</b>
	Rules and procedures are followed by decisions making and their execution;	For those who fear Allah, there is a clear explanation, advice, and guideline for all men;
	those who will be affected by such decisions execution, information is easily available and directly accessible to them;	
<b>4</b>	<b>Responsiveness</b>	<b><i>Al-Tabāyun</i></b>
	Good governance demands that organizations and practices try to assist all participants within a fair timeframe.	To avoid making a mistake and feeling regret, having information must be checked and double

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		checked cautiously, and explain the real scenario.
5	<b>Consensus Orientation</b>	<i>Shūrā</i>
	In a particular society, there are various actors and as several contexts:	The work concerns regarding the common good may not be resolved alone.
	To reach a broad consensus in society, needs negotiation of the various interests in society;	Determining work-related problems requires dialogue between the parties.
	To improve human and how to achieve the objectives of such development, needs a broad and long-term viewpoint;	Making decisions is done with trust and full of conviction in Allah SWT.
6	<b>Equity &amp; Inclusiveness</b>	<i>‘Adl</i>
	The sustainability of a society depends on each of its members feeling part of it and not feeling disconnected from society.	Allah SWT orders people to establish legitimacy, good, and prevent the evils, aggression, and <i>munkar</i> .
	All groups must have the opportunity to grow or ensure their well-being in order to achieve equity and inclusion. However, this is particularly true for the most vulnerable.	Inclusiveness involves maintaining respectful relationships with followers of other religions, as long as they are not mutually immoral and do not involve <i>aqīdah</i> and worship.
7	<b>Effectiveness &amp; Efficiency</b>	<i>Itqān and Tawāzun</i>
	Institutions and processes provide outcomes that satisfy societal demands	The job is prescribed by balance and sincerity. Also, careless is

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	while maximizing the use of available resources;	ignored, as a result, the task finished and completed well.
	In the context of good governance, the idea of efficiency covers the protection of the environment and sustainable purpose of natural properties.	The reality of balance, harmonious act, modest, not careless, ungenerous or miserly.
<b>8</b>	<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Mas'ūliyyah</b>
	Government, corporation, and civil society groups must be accountable to the public and participants;	On the Day of Judgment, any activity of hearing, seeing, or feeling of the heart is required.
	Whether decisions or actions are taken inside or outside an organization influence who is responsible for what.	Actions in Islam, known as <i>ākhirat</i> , have both present and future consequences, with emphasis on responsibility and the moral and ethical consequences of rewards or punishments.

Table-2: Comparative Analysis of Western and Islāmic Governance. <sup>51</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, an in-depth study of good governance in Western and Islāmic traditions reveals common elements and distinctive characteristics. Western administration values important principles such as the rule of law, accountability, participation, transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness. Islāmic governance, in addition to adhering to these principles, also includes unique aspects such as divine responsibility, consultation (*Shūrā*), and the pursuit of excellence (*Itqān*) and balance (*Tawāzun*). By understanding and integrating the benefits of both methods, a more comprehensive and inclusive governance framework can be created. This comparative study provides important insights for professionals seeking to improve public structures and promote effective administration by leveraging best practices from Western and Islāmic

<sup>51</sup> Wiryanto, "The Comparison of UNESCAP'S Characteristics of Good Governance and Islāmic Characteristics of Governance for Public Services Reform in Indonesia," 134–35.



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traditions. This statement underscores the importance of justice, ethics, shared decision-making, and recognition of divine guidance as critical factors in promoting effective and responsible governance.

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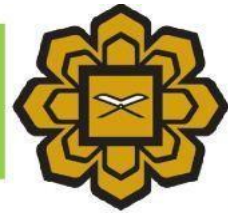
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