

AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Hailan Salamun

Abstract

This paper looks at the focus of leadership practices of National Islamic Secondary School principals in Malaysia. It introduces the concept of Rabbani leadership that places great importance to shared responsibilities and accountability and practices driven by internal drives aligned to concerns for godly/divine righteousness (ketuhanan), human development (keinsanan), and professional development. Leadership focus refers to dominance of practices exhibiting the specific concerns, be it developing the spiritual self, the human self or the professional self. The results show that the general focus of the principal leadership practices were all three aspects of moral judgement, that is concern for divine righteousness, human development, and professional development or developing the professional self.

Keywords: Rabbani leadership, Moral judgement, Divine righteousness, Human development, Professional development.

Introduction

Educational leadership is often understood as a process of influencing change or motivating followers to move towards organizational goals and achieving visions and missions (Blanchard, 2007; Hussein Mahmood, 1997, 2008, Northouse, 2004; Ciulla, 2004). While Western literature defines leadership as the ability to influence others and develop potential, from an Islamic perspective, leadership is backed by the good practice of obtaining the pleasure of Allah swt. Mohd Ali Jubran (2004) states that Islamic leadership is a responsibility and trust to be executed. It is a part of religious practice, meant for providing superior

service through coaching and guiding the followers in the world to perform good deeds for the hereafter. In short, leadership is an internal drive for a person to carry out responsibilities and strive to fulfill the responsibilities devoted solely to Allah.

Muslim scholars have presented different interpretations of the concept of leadership from Islamic teachings (Shah, 2006). In many Western countries, 'leadership' tends to be seen as the most important attribute to influence others to undertake tasks (Coleman & Early, 2005). It is often understood as a process of influencing change in practice to meet specific goals such as the setting up of more effective schools or the process of school improvement (Blanchard, 2007; Hussein Mahmood, 1997, 2008; Northouse, 2004). Bush (2003) assumes leadership as a business that has to do with influence, personality, leadership, vision of the organization, and its relationship with those being led. These conceptualizations of leadership are limited to the practices in a secular context disconnected from faith and beliefs.

An Islamic Perspective on Leadership

Shah (2006) argues that concepts, theories, and practices in education are predominantly ethnocentric, where there is a tendency to interpret or evaluate other cultures in terms of one's own. She emphasizes that different cultural and belief systems are underpinned by diverse values and patterns of behaviour. Different interpretations of leadership reflect different ways of looking at it together with the philosophical and theoretical assumptions underlying these different cultural perspectives. Theories and models of leadership depend not only upon the way the world is, but also upon what it is we want to highlight or display. It is not reasonable to assume that there could be one classification or descriptive scheme for educational leadership, which could serve all purposes.

'Leaders' and the 'led' participate in related activities informed by their ideological and cultural knowledge. Shah (2006) argues from an Islamic perspective that 'leading' has strong connotations of leading towards knowledge and righteousness through words and acts. It entails a knowledge status for the

teacher or leader which places him in the position of a role model. The notion of educational leadership derives from Islamic philosophy of education which reinforces the interplay between faith and concepts. The basis of the Islamic philosophy of education is located in faith as reflected in the Quran that God is the ultimate Knower:

Above every one possessed of knowledge is the All-knowing One. (12.76)

Many Muslim scholars (Ali Moh'd Jubran Saleh, 2004; Gamal Abdul Nasir Zakaria, 2003; Wan Mohd. Nor, 2005; Shah, 2006) have highlighted this aspect of Islamic teachings, arguing that seeking knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim as knowledge is the legacy of Muslims to be sought everywhere. In Islam, education is for holistic development, and religion is not merely a set of moral principles. It is a complete system encompassing and integrating political, social and economic life as well as the personal, moral and spiritual aspects of life. The role of educational leadership in this context entails being involved in knowledge building because it is a contributing factor to this "process of becoming". In this way, institutional leadership involves more than organisational management and includes responsibilities for the holistic development of the learners and also the wider community.

Shah (2006) uses the concept of leadership for both leaders and teachers to relate the role of leading towards knowledge and righteousness. She argues that the teacher and the leader have blurred boundaries within and beyond the classroom context as guides to knowledge and conduct and this includes the responsibility of being a role model. She notes that knowledge and wisdom as discussed in the Quran are attributes of the prophets, who are guided by these qualities in reflection and practice.

Their prophet said to them: Surely Allah has raised Talut to be a king over you. They said: How can he hold kingship over us while we have a greater right to kingship than he, and he has not been granted an abundance of wealth? He said: Surely Allah has chosen him in preference to you, and He has increased

him abundantly in knowledge. (The Quran 2:247; also see 3:7-8; 6:105; 22:55; 24:6; 27:15; 58:11)

To be a good leader or teacher is determined by the leadership values inherent in societies and institutions which speak to individual development and organizational success. In the case of Islam, all knowledge and practices are directed toward seeking the righteous path and for the approval/pleasure of Allah Almighty. These practices lead to the use of the moral selfjudgments as the inner driving force for the human beings. This requires submitting oneself wholly to the *Sharia*, which is the manifestation of divine order. Al-Faruqi (1991) states that men should not run away from following the rules of nature (natural laws) or moral rules (moral laws). People have been given the freedom to choose either to follow rules or not to: however, each choice provides either good or bad outcomes in life. The freedom to choose in daily life is reflected in the nature of leadership.

Human beings have been created to play the role of and fulfill the purpose of God's *vicegerents* (deputies). Allah said, "*thy Lord said to the angels: 'Verily, I will create a vicegerent (khalifah) on earth ...'*" (Al-Baqarah: 30). The term '*khalifah*' means a representative of Allah on earth to govern or to rule on earth in accordance with Allah's commands (al-Qadi, 1988; al-Tabari, 1997; Abu Haidar, 2009). *Khalifah* is a responsibility a position of trust from Allah to execute His words on earth regarding religious and other activities (Zulkifli Mohamad al-Bakri, 2007). The word *khalifah* or *caliph* has different meanings. In the quoted verse *caliph* is the successor of Allah responsible for applying God's laws and to provide order for those on earth (al-Qurtubi, 1995). Ibn Kathir (1420H) interpreted *khalifah* in this verse as he who is bestowed the duties including (a) to judge people on matters pertaining any issue, (b) to decide on their dispute/s, (c) to help the oppressed, (d) to implement the law, (e) to bear witness to those who do evil, and others. In Islamic ideology leadership is associated with the concept of *caliph* that is he who is responsible to execute the words of Allah regarding religious affairs and worldly affairs. It is associated with the

responsibility of conducting a ‘business’ (Haron Din, 1988). Each person that serves as a leader has a legitimate purpose. A *hadith* reported by Ibn Umar states: “*Every one of you is a shepherd (leader), and every shepherd (leader) is responsible for the ‘led’*” (al-Baqi, 1994, 33/1199). Zulkiple Abd Ghani and Ahmad Redzuwan Mohd Yunus (1999) argue that leadership at the very minimum is the individual’s responsibility for his own life, and a higher level of leadership relates to the requirements for leading groups and institutions. The word *khalifah* has a relation with the responsibility of men who are accountable to execute their duties while working in any position in any organization.

Al-Talib (1992) argues that leadership can be defined as the process of moving people by providing a stimulus to further action through the use of strong demands. Leaders not only direct followers to carry out the tasks given, but simultaneously help to move them towards higher productivity through stimulus and encouragement. This has some similarities with Western interpretations of leadership, but the added element in the Islamic conceptualization is the religious dimension of leadership. Abdul Monir Yaakob (1996) asserts that leadership in Islam should be based on the paradigm of *tawhid* (an Islamic fundamental belief) by placing it under the authority of Allah Almighty. It is because God alone has both “de facto” and “de jure” authority. Leadership authority is not unlimited and not that which is unchallenged. Leaders should recognise that they are under the authority of God and that He alone has absolute sovereignty. From an Islamic perspective, leadership is a matter of responsibility and trust to be executed. Ali Mohammad Jubran Saleh (2004) also points to the blurred boundaries of leadership and teaching. Leadership is part of the religious practice and should provide service through coaching and guiding the followers to do good deeds for the benefit of the hereafter: this links leading and teaching into a single role. Leadership or this educational leadership underpinned by Islamic philosophy would thus put up a paradigm based on faith for generating shared responsibility and accountability to influence teachers and/or followers to make changes in their lives or in their organisations for the approval of Allah Almighty. Leadership in

Islam is associated with the responsibility entrusted by God to lead people and inhabit this world with justice and order to obtain the pleasure of Allah Almighty (Ali Moh'd Jubran Saleh, 2004; Haron Din, 1988; Al-Mawardi (957 - 1058), Ibn Khaldun, 2006). Ibn Taymiyah (1992) and other scholars of the Muslim world like Al-Mawardi (957-1058) and Ibn Khaldun (2006) agree that the leadership role should protect the interests of religious and worldly affairs and help manage this role in line with the call of Allah that explains the purpose of the creation of mankind to: (a) worship God all their life (Surah al-Zariyat, 56), b) be the inheritors of leadership that will make them inhabit the earth for the good of Islam (Surah al-Baqarah,) that is compatible with the claim (Ibn Kathir, 1420H; Al-Qurtubi, 1995).

Principals as leaders have great influence on followers, including teachers, non-teaching staff, and students at schools. A successful leader is the one who can provide good examples to the people being led. Leadership by example is important as a means to educate the followers. Leaders can provide examples by practising good values when performing their role (Ahmad Sufyan, 2006), and thus developing the followers/colleagues. A leader who can develop good character and values among the followers will be seen as successful and effective (Abdul Razak, 2005; Covey, 2004; Gill, 2006; Noor, 2002; Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Sadler, 2003). The responsibility of a leader is to guide and assist those who are being led to enhance good values and strengthen the organization (Northouse, 2004). Ibn Khaldun (2006) states that people cannot improve by themselves, they need support and guidance. A principal should be a role model to encourage people, especially school teachers and students. Such 'role models' may play a major role in creating a culture that reflects Islamic lifestyle in the institutions and the community. Sidek Baba (2009b) explains that '*qudwah*' or 'role model' is an important factor that affects the minds and personal development of students. Principals can motivate teachers to share the responsibility and accountability of leadership, and these partnerships can encourage teachers to show positive values that can help achieve the school's vision and mission. However, Abd Rahman Ahmad (2006) suggests that the

leader needs to emphasize to organizational members an awareness of the divine by inculcating these ideas:

- i) The work is accepted as a trust (the trust required to deliver the work),
- ii) Good work (good deeds) is part of worship,
- iii) *Halal* brings blessings in life,
- iv) reflects the holy character of faith,
- v) Work cooperation represents a union.

This awareness encourages teachers or employees about what is needed (to understand the meaning of responsibility) and the responsibility for the act or acts done (meaning accountability) in the context motivating that all the work be done as superior practices (good deeds). Teachers who are aware of the divine would be responsible for matters entrusted to them. Leadership can provide an understanding of responsibility and accountability among employees through the following scheme: i) knowledge about the work to be done, ii) description of the responsibilities iii) description of the task, iv) description of the work to be done, v) explanation of how the work should be done, vi) description of the extent of work required, vii) description of the assessment of the work done, and viii) description of rewards or penalties.

Islamic Educational Leadership Research

A diversity of definitions and different perspectives on understanding the concept of leadership among the researchers provides no comprehensive answer to the question of what is leadership from an Islamic perspective. In education studies, leadership is associated with changes and improvements at the school level. This phenomenon has attracted many researchers to explore the field of leadership in education. Some researchers think that there is no single model of leadership that can satisfy the needs and requirements of all people (Gill, 2006; Mustafa, 1994).

Research associated with Islamic school leadership is scarce (Ali Moh'd Jubran Saleh, 2004; Shah, 2006; Sidek Baba, 2007a). Ali Moh'd Jubran Saleh (2004) argued that Muslim scholars have not managed to develop a theory of educational leadership for

Islam. This view is shared by Sidek Baba (2007a) who states that the study of educational leadership from an Islamic perspective is still in its infancy and the concept has not been explored at the level of operation. According to Shah (2006) the development of educational leadership from an Islamic perspective in Britain is not a priority. This is similar in many other countries as well. The scarcity of research in this field is noted by many Muslim scholars who have also suggested approaches to develop and enrich the theory from Islamic perspectives. Ali Moh'd Jubran Saleh (2004) suggests the necessity of studying creativity as a new methodology in educational leadership. A creative Muslim uses the divine guidance from Allah to deal with concrete issues and problems, but without relating the verses to certain methodologies or frameworks. There are four methodologies to use; a) methodology of travelling and observation, b) methodology of seeing, c) methodology of hearing, and d) methodology of thinking. Ali Moh'd Jubran Saleh (2004) argues that the objectives of creativity in Islam are fulfilling the duty of the vicegerent on earth, strengthening one's relationship with Allah, finding the truth, and serving society.

Besides al-Quran and al-Sunnah, other resources are also accepted when considering different concepts of leadership in education. Sources of knowledge are not limited only to the divine revelation or theology, but other sources which include the origin of the universe and history. Gamal Abdul Nasir Zakaria (2003) refers to Mohammad Natsir as an "icon" in Islamic education urging that all knowledge should embody the spirit and values of Islam, especially all areas of knowledge related to the integration of worldly life and functional knowledge. Mohamed Aslam Haneef (2005) states that "*Islamization of knowledge is providing meaning and presenting knowledge based upon an Islamic ontological framework and through an Islamic epistemological framework utilizing methodologies derived from these*".

This study presents a model of Islamic leadership informed by the wide ranging Islamic and other international literature as well as the data collected. The model is titled "Rabbani Leadership". The word "Rabbani" is of Arabic origin and it means

“divine”. The title is developed to indicate the faith dimension of the concept.

Rabbani Leadership and Spiritual Intelligence

The writers used the methodology of creativity to develop the Rabbani leadership model which refers to leadership as being more focussed on sharing of responsibilities and accountability. It hinges upon practices that are influenced by those inner drives of leaders which seek to adhere to the covenants of Islam and Allah swt. Leadership focus is closely aligned to moral inner drives that are influenced by moral self judgment, be it “divinity”, humanity or for the professional development of staff. This Leadership views responsibilities as influencing changes in practice to motivate the followers, build potential members, complete the mission and vision, and provide excellent service to meet the responsibility of life in this world and the hereafter.

The moral judgments that are generated by divinity have the same functions as spiritual intelligence quotient (SQ). Zohar and Marshall (2004) explain the term spiritual intelligence as being the same as the word ‘wisdom’ (wise) which equates with the Latin word *sapientia* and the Greek word *Sophia*. Spiritual intelligence is related to the wisdom of a person who is not only knowledgeable or able to solve a problem or have a particular talent, but the individual who strongly adheres to the pursuit of the divine path for all actions. Those who develop spiritual intelligence (SQ), which means the “inner drive”, the individual, will influence their concern for humanity, human development, as well as professional development that will manifest in their moral judgment. The nature of the Holy Prophet’s wisdom provides a true picture of how spiritual intelligence plays a role in leadership. Spiritual intelligence (SQ) is the “capacity of the soul” that can integrate all elements of humanity. Spiritual intelligence (SQ) can only be developed through activities that are integrated with emotional intelligence (EQ), and intellectual intelligence (IQ) in the human brain (Zohar & Marshall, 2004).

Some researchers have defined intelligence as the ability to solve problems and generate strategies to achieve a goal (Maltby,

Macaskill, & Day, 2007). Gill (2006) states that effective leadership requires leaders who are capable of understanding information, have a strong reason for doing things, can imagine possible outcomes, use intuition, make judgments, solve problems and make decisions. This reflects the leader's moral self judgment and helps him have the capability to integrate spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence and intellectual intelligence in order to lead activities based on high moral values (Zohar & Marshall, 2004).

Rabbani leadership refers to someone who takes divinity into consideration to generate his or her spiritual intelligence (SQ). The spiritual intelligence (SQ) will integrate with emotional intelligence (EQ) and intellectual intelligence (IQ) to generate moral self-judgment. Moral self-judgment is a stimulant that induces a sense of responsibility that will highlight 'Rabbani Leadership Practices' in school. In short, principals who use 'moral self judgment' will take into consideration certain aspects such as the moral inner drive of the individual, together with divinity, humanity and professional development judgment, in order to define leadership practices.

Rabbani Leadership is set in motion by the paradigm of *tawhid* (Ramli Awang, 1997), and leadership is the process of generating shared responsibility and accountability based on moral judgments. The followers' moral considerations affect change merely for the pleasure of Allah *swt*. The Rabbani Leadership practices account for developing good character (*Ihsan*), capacity building of teachers, collegiality, cultural knowledge and management of teaching programs in schools informed about moral judgment.

Moral Judgment and Leadership

Sergiovanni (1992) explains that moral judgments highlight choices and behavior actions. Every decision and action is usually influenced by a value and belief held by someone. An act can only be driven by moral judgments depending on the strength of intelligence and wisdom. Reasonable intelligence plays a role in making moral judgments and do things properly and correctly. In Covey's opinion (2004), the freedom to choose the rules of life

depends on the ability to balance a sense of intelligence. The human mind is able to think rationally using the intellectual quotient (IQ), controlling emotions using emotional intelligence (EQ), and find the meaning of happiness and the meaning of life using spiritual intelligence (SQ). Humans who can use all the intelligence in a balanced manner would have a more meaningful life.

Fisher (1954) said that an intelligent leader uses the method of reason in his leadership. Method of reason or rational concern is the ability to balance judgment of facts with judgments of practice. This influences an important criteria in an individual's leadership style which is always associated with an individual's quality of leadership. Quality leadership has the potential to attract the interest of subordinates. Similarly an intelligent leader would be able to make judgments to influence the attitudes of his subordinates in order to achieve the organization's goals. The choice taken must be suitable to the potential ability or intelligence of the individual. The physical element is associated with the potential to develop the Physical Quotient; the emotional element is associated with the capacity to develop the Emotional Quotient, while the intellect is associated with the potential to develop the Intelligence Quotient, and the spiritual aspect associated with the capacity to build the spiritual element (Covey, 2004).

The perception of values and social interaction are shaped by the communities in which people live and work (Shah, 2010). The principles of values progress through these reasoning stages at different rates and to different degrees. Each level of reasoning describes a qualitative progression in this capability and represents a particular approach to thinking about human interaction (Kohlberg, 1976; Trevino, 1986). Haidt (2000) argues that people divide moral reasoning into three categories: they are, 'pre-conventional' who emphasize obedience, strive to escape from punishment and are generally self-interested. 'Conventional' use laws and rules as a way of guiding their behaviour; they see interaction with others in a fundamentally instrumental way. Post-conventionalists think less instrumentally than 'conventionalists'

and use more universal principles of reasoning in making life's decisions.

Moral judgments are therefore defined as evaluations (good versus bad) of the actions and character of a person that are made with respect to a set of virtues held by a culture or subculture to be obligatory (Haidt, 2000). Rationalist approaches in moral psychology say that moral knowledge and moral judgment are reached primarily by a process of reasoning and reflection (Turiel, 1983); whereas, intuitionist approaches in moral psychology argue that moral intuitions (including moral emotions) come first and directly cause moral judgments (Shweder & Haidt, 1993; Wilson, 1993). The central claim of the social intuitionist model is that moral judgment is caused by quick moral intuitions and is followed (when needed) by slow, ex-post facto moral reasoning.

Marnburg (2001) argues that strong ethical attitudes would have a restraining effect on moral reasoning. The statistical testing showed that there was a negative, but not significant, correlation between strong attitudes and good moral reasoning ability. It was also a hypothesis that good ability in moral reasoning would tend to exhibit a smaller difference between Policy-decisions and Action-decisions. Good ability in moral reasoning seems to imply less stability and more inconsistency. Therefore, the moral judgment will be insufficient if the source of ethics is based on pure human rationality to provide justification. This theory underlines the Rabbani Leadership concept maintaining that moral judgments need the sources from Allah to guide human beings in order to understand the universal values and knowing what is right and what is wrong.

Western secular philosophies emphasize the enlightenment of rationality and strong belief in the power of reason. The Islamic worldview is derived from original sources of revelation that are al-Quran and Sunna of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. The source of the worldview in Islamic philosophy is not merely derived from cultural and philosophical elements aided by science, but confirmed by religion, and affirmed by intellectual and intuitive principles (al-Attas, 1995; Shah, 2006). Ethics according to

religious perception (moral judgment in Islamic perspective) will be *religionized* when people:

- i. Submit to God's transcendental way of life which is actualized in their entire of life;
- ii. Bring themselves closer to faith that assists them to gain a perception of the highest good for themselves;
- iii. Use religion as the ideal way of life to justify the principles of their moral character;
- iv. Moral character is built on a balanced system of values comprehending the all aspects of life - physical and spiritual.

Moral values promoted by religion in general, and Islamic religion in particular, need to be considered in developing theory and practice in the field of educational leadership as in other everyday activities (Fatmir Shehu, 2009). Leadership from the Islamic perspective, is a vocation, a commitment to responsibility in the true and divine path of the Creator, to lead the *ummah* to peace on earth, and in line with divine right (Ali Moh'd Jubran Saleh, 2004; Haron Din, 1988; Ibn Taymiya, 1992; Al-Mawardi, 1973; and Ibn Khaldun, 2006).

Moral Judgment In Islamic Leadership

Moral judgments are internal considerations of the individual that create a sense of responsibility for bad and good practice. Moral judgment refers to the basic inner drive that moves an individual to act in certain ways reflecting that the individual has considered the good and bad of such an action. Moral means (i) teaching values or beliefs about the good and bad of an action; (ii) attitude or behaviour that is measured by such moral values of a certain character; (iii) related to what is right or fair (iv) the spirit to face any criticism in order to uphold the moral truth (*English-Malay Dictionary*, 2003). Taufik Pasiak (2008) relates the basis of moral judgment with intelligence, or the intellect (*aql*). In the Al-Quran, the intellect is referred to as (i) ability to understand something, (ii) the basis of moral judgment, and (iii) the ability to receive knowledge, wisdom and conclusion. The Quran also uses '*aql*' to refer to things related to (i) belief, (ii) the understanding and the

existence of the world and universe, (iii) moral values related to personal and social ethics.

Moral judgment refers to inner thoughts that have taken into account the good and bad (positive and negative) impact of a particular action before a person takes the action. It indirectly portrays the individual taking action as a result of an inner concern that is based on truth, good and fairness which are positive. In this study, the basis of moral judgment refers to inner concerns that an individual entertains, resulting in feelings of responsibility to weigh the good and bad of any practice. It is assumed that the actions or character of a person informed by a set of virtues held by an Islamic worldview are derived from an original source of revelation that are al-Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.*

The moral judgment cannot stand alone. Judgments are made based on Godliness, wholesome human development, or professional development concerns that are able to influence leaders to make a decision. Covey (2004) used the word *conscience* as the basis of a person's moral judgment. *Conscience* is defined as the role of a part of the human mind which explains what is good or bad about an action (*English-Malay Dictionary*, 2003). A person's conscience becomes active when the spiritual quotient (SQ) influences each activity done by the individual. The principal as the school leader needs to integrate all intelligences, the IQ, EQ and SQ in the application to his leadership practices. The principal who makes decisions based on the integration of the three intelligences, SQ, EQ and IQ in his leadership is on the way to the Rabbani leadership model. The basis for concern about what is good or bad should not be in contradiction with the tenets of Islam (*sharia*). Moral judgment would need to be nurtured so as to ensure that the concerns are based on Quranic tenets of Godliness (divine righteousness), wholesome human development, and professional development, which are discussed next.

Godliness (Divine Righteousness)

Godliness refers to concerns which are based upon careful thinking about what is good or bad before a decision is made (*English-*

Malay Dictionary, 2003). Concern for Godliness is based upon *aqidah* (Islamic fundamental belief), that it is the good or bad according to religious beliefs. Godliness influences the basis of a person's moral judgment in determining actions in Rabbani leadership, which is based on religious beliefs. It reflects directly the relationship between God and man by following Islamic teachings according to the tenets of Islam as noted in the Al-Quran and *Sunnah*. Leaders who are guided by Godliness use spiritual intelligence (SQ) to guide emotional intelligence (EQ) and intellectual intelligence (IQ).

Doing something good in the name of Allah is the early subjugation to God. This opens the way for any person to find 'instincts', which incorporate the meaning of life. An individual will discover the meaning of life when free from prejudice, life's principles which contradict the Quran and *Sunnah*, past experiences, certain vested interests, differential perspectives, comparisons, and literature. When his feelings are not influenced by those mentioned above, he will be touched by universal values that is the ninety-nine names of *Allah* (Ary Ginanjar, 2005). This feeling will invoke strength to draw others into doing what is good for the welfare of mankind. Then the individual will become an example for others as he 'enjoys' loving goodness, doing good, and spreading goodness to others. An individual influenced by SQ will always be guided by EQ and IQ in all acts of doing good solely to get blessings of God (Allah s.w.t). Simply put, a person who is guided by SQ tends to be good, practices what is good, and influences others to do the same.

Wholesome Human Development Concern

To safeguard relationships among human beings is of great value in Islam. The basis of human relationships should begin with the relationship between a leader and his followers according to the guidelines of *tawhid* (science of Islamic fundamentals). The relationship between a father and son reflects the concept of leader-follower in the family in Islam. Likewise, a society, and a nation will be peaceful for as long as there is a leader-follower

relationship. Hence, whatever organisation there is will be able to function as long as a leader-follower relationship exists.

Concern for humanity influences the basis of moral judgment in a Rabbani leadership model, which is again based on responsibility and accountability that is to influence people in building themselves (leadership capacity building). Moral judgment is based upon understanding, and influencing groups of people to do things that they are capable of, stimulating and motivating followers to a higher level of performance and to bring them closer to each other (collegiality). It seems like a model of transformational leadership that idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration of a leader's personal, emotional, social skills, and emotional abilities that make up emotional intelligence. It has a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership and will positively relate to leader effectiveness (Duckett and Macfarlane, 2003; Niroshaan Sivanathan and Cynthia Fekken, 2002; Mandell and Pherwani, 2003).

EQ enables a person to know oneself and one's feelings and understand the feelings of others, based on *tawhid*. Ary Ginanjar (2005) developed emotional intelligence through the six principles of the rule of faith, namely: (i) build a strong voice for faith-based ninety-nine names of Allah (*Asma-ul-Husna*), (ii) inculcate the principles of trust, loyalty and honesty, (iii) develop self-awareness as a leader (iv) recognize the importance of learning to make the Quran a guide, (v) know the principles of life-oriented short-term and long term goals, and (vi) learn the principles to live and manage the process according to the rules of nature and rules of conduct. In Islam, the principle of life is simply to worship God and all actions taken should be aimed at seeking the pleasure of Allah. Muhamed Fauzi Othman (2006) equates emotional intelligence (EQ) with a stable quality of faith. People who have high emotional intelligence may control appetite and increase the moral attitudes that produce commendable practices. Among them, those pertaining to attitude towards people, should be: a) assisting a person to bring people to welfare and insist on fighting evil, b)

preaching the law gently and firmly, c) loving and respecting the elderly, d) loving fellow Muslims and protecting non-Muslims. Regarding attitude towards life, it should enable one: a) not to give up, b) to do justice for the sake of God, and c) try to prevent themselves from committing fraud. For Goldman (1995), an individual with EQ will be able to (i) understand his own emotions; (ii) manage emotions (iii) self motivate, (iv) understand the emotions of others, and (v) manage relationships with others. Instincts which are subtly influenced by EQ usually result in the person realising responsibilities as a leader.

Leaders with emotional concerns (EQ) will influence others to be responsible by understanding the capability of others. The possibility of an empirical link between moral judgment and human relationship was studied by Patricia and Matthew (2002) who investigated the moral development of undergraduate college students and provided an organizational framework for analyzing educational contexts in higher education. The study addressed collegiate outcomes related to character or civic outcomes, selected aspects of students' collegiate experiences related to moral judgment development, and changes in moral reasoning during the college years as they relate to changes in other domains of development. The findings suggest that dramatic gains in moral judgment are associated with collegiate participation.

Concern for Professional Development of Staff

Staff development based on Islamic beliefs aims to get the blessings of Allah in a person's life span until the person's death. Development means interaction of humans with resources bestowed by *Allah* with the objective of fulfilling human potential and needs in the world. The individual's role is to manage natural resources and to develop them to fulfil human needs (Muhammad Syukri Salleh, 2002). To manage and develop the world's natural resources require knowledge and skills. The Al-Quran and *hadith* highlight the importance of knowledge. Zulkifli Mohamad (2007) analyses *hadith* (narrated by the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.) related to knowledge, emphasising that Muslims must have several

skills such as managing self, managing systems, thinking skills, organizational skills, strategic skills and communication skills.

Concern for professional development influences moral judgments for Rabbani leadership practices. The basis for moral judgment is to enhance competency and knowledge as well as skills. IQ does not guarantee that leadership practices will be in sync with good values. The force towards fulfilling every day needs sometimes deviates a person from the right path. Not all actions are good and moral. There are times when a leader may manage well, but might be involved with wrong or immoral activities. Ones SQ will guide one to the right path, influencing the IQ to fulfill basic human needs informed by good moral values. The study carried out to develop the Rabbani Leadership Model is discussed next.

The Study

The study used a mixed method approach. Data collection was carried out in two phases - quantitative data followed by qualitative data collection to further investigate the findings obtained from the quantitative data, thus developing a mixed method design (Cresswell, 2008). Quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire and from the initial results obtained, a selected number of principals from the initial sample for the quantitative phase was chosen for interviews. This was to further investigate the phenomena unveiled in the first phase of data analysis, as illustrated in Figure I.

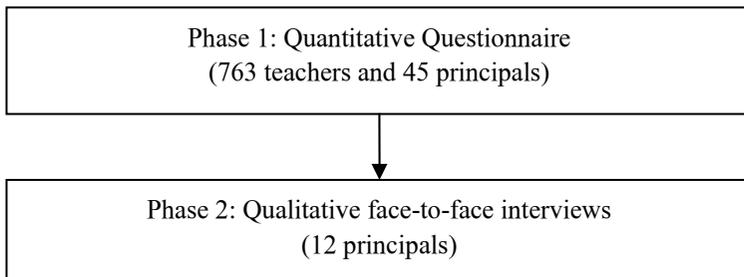


Figure I: Primary Data Collection Phases

The population for the study consisted of all the principals and teachers who were holding administrative positions in the 51 National Islamic Secondary Schools (SMKA) under the purview of the Ministry of Education Malaysia, in 2007. The sample included 51 principals, all teacher-administrators, three school assistant principals, heads of departments, as well as heads of subjects from each school.

Sampling was done at two levels. For the quantitative study, stratified random sampling procedure was used to select fifteen (15) teacher-administrators from each school. Researchers agree that a sample of 10 – 20 percent of a population can be sufficient (Van Dalen,1993), although a bigger size sample would be more reliable. (Gay & Airasian, 2000). As there were only 51 schools, all the principals were included. However, only 45 principals participated in the research due to unavoidable circumstances, since the positions of some principals were vacant due to transfers or retirement, and some principals were not able to participate due to other reasons. The final sample comprised 45 principals and 763 teachers/administrators. All were administered the questionnaires in the first phase of data collection. For the second phase, 12 principals were selected for the interview, three from each of the types of the Rabbani leaders identified by the analysis of the first phase data.

Moral Judgment of National Islamic Secondary School Principals in Malaysia

The basis of moral judgment consists of concern for godliness or concern for divine right for developing the human being and for professional development. The level of the principals' moral judgment was measured using mean scores. Data was analysed by using simple frequency counts and means. This was measured through the responses of principals to the items which measure leadership practices, which were then grouped as concerns.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics: Principals' Moral Judgment items

No	Principal's Moral Judgment	N 45	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %	Mean
1	Emphasizes the value of faith and goodness in all things at school.	45	-	-	-	17.8	82.2	4.82
2	Encourage teachers to improve the character as a role model for students.	45	-	-	-	35.6	64.4	4.64
3	Enhance the spiritual strength to bear all the responsibilities entrusted.	45	-	-	4.4	20	75.6	4.71
4	Setting a clear mission to educate students and school staffs. Mean of concern for Godlines.	45	-	-	-	20	80	4.80 4.74
5	Teachers should be motivated to improve their leadership efforts.	45	-	-	6.7	51.1	42.2	4.36
6	I need to emphasize teacher expertise in their respective fields.	45	-	-	2.2	42.2	55.6	4.53
7	I need to strengthen the commitment of work among teachers.	45	-	-	-	33.3	66.7	4.67
8	Understanding among the teachers should be emphasized. Mean of concern for human development.	45	-	-	-	26.7	73.3	4.73 4.57
9	Develop a culture of knowledge among school staff.	45	-	-	-	28.9	71.1	4.71
10	Inculcate common values among the school population.	45	-	-	2.2	26.7	71.1	4.69
11	Emphasize on increasing the professional knowledge sharing among all parties.	45	-	-	2.2	26.7	71.1	4.69
12	Emphasizing skills of teachers in the management of the instructional program at the school.	45	-	-	-	33.3	66.7	4.67
13	Foster orderly system of work among teachers.	45	-	-	-	24.4	75.6	4.76
14	Management of teaching and learning among teachers must be improved.	45	-	-	-	35.6	64.4	4.64
15	The practice of continued teacher supervision is very important. Mean of concern for professional development Mean of Principals' Moral Judgment	45	-	-	-	37.8	62.2	4.62 4.68 4.66

Table 1 is a summary of a bigger table which details the frequencies and means of the items used to measure practices and concerns. It shows the level of moral judgment of Rabbani principals on the basis of concerns. It can be seen that the moral judgment of principals was generally very high, with a mean score of 4.66. Concern for godliness was highest, at 4.74, followed by concern for professional development (mean = 4.68), and concern for human development (mean = 4.57), although the difference in means were small. More than 50 percent of the principals agreed that their practices were guided by their own moral judgment, that is godliness, wholesome human development and concern for professional development. It can also be seen that about 75 percent of the principals rated concern for godliness as very high denoting that godliness was the main concern which shaped their moral judgment. This is to be expected as they were Islamic secondary school principals, and the values that permeated the organisations were Islamic values.

Analysis of the qualitative data affirmed the findings from the quantitative data. The principals interviewed agreed that their practices were influenced by what they felt was the best in accordance with Islamic values and driven by what they felt was the best choice of action to take, based on their own judgments. They said they tried to emulate the practices of the holy Prophet, Muhammad (pbuh). Confirming the results from the quantitative data, the principals claimed that they used their moral judgment in making decisions and in taking actions. They claimed that it was their own judgment as Muslims that guided them to act and dispense their duties, believing that it was their responsibility to develop their staff as individuals, develop teacher leadership capacity, develop group cohesiveness and collegiality, as well as the knowledge culture, enhance the teachers professional competency to the values from Islamic practices within the scope of the functions of a school principal.

The Focus of Rabbani Leadership

The focus of Rabbani leadership with regard to educational institutions refers to practices informed by any of the subsets of

moral judgments, which are categorised here as Godliness consideration, wholesome human development consideration and professional development consideration. Leadership focus is the degree to which the considerations of moral judgment are clear and spelled out in the leadership practices. A clear focus will provide guidance to the leader as well as support to achieve the mission. A focus is considered clear when considerations of the moral judgment inform the leadership practices in organization. When consideration of any moral judgment has a greater significance correlation with the leadership practices, such a leader has clear leadership focus which inform the leadership practices such as Godliness, wholesome human development, and professional development. On the other hand, if the consideration of any moral judgment, Godliness, human development or professional development has no significance correlation or has less significance with the leadership practices, such a leader has no clear leadership focus. Table 2 shows Spearman's *rho* correlations between moral judgment and consideration of leadership practices dimensions, which are categorised as Godliness consideration, wholesome human development consideration and professional development consideration of leadership practices. Correlations between moral judgment and Godliness consideration of leadership practices ($r = 0,693$, $p < .05$), wholesome human development consideration of leadership practice ($r = .601$, $p < .05$), and professional development consideration of leadership practices ($r = .498$, $p < .05$) were also significant.

Table 2: Correlations between moral judgment and the consideration of principals on leadership practices

	Godliness consideration of Leadership practices	Human consideration of Leadership practices	Professional consideration of Leadership practices
	Sig / R	Sig / R	Sig / R
Principals' Moral judgment	.000/.693**	.000/.601**	.000/.498**

* Significant at level $p < .05$ level

** Significant at $p < .01$

We computed a stepwise multiple regression analyses. Multiple regression analysis was computed with moral judgment as the dependent variable and the selected subscales of the consideration of leadership practices dimensions: Godliness consideration, wholesome human development consideration, and professional development consideration, as the independent variables. Table 3 shows results for regression analyses.

Table 3: Summary of regression analysis with the principals' consideration of leadership practices and moral judgment

Predictor variable	β	t	Sig.
Godliness	0.055*	5.724	.000
Wholesome development	0.148	0.973	.336
Professional development	0.066	0.441	.662

* Significant at level $p < .05$ level

** Significant at $p < .01$

Godliness consideration was positively associated with moral judgment that provided full support to the Rabbani Leadership practices. It appears that Godliness consideration is a very good predictor of moral judgment ($\beta=.055$, $p<0.01$).

The qualitative data also emphasised the influence of moral judgments on leadership practices. Most principals affirmed that their actions were guided by what they felt as Muslims was ‘the best’ for the good of the staff.

I adhere to the Prophet’s actions when he arrived in Madinah, when he (Muhammad pbuh) first built three things before rebuilding the city of Madinah. First, for brotherhood, he built the masjid; Secondly, for brotherhood he built the relationship between Aus and Mujahirin, and third , he implmeneted Islamic laws in all fields. So, I took all three....” (Principal 1)

Principal 1 claimed that the example of Muhammad’s (*pbuh*) leadership during the *Hijrah* was an example that he followed and which was manifested in his school leadership practices. Leadership practices of the principals appear to have a direct relationship with moral judgments influenced by faith. These moral judgments guided their actions, fitting within the framework of the Rabbani Leadership, that is, practices towards developing the human good character, building teacher capacity, teachers’ group collegiality, building learning culture, and management of teaching-learning programmes. The most dominant was building human beings. This was strenghtened by qualitative data findings, as well as the quantitative findings, reinforcing that leadership practices of National Islamic Secondary School Principals were heavily influenced by faith informed moral judgments.

Discussion

Teachers are one of the most valuable resources in schools and have to maintain their commitment and competitiveness. In a dynamic, unpredictable environment, modern schools might achieve this by using intelligences (spiritual, emotional, and intellectual intelligence) that promote the development of a human

capital tool possessing a broad range of skills that are able to engage in a wide variety of behavior. Moreover, modern schools also need effective leadership practices to develop team responsibilities and accountabilities. The role of leadership in schools is largely determined by the organizational culture and religious climate of the schools. Educational institutions that adopt a greater number of prescribed leadership practices (any of the subsets of moral judgments, which are Godliness consideration, wholesome human development consideration and professional development consideration) are likely to empower teamwork, enhance employee satisfaction and enjoy superior performance. However, the implementation of these practices is not always an easy task.

As it was stated above, many scholars and writers have emphasized the importance of moral judgment on leadership effectiveness. It has been argued that beliefs, values and interpersonal competences of principals are of critical importance to the overall style of leadership that they adopt. This study investigated the relationship between consideration of leadership practices and moral judgment in schools organizations laying emphasis on the leadership practices of the principals. In particular, this study investigates the considerations of principals' leadership practices as well as moral judgment. An additional contribution of the research was that it was conducted in a national Islamic secondary schools context that was different from other cultural environments in which research on consideration of leadership practices and moral judgment has so far taken place.

The study contributed to our understanding of the linkage between consideration of leadership practices and moral judgment. Overall, the results provided support for the model, which suggests that consideration of leadership practices such as wholesome human development consideration and professional development consideration, especially Godliness consideration are positively associated with faith-informed moral judgment, increasing leadership effectiveness with teachers. The participating principal's moral judgment influenced leadership practices that created an atmosphere of harmony and visionary ideas that contributed to

motivate, stimulate, and drive other people also to work hard. They generated the capacity to build team members' colleageality to do more than normally expected. In addition, the principal's moral judgment had a spiritual impact on the teachers, building good character (*Ihsan*) as key in implementing the practice of the Rabbani leadership in schools. The Leadership Rabbani generated the spirit of Godliness, moral judgments, and commitments for dedicated teachers and contributed to building trusts. Teachers exposed to good leadership practices increased in appreciating spirituality and the vision and mission of the school.

Conclusion

The study attempted to identify the nature of the Rabbani leadership practices of SMKA's principals in Malaysia. The Rabbani leadership practices significantly correlated to the moral judgment of SMKA principals, and the same were confirmed by the teachers. The study suggested that the principals were best able to lead teachers and to fulfill the aspirations of developing the potential of an integrated school community when they performed within the framework of the Rabbani leadership. Leadership practices of SMKA principals were effective when in line with the concept of Islamic perspective taking into account all the important elements such as body, soul and conscience (Gamal, 2003). Education in Islam is not only to develop knowledge content but to develop the whole person (Mohd. Kamal Hasan, 1988) and the Rabbani leadership model is not confined to the leadership practices related to academic pursuit and increased performance. In the context of this study, educational concepts and issues raised by Gamal (2003), Mohd Kamal Hasan (1988), and Hasan Langgulung (1979) underpin the principals' practices as well as concepts of 'education' and 'teaching'. The findings affirmed that the model captured the beliefs and practices of SMKA principals as they were trying to apply the Rabbani leadership model to their practice.

The contribution of this research is to develop a model of educational leadership informed by belief systems highlighting the significance of faith-informed moral judgment for leadership practices. The study explored the influence of faith-based

leadership within the organizational context with specific focus on 51 National Islamic Secondary Schools (SMKA) in Malaysia, and the data evidenced how leaders enacted leadership informed by their beliefs and moral judgment. It emphasized the significance of spiritual-based leadership, and its role in relevant societies underlining the need to enhance awareness through courses and work-shops, where principals may get acquainted with the meaning and purpose of life, and values informed by religious teachings to inform their practices as leaders in diverse educational contexts.