

Leadership Traits from Islamic Perspective

Nazamul Hoque,^{*} Abdullahil Mamun^{**}
and Mohammed Jonayed Kabir^{***}

Abstract

Traits of leaders are very essential for the effectiveness of leadership and without having required traits there would be no influence on the followers and without proper influence leaders cannot attain the predetermined goals. Although the effectiveness of leadership depends not only on the traits of leader but also on the situational factors (external factors, follower readiness); numerous studies show that the traits of leaders can overcome those situational factors in many cases. If leader holds the necessary traits he can achieve the goals controlling the situation. Since the followers imitate the leader it is easy for a good leader to create good followers. For instance, the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) transformed the worst people of Arab into the best people of all times with the help of his leadership traits. So, this study is conducted to identify the traits of leadership from Islamic point of view. After going through the Holy Qur'Ēn, ᵂadĒth, and the life of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and KhulafĒ' (Successors), the researchers have developed thirty leadership traits such as faith on Allah, missionary zeal, vision, mutual consultation for decision making, knowledge, persuasiveness, justice, patience, enterprise and initiative, leniency, humility, self-sacrifice, God-fearing, honesty and truthfulness, keeping promise, physical soundness, moral character, no greed for position, sense of responsibility, accountability, optimism, good behavior, generosity, guardianship, striving for improvement, perseverance, inviting to good deeds and forbidding bad deeds, rendering service to the followers, economical, and neat and cleanliness. It is expected that holding these traits Muslim can increase the influencing power which will ultimately helps in achieving goals efficiently.

Keywords: Leadership, Quality, Islam, and Ummah.

1. Introduction

Islam is a complete code of life (Al-Qur'Ēn: SĒrah al-MĒ'Ēdah: 5:3) because Allah (s.w.t.) and His Messenger Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) gave us guidelines regarding every aspect of human life to be dealt with (Al-Qur'Ēn, 16:89). Allah (s.w.t.) said, "This day, I have perfected your

religion for you, completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for Islam as your religion....." (Al-Qur'Ēn, SĒrah al-MĒ'Ēdah: 5:3). Ather and Ullah (2009) stated that Islam is not only a religion like other religions based on belief but it is an integrated way of life combining all spheres of life such as individual, social, economic, political, cultural, religious, etc. So, a Muslim can not think of any thing without the guidelines of Islam. Islam extended very quickly around the globe because of leadership traits of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and his successors (khulafĒ'). Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) transformed the character of the then people with his beautiful traits of leadership. After his departure, the successors also continued to attract people by their superb traits of leadership. But today, around the world the Muslim leaders hardly possess such beautiful traits of leadership and this may be one of the major reasons for which the Muslims are now being oppressed almost all over the world. Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani said Muslims are weak because they are not really Muslim (Hourani, 1983). Therefore, this research is an attempt to identify the leadership traits in the light of Al-Qur'Ēn, ᵂadĒth, and practices of KhulĒfĒ' (successors) of Islam in order to renovate and recharge the Muslim leaders of today. It is expected that Muslim leaders as well as all leaders will get an idea in building their leadership traits and thereby can increase their leadership capacity that will ultimately lead to achievement of the goals of whole Muslim Ummah.

2. Objectives of the Study

In this article, the authors took interest to highlight the various aspects of leadership traits from Islamic perspective. The rationale of the study lies in the fact that no comprehensive research regarding leadership traits from Islam perspective has been undertaken. There are few studies in this line but these are not fully and analytically written from the Islamic point of view.

The main objectives of the study are:

- a) To focus on the concept of trait theory of leadership;
- b) To focus on the concept of Islamic leadership traits; and
- c) To develop leadership traits of Muslim leaders from Islamic perspective.

3. Methodology

This study is a desk-based and library-oriented research. To find out the development in leadership traits and related Islamic issues, the authors consulted available published literatures, research monographs, journals

* Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration, International Islamic University Chittagong, Bangladesh. e-mail: nazam_iuc@yahoo.com.

** Lecturer, Department of Business Administration, International Islamic University Chittagong, Bangladesh.

*** Lecturer, Department of Business Administration, International Islamic University Chittagong, Bangladesh

and magazines in this field. The study has been structured in the light of the research objectives.

4. Concept of Leadership Traits

4.1 Traditional Concept of Leadership Traits

Leadership traits are the characteristics that might be used to differentiate leaders from non-leaders (Robbins & Coulter, 2004). There are six traits associated with effective leadership such as drive, the desire to lead, honesty and integrity, self-confidence, intelligence, and job-relevant knowledge (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). Traits alone are not sufficient for explaining effective leadership because of situational factors, but possessing the appropriate traits can make it more likely that an individual would be an effective leader (Robbins & Coulter, 2004).

4.2 Islamic Concept of Leadership Traits

Leadership traits are the characteristics that a leader should have in order to be a true Muslim as well as to differentiate leaders from non-leaders. Abdul Ghani Barrie (1997) listed twenty five traits necessary for leadership using extracts from the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and from the holy Qur'án. These characteristics are: ability, bravery, calmness, dependability, exemplariness, fairness, genuineness, honesty, initiative, judgment, knowledge, liberalism, modesty, nobility, organization, personality, quality, responsibility, sacrifice, teamwork, understanding, versatility, wisdom, youth, and zeal. Ather (2007) identified fourteen traits of a Muslim leader such as faith, practicing Muslim, taqwá, ísán, justice, trust, righteousness, striving for self-improvement, keeping promise, honesty, patience, inspiration & initiative, competence, consulting nature, and humility. Hawi (1982) attempted to synthesize the most desired traits and qualities of leaders in Islamic thinking. He relied on history and the early years of the Islamic state to come up with an all-encompassing list. He described the attributes of an Islamic leader as having the ability to reason or act rationally, to be knowledgeable, mentally stable, courageous, in control of desires, generous, wise, in control of his temper, forgiving, caring, flexible, relying on evidence, abiding by promises, honest, able to keep secrets, acting decisively, being cunning, humble, free from hatred and envy, patient, thankful, diplomatic, not listening to slanderers and backbiters, not appointing the non-faithful as deputies, following up and processing work, receptive and willing to give advice, attentive, a good organizer, rewarding and recognizing achievers and respectable in their appearance.

In the context of business, Asaf (1987) provided two categories of traits and qualities that a leader must have: moral discipline which includes eight attributes identified under moral categories- goodness, patience, forgiveness, an ability to make peace among conflicting parties, selflessness, cooperative, a sense of responsibility, and tenderness-and kindness in conversation. These attributes must be accompanied by the avoidance of lies, arrogance, enviousness, anger and suspicion and spying. In addition, the traits of a leader deemed to be essential for effective conduct in business are: experience and knowledge, justice, caring, exemplary behavior, willingness to consult, trust in God and persuasiveness through goodness.

In a review of the Islamic literature, the researchers identified thirty of the most essential traits of Muslim leaders such as: faith on Allah, missionary zeal, vision, mutual consultation for decision making, knowledge, persuasiveness, justice, patience, leniency, humility, self-sacrifice, God-fearing, honesty and truthfulness, keeping promise, physical soundness, moral character, no greed for position, sense of responsibility, accountability, optimism, good behavior, generosity, guardianship, striving for improvement, enterprise and initiative, perseverance, inviting to good deeds and forbidding bad deeds, rendering service to the followers, economical, and neat and cleanliness

5. Justifications and Referential Discussions on the Islamic Leadership Traits

5.1 Missionary Zeal

There should have a mission of each and every Muslim leader but this mission is not like the mission of non-Muslim leaders. The mission of Muslim leader is to bring people under the single umbrella of Islam as a faith and a way of life. The Holy Qur'án declares, "Who is better in speech than one who calls men to God, work righteousness, and says I am of those who vow in Islam?" (SĒrah al-Sajdah: 32:33). The Holy Qur'án reveals in another verse "Invite (all) to the Way of your lord with wisdom, good advices and beautiful preaching with the best approaches (and scientific arguments)" (SĒrah al-Naál: 16:125). The Holy Qur'án also declares, "Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good, enjoying what is right (ma'ruf) and forbidding what is wrong (munkar). And it is they who are successful" (3:104). The Holy Qur'án declares in another verse, "and call to your collaborations whomsoever you can except Allah, if you speak the truth" (SĒrah LuqmĒn: 31:32). In another verse the Holy Qur'án says, "Say, this is my

way, I call to Allah with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me" (SĒrah Yusuf: 12:108). Every Muslim by virtue of his faith is a missionary of Islam (Irshad, 1986). So, having a missionary zeal a Muslim leader can sincerely and dynamically involve in calling the people to the beauty of Islam and can win the heart of people. Missionary zeal drives a person to work more and more intimately which ultimately helps in increasing the number of dedicated followers and thereby strengthening the leader's power.

5.2 Vision

All leaders are visionary men but Muslim leaders are not like the non-Muslims. The vision of Muslim leader is to protect the Muslims from the tyranny and oppression of their enemies. The Holy Qur'Ēn says "We do not change the circumstances of people until they do not change what is within themselves" (SĒrah al-Ra'ad: 13:11). Islam has no problems with creative and innovative ideas. In fact, there is no place for a lazy and idle brain in this religion and an empty brain is said to be a devil's house by Islam. According to Islamic teachings, "A man can have nothing but what he strives for" (Al-Qur'an, SĒrah al-Najm: 53:39) and in such a scenario the role of an Islamic leader becomes very crucial. In addition to basic leadership qualities, vision makes a leader self-triggered, confident and determined to do something extra-ordinary (Mohtsham, 2007). As per Islamic teachings, a leader is the one who follows his own light (Rumi) and sees what others can't see. He doesn't rely on what is in existence already; he is a dynamic open-minded person with a very keen perception. Using his visionary mind, he creates the world of his own (Iqbal, 2006). This creative thinking together with a strong will power within himself takes him to the heights of excellence. A leader cannot take his organization to the heights of excellence until he has extraordinary future anticipation or risk taking skills by which he takes bold but wise and timely decisions. A beautiful verse from the poetry of Allama Iqbal (a great Muslim philosopher) guides us as to what makes a visionary leader. "Re-read the lessons of Truthfulness, Judgment and Bravery, and you will be chosen to lead the world". The vision of Hazrat Umar[®] was to ensure that every one in his kingdom should sleep on a full stomach. This vision energized him to take pragmatic initiatives to materialize it.

5.3 Faith on Allah

This is an important leadership trait that lies at the root of all other traits such as resolution, perseverance, knowledge, wisdom, enterprise,

eloquence, leniency, and forbearance (Safi, 1995). A Muslim leader must have faith in Allah (s.w.t.) as there is none except Allah who has created the universe. He is the supreme power to manage and control it. Every person is accountable to Him for his or her each and every action. He will prize and punish each man and woman for his or her good and bad deeds respectively on the Day of Judgment. Thus a deep conviction in and a strong commitment to a set of principles or values are essential for a leader who wants to reform the accepted patterns of behavior. By making administrative responsibility the function of one's religious conviction, the Islamic approach provides a strong internal motivation for administrators to behave faithfully (Abdel-Rahman, 1996). In the same way, following Max Weber, many Western scholars recognize the significance of faith and conviction for reformist leadership, and they use the term charisma to mystify its spiritual origin (Safi, 1995). Conviction is connected with trust in Allah and His creation, so leaders must be faithful and trustworthy. "Truly the best of men for thee to employ is the man who is strong and trustworthy" (Al-Qur'Ēn, SĒrah al-QaĒf: 28:26). The leaders in Islam must depend on Almighty Allah (s.w.t.) for the outcome of any action. It is known in Islam as Tawakkul. Allah asked His believers to depend on Him. Allah says, "...when you have made a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him)" (SĒrah Ōl 'ImrĒn: 3:159). However, dependence on Him without any endeavors is not supported by Islam. The managers must prepare managerial plans and policies in order to achieve the rational (ĒalĒl) objectives. But he must depend on Allah (s.w.t.) for the success of his plan (Ather and Sobhani, 2007).

5.4 Mutual Consultation for Decision Making

It is another trait of Islamic leadership (Altalib, 1991). The Qur'Ēn has made it clear that Muslim leaders are obligated to consult those who have knowledge or those who can provide sound advice. "And those who answer the call of their Lord and establish prayer, and who conduct their affairs by consultation and spend out of what We bestow on them for sustenance" (SĒrah al-ShĒrĒ: 42:38). The Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) regularly consulted his companions on all important matters. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) was ordered to take counsel from and consult with his companions to find out their opinions in all affairs before making any final decisions (Jabnoun, 1994; Trad, 1998; Syed, 2002). The most outstanding example of the Prophet's (p.b.u.h.) Shura occurred on the eve of the battle of Uhud. While the Prophet was thinking that the city should be defended from within, the majority wanted to go out to fight.

The Prophet accepted this and did not impose his own opinion on his companions (Ghazali, 1999; Bangash, 2000; Sweedan, 2000). A leader's consultative character with the followers reflects his trust and confidence in them; as a result, the leader is not misunderstood rather more confidently followed. This consultative character of Muslim leaders uprooted the seed of egoism which is prohibited in Islam (Ather, 2007).

5.5 Knowledge

Leaders are expected to be knowledgeable and well-informed (Safi, 1995; Bangash, 2000; Mustapha, 2000; Ahmad, 2001). Knowledge of the Al-Qur'Ēn and the Hadiith are two criteria for selecting the Muslim leaders (Chowdhury, 2001). As regards knowledge of the leader Allah says: "Allah has chosen (Talut) above you (as king) as He gifted him abundantly with knowledge and physical strength. And Allah gives power whoever he likes" (Al-Qur'Ēn, SĒrah al-Baqarah: 2:247). The Holy Qur'Ēn also declares, "pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge." (SĒrah al-FurqĒn: 25:67). Imam Ali (1989) stated that a person "who acts according to knowledge is like one whose road is clear". Excellence in knowledge increases humbleness and convinces a person how much more one needs to explore in the new areas of knowledge. The Al-Qur'Ēn refers to it in a unique manner: "Those truly fear Allah, among His servants, who have knowledge, for Allah is exalted in Might, Oft-forgiving." (SĒrah FĒlir: 35:28).

In Islam a leader should have also situational knowledge, otherwise, the goals may not be attained efficiently. Leaders need to evaluate the prevailing situation accurately and devise appropriate strategies for dealing with it. For example, in Makkah, Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) rejected the unjust prevailing order, and he called people to the worship of One God and to be truthful and honest in their dealings with each other. Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) appointed different leaders in different situations. He provided the most excellent example of leadership. He adjusted his leadership style depending on the situation he was in. For example, he was directing at the battle of Uhd. In this battle, the Prophet asked 50 men to keep the cavalry away from Muslims and not to let the enemy approach the Muslim army from the rear. Then the Prophet proceeded to arrange the vanguard, giving the order that fighting should not begin without his permission. The Muslim army was defeated in this battle because the archers did not comply with the Prophet's strict orders to stay in their places to protect the rear (Ghazali, 1999).

Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) also used a supportive style with Salman Al Farisi in the battle of Al-Khandaq (trench). The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) knew that if he fought against a large army on an open plain he had little chance of victory. Therefore, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) resorted to his strategy. He consulted his companions, and Salman Al Farisi suggested digging a ditch. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) supported Salman's idea, and with his men, the Prophet dug the ditch, and the Muslim army won the battle (Ghazali, 1999).

Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) used a coaching style with his followers. The objective of coaching in Islam as a Tarbiyyah (moral training) is to focus on the self-development of the individual as a Muslim. Anas Ibn Malik reported that the Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) once said, "Facilitate things for people (concerning religious issues), and do not make it hard for them, and give them good tidings and do not make them run away from Islam." (Alim, 2000; ØaĒĒĒ al-BukhĒrĒ, ×adĒth no. 69).

Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) used a delegating style with his companions, and he was aware of the importance of matching the demands of an assignment to the level of development of the companions. For example, during the time of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.), Bedouins tended to be uneducated people living a very simple way of life. The following Hadiith narrated by Abu Hurairah demonstrates the Prophet's ability to transmit Islam according to his audience's frame of reference. Al-BukhĒrĒ reported and Talha Ibn Ubaidullah (r.t.a.) narrated that a Bedouin came to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and said, "Tell me of such a deed as will make me enter Paradise if I do it." The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said, "Worship Allah, and worship none along with Him, offer the five prescribed compulsory prayers perfectly, pay the compulsory zakĒt, and fast in the month of RamaĒĒn." The Bedouin said, "By Him, in whose hands my life is, I will not do more than this." When the Bedouin left, the Prophet said, "Whoever likes to see a man of Paradise, then he may look at this man." (Al-NawawĒ, 1993, p. 587). On the other hand, when the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) dealt with companions who had higher responsibilities and deeper understanding of Islam, he would ask more from them. For example, at the time of Hijrah (immigration to Madinah), the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) asked 'AlĒ (r.t.a.) to stay behind in order to repay some things entrusted to and deposited with the Prophet. Ali (r.t.a.) slept in the Prophet's bed while killers and assassins surrounded his house. In addition, whenever the Prophet left Madinah, he would appoint someone as a leader in his absence (Haykal, 1976). Those who assume leadership responsibilities in political, economic, legal, educational, or military

fields must acquire the necessary specialized knowledge and expertise. Prophet Yusuf (p.b.u.h.) asked Pharaoh "Set me over the storehouses of the land, I will indeed guard them, as one that knows." (S rah Yusuf: 12: 55). Knowledge is compared with light. So if a person does not have sufficient knowledge of Islam he will not be able to lead the followers to the light, rather he may lead the follower to the darkness.

Moreover a Muslim leader must have Islamic knowledge as well as the knowledge of contemporary world, otherwise he will not be able to lead the followers in this competitive world as per Islamic guidelines. A Muslim leader must be knowledgeable and competent enough to guide the followers through adversaries and crisis, otherwise the follower will lose their confidence and trust in him (Ather, 2007). Mohtsham (2007) stated that an Islamic leader should know the art of keeping a balance between idealism and realism, target and resources, core competencies and weaknesses, opportunities and risks etc.

5.6 Good Behavior

Good behavior is considered as a very essential personal trait of a Muslim leader. The Holy Qur' n states, "The noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the best of you in conduct" (S rah al-xujur t: 49:13). The Holy Qur' n states in another verse, "...Speak good words to people..." (S rah al-Baqarah: 2:83). Good behavior can convert the enemy into friend. People like those who are well-behaved. Good behavior costs nothing but brings everything. In spite of having many qualities in a person his leadership quality is destroyed if his behavior is not good to the followers.

5.7 Justice

It is another of the essential characteristics that leaders must possess (Jabnoun, 1994; Safi, 1995). The leader should deal with people fairly regardless of their race, color, national origin, or religion. The Al-Qur' n commands Muslims to be fair even when dealing with those opposed to them: "And when you judge between man and man that you judge with justice." (S rah al-Nis ' : 4: 58). The Qur' n also commands Muslims to be fair and just in any circumstances even if the verdict goes against their parents or themselves. Allah says: "O you, who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witness to Allah, even as against yourselves or your parents or your kin and whether it be against rich or poor, for Allah protects both". (S rah al-Nis ' : 4:135). As reported by Muslim and narrated by Jabir Ibn Abdullah, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said, "Injustice is darkness in the hereafter" (Al-Nawaw , 1993, p.143). The Prophet

(p.b.u.h.) was just in implementing the injunctions of Allah even with his relatives. For example, in Madinah the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) ordered the hand of a thief to be cut off. Some of the companions thought the punishment would not be carried out, because the person was a distant relative of the Prophet. When the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) heard this, he said, "If my daughter Fatimah had been guilty, she would not be spared" (Al-Bukhari, 1997, p. 409). Injustice invariably leads to turmoil and conflict, but at the same time, justice must be tempered with compassion. A Muslim leader must have the ability to maintain justice, otherwise the followers will lose confidence in him which will ultimately lead to the destruction of leadership quality. (Ather, 2007).

5.8 Patience

In Islam, no virtue has more affinity with leadership than patience (Safi, 1995; Bangash, 2000). "And We made, from among them leaders, giving guidance under Our command, so long as they displayed patience, and continued to demonstrate faith in our signs" (Al-Qur' n, S rah al-Sajdah: 32: 23). In the Holy Qur' n there are many indications about patience(3:186, 11:49, 11:115, 10:109, 16:127, 46:35, 6: 34, 37:102, 2:249, 8:65, 3: 186, 68:48, 70:5). There is nothing superior and valuable than patience gifted to someone (Al-Bukh r ). The Prophet and the Muslim leaders at the early stage of Islam showed utmost patience and endurance against the oppressions and tyranny of the unbelievers (Ather, 2007) .There may have thousands of obstacles on the way of achieving the goals but patience can help the leaders to achieve the goals.

5.9 God-fearing

Muslim leaders should have this trait because the power and authority they acquire can make them arrogant. Taqw  (God-fearing) is the inner consciousness and awareness of accountability of a person's duty towards Almighty Allah. This quality motivates leader to act according to Islam (Ather, 2007). The Al-Qur' n says "Verily, the most honorable person to Allah among you is he who fears Him most." (S rah al-xujur t: 49:13). He shall be modest in his behavior with the creator as well as the creatures and be balanced in his dealings with them (Bhuiyan, 2007). In the first speech as Khal fah of the Muslims, Ab  Bakr  idd q proved himself an ideal of Taqw . He said, I have been appointed as a ruler over you although I am not the best among you. I have never sought this position nor has there ever been a desire in my heart to have this in preference to anyone else...If I do right, you must help and obey me; if I go astray, set me aright...Obey me so long as I obey Allah and His Messenger. If I disobey them, then you have no obligation to follow me.

(Al-ÜabrĒ, 1987). A Muslim leader without having this quality may misuse the power which will finally foil the leadership quality.

5.10 Leniency

Self-confidence, boldness, and courage do not produce effective leadership if they are not balanced with kindness, courtesy, compassion, and leniency (Leen) (Safi, 1995; Bangash, 2000). Leniency is a result of the leaders' concern for the well-being of the followers, and it reflects an attitude of compassion and humility towards the followers. Leniency implies charity, recognition of the interests and needs of others, and is associated with doing well to others (Abdel-Rahman, 1995). It was the Prophet's (p.b.u.h.) kindness and good manner that kept the believers attracted to him. The Holy Qur'Ēn says 'It is by the mercy of Allah that you have been soft with them. Were you severe or harsh hearted, they would have broken away from you: so pass over their faults, and ask for Allah's forgiveness for them, and consult them in public affairs' (3:159) Anas Ibn Malik (r.t.a.) narrated, the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said, "Show leniency; do not be hard; give solace and do not create aversion." (ØaĒĒĒ Muslim).

5.11 Humility

Prophet Muhammed (p.b.u.h.) stated that, "The best of people are those who benefit others". This is very special quality of Muslim leaders and all the Muslim leaders' traits were featured by their utmost humility. With this trait the Muslim leader can become very close to followers (Ather, 2007). Basically a Muslim leader should be humble since he considers himself as the servant of Allah.

5.12 Self-sacrifice

This is another leadership trait that a Muslim leader should possess (Bangash, 2000; Sweedan, 2000; Ameenah, 2001). If the leader is seen to be making personal sacrifices, then the followers will make even greater sacrifices. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) never did anything to benefit himself or his family. The second Caliph, 'Umar Ibn al-KhalĒĒb, saw marks on the Prophet's body because the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) had been lying on a coarse mat on the floor. 'Umar asked why the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) denied himself even the small comforts of life. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) replied that such comforts are for people who wish to cling to the worldly life (Ghazali, 1999; Bangash, 2000). Another example is the third Caliph, 'UthmĒn Ibn 'AffĒn, who did not take any remuneration. He only used his wealth, which he had accumulated through trade prior to his KhulafĒ', and he gave salaries to his governors out of his own wealth and did not touch

one DirĒĒm (currency unit in 'Arabia) out of the treasury for that purpose (Trad, 1998). Self-sacrifice quality develops loyalty in the followers towards the leader which ultimately helps the leader in achieving the goals more smoothly.

5.13 Sense of Responsibility

Sense of responsibility is very unique quality of a Muslim leader. Saeed M. Mohtsham (2007) cites:

"'Umar (r.t.a.) used to monitor very closely the public policy and had kept the needs of the public central to his leadership approach. As second Caliph of Islam, he refused to chop off the hands of the thieves, because he felt he had fallen short of his responsibility to provide meaningful employment to all his subjects. As the ruler of a vast kingdom, his vision was to ensure that every one in his kingdom should sleep on a full stomach. If a dog dies hungry on the banks of the River Euphrates, Umar will be responsible for dereliction of duty. He also knew that just having a vision is not enough unless it is supported by effective strategies. He didn't only have a vision; he truly transformed his vision into actions. For example, to ensure that nobody sleeps hungry in his empire, he used to walk through the streets almost every night to see if there is any one needy or ill. One night as usual he went in disguise, with one of his assistants. While patrolling, he heard crying in a house. Knocking at the door, he went in. There was an old woman with her little kids. A pan was boiling on the fire and the children were crying. When Umar asked about what was going on, the woman explained that the children were hungry and there was nothing at home to eat. In order to keep them quiet until they fall asleep, she was boiling water in the pan. 'Umar asked her (without letting her know about himself) why they did not inform the caliph Umar of their condition. The woman replied "May God take Umar's soul! he undertook the management of people but does not concern himself with their hardships.'. 'Umar astonishingly asked "how can. The Caliph know of your hardships if you do not inform him". The woman replied calmly, a ruler should know himself, should he not walk round and see what is going on in the city? Hearing this Umar immediately left the house with his helper. He went straight to the state treasury. Umar lifted a sack of flour and some other food-stuff on his back and rushed towards her house. Although the subordinate insisted to carry the sack but Umar did not let him saying that it was he who was responsible for the wellbeing of the people. They arrived at home and went in. The children were still crying. Umar cooked food with his own hands and offered bread and food to the children. After the children went to sleep, he left the house. Such is the responsibility of a state and

head of state under Islamic law. Where it carries the lessons of bravery, justice and a sense of responsibility in fulfilling the needs of the society, it also highlights the significance of being visionary in leadership and having an ability to convert one's vision into reality".

5.14 Honesty and Truthfulness

A Muslim leader must be out and out honest and truthful, since honest and truthful people are trusted by the followers (Ather, 2007). Truth has a self-reinforcing effect. In a Hadith reported in Sahih al Bukhari, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said, Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. A man continues to tell the truth until he becomes a truthful person. Falsehood leads to wickedness, and wickedness leads to the Hell, and a man may continue to tell lies till he is written before Allah, a liar. (Al-BukhĒrĒ, 1996, p. 961). Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) also said, "Tell me, O men of Quraish, if I were to inform you that I see a cavalry on the other side of the mountain, would you believe me"? They answered: Indeed, for we trust you and we have never known you to tell a lie. Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) said: "Know then that I am a warner, and that I warn you of a severe punishment." (Alim, 2000). The quality of honesty and truthfulness of Muslim leaders make them reliable and acceptable to the followers. This quality ameliorates the charismatic power of the leader. The Holy Qur'Ēn declares:

"It ...is righteousness to believe in Allah (SWAT) and the last day and the angels and the book and the Messengers; to spend from your wealth, out of love for him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the way farer, for those who ask....; to fulfill the contracts that you have entered into; and to be firm and patient in pain (or sufferings) and adversity...." (SĒrah al-Baqarah: 2:177).

5.15 Keeping Promise

A Muslim leader must keep his all promises. By fulfilling his promises the leader enhances the confidence of the follower in him (Ather, 2007). But a Islamic leader should avoid all un-Islamic promises. Al-Qur'Ēn says:

"O! You who believe! Fulfill (all) obligations" (5:1). The Holy Qur'Ēn also declares "Fulfillment of a commitment is considered as one of the characteristics of Prophethood" (SĒrah Maryam:19: 54).

The Prophet of Islam says: " A person has no Iman (belief) if he cannot keep his trust(amanah) and a person has no religion if he can not keep his promise"(Musnad Ahmad).

5.16 Physical Soundness

Physical soundness is another very important quality of Muslim leader. The Al-Qur'Ēn says: "Truly the best of men for you to employ is the man who is strong and trustworthy" (28:26). There is another indication about physical quality in the Holy Qur'Ēn (2:247). Regarding physical fitness the Messenger of Allah says: "A strong believer is better than the believer who is weak in physical strength" (Sunan An Nasai). The physical fitness is very essential because sound mind lies in a sound body. Moreover, without physical fitness the leader will not be able to perform his responsibilities. So while selecting Muslim leaders physical fitness should be tested sincerely and rightly.

5.17 Morality

Moral Character is another important quality of Muslim leader without which the leadership cannot be thought of. The sole function of the mission of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) was to perfect the character of the people (Bhuiyan, 2007). Anas[®] reported that the Messenger of Allah said: "Indeed I have been sent to complete the perfecting of good character" (Sunan An-Nasai). Almighty Allah declares about the character of His Prophet: "And you are on an exalted standard of character" (Al-Qur'Ēn, SĒrah al-Qalam: 68:4). Amar Ibn Al-'Ēs (r.t.a.) says, "The Messenger of Allah neither spoke indecently nor he listens to any indecent talking. He used to say that "the best among you are those whose character is good" (ĀlĒl al-BukhĒrĒ). Muslim leaders are treated as model of the followers from all dimensions especially from the view point of character and morality. So in spite of having a lot of knowledge a person can not be a leader in Islam unless and until his character is good. The wise says, "When money is lost nothing is lost, when health is lost something is lost, but when character is lost everything is lost". Allah declares:

"Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the meeting with) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much" (Al-Qur'Ēn, SĒrah al-AĒzĒb:33: 21).

5.18 No Greed for Position

No greed for position is another very important quality of Muslim leader. In Islam, leadership is nothing but heavy responsibility and

accountability to the board of directors, followers, and Allah. Therefore, a greedy man cannot offer himself for that accountability knowingly (Bhuiyan, 2007). AbĒ MĒsĒ al-Ash'arĒ (r.t.a.) reported that, I and two other persons from the family of my uncle told the messenger of Allah that "O Prophet! Allah favored you with heavy power and responsibility; therefore, appoint me in one of such responsibility." The Prophet replied, "By Allah, I do not appoint some one in these positions who asks and desires for it" (ØaĒĒĒ Muslim). In another ĒadĒth reported by Abd al-RaĒmĒn Ibn Samara (r.t.a.), the Messenger of Allah told him: "Do not ask for the position of leadership. Because, if you get it by asking, then you will hand over to it (for accountability) .If you get it without asking of it, then the assistance of Allah will come for you" (ØaĒĒĒ Muslim). If he is selected or elected by the people for the said post then he will be given assistance by the people in his responsibility. But a leader should have the desire that if he is selected or elected as a leader he will perform his duty sincerely and with commitment and all the time he should be prepared for being a leader.

5.19 Accountability

Virtue of accountability is another personal trait of a Muslim leader. An organization is unhealthy unless it periodically holds its leaders accountable for their actions (Altalib, 1991; Trad, 1998). Any follower has the right to ask any question on any matter to the leader and the leader should answer the questions of followers without any hesitation. This accountability is not related only with the Day of Judgment but also in the present life. This trait is seen among the Muslim leaders. According to Islam, each and every human being will be made responsible for his good or bad deeds and accordingly he will be rewarded or punished. Allah says: "...whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant) shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant) shall see it." (SĒrah al-ZilzĒlah: 99:7-8). The Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) said, "Surely, all of you are responsible and will be questioned about their responsibilities" (ØaĒĒĒ al-BukhĒrĒ). The first caliph AbĒ Bakr (r.t.a.) following his election to the post of the head of state of Medina said, "Obey me as long as I obey Allah and His Messenger, when I disobey Him and His Messenger, then obey me not" (ØabarĒ, Abu Ja'far Ibn Jarir). The second Caliph 'Umar Ibn KhaĒĒĒb (r.t.a.) said, "Obey me if I obey Shariah. Correct me if I am deviated from the right path" (Ibn Sa'ad, Muhammad, 1944). Once while addressing to the public, a young man from the congregation stood up and asked 'Umar (r.t.a.) "We will not listen to

you, until you give us the explanation that you owe us." The people were shocked at this audacious interference. Umar paused for a moment, and then turning to the young man asked, "Explanation for what." The young man said, "The other day each one of us obtained a piece of cloth from the Baitul Mal. Today I find such two pieces of cloth on you. I want to know what right had the Caliph to get a share double than the share of an ordinary Muslim." Before Umar could explain anything, Abdullah (the son of Hazrat Omar) stood up and said, "Friends, the truth of the matter is that like every other person me and my father obtained a piece of cloth each from the Baitul Mal. My father is so tall that the piece of cloth that he got from the Baitul Mal did not suffice him. So I gave him my piece of the cloth." This explanation satisfied every one. The young man who had interrupted the Caliph said, "We are satisfied. You can now proceed with your address. We will listen to you and obey your commands."

5.20 Striving for Improvement

A Muslim leader has another trait i.e he has a continuous inner striving for self-improvement. Prophet (p.b.u.h.) says: "Whose today is not better than yesterday, he will be backdated." In Islam, there is always a room for improvement, Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) always prays to Almighty Allah to increase him in knowledge (al-Qur'Ēn, SĒrah Ūaha: 20-114), no matter how knowledgeable or skillful he is. If leader's improvement does not occur then followers' improvement will also not occur, because, followers will follow the leader. So, in Islam, leader should try his level best for improvement from the stand point of knowledge, quality of work, quality of life, relationship with Allah, and relationship with followers.

5.21 Optimism

A Muslim leader is always hopeful regarding the success of his work. Believers do not feel insecure at any stage of life. Due to their trust on Almighty, they are made immune from disappointment. No doubt, ups and downs come in the life of almost everybody, but hope for success helps not to be frustrated. Then they do not look at life or world with gloomy and aimless eyes. They know that they have been asked to despair not of the mercy of Allah (Al-Qur'Ēn, SĒrah al-Zumar: 39.53) in any circumstances. They firmly believe that nothing is impossible and with greater enthusiasm and ambitiousness all the hurdles coming in the way become easy automatically.

5.22 Persuasiveness

It is the ability to articulate ideas and views with clarity .The Holy Qur'Ēn emphasizes the importance of persuasiveness through the

example of Prophet Moses who pleaded for the inclusion of his brother Aaron in his mission. Moses said, "My brother Aaron is more persuasive in speech than I. So send him with me as a helper, to confirm me. For I fear that they may accuse me of falsehood." (Al-Qur'Ēn, SĒrah al-QaĀĀ: 28:34). In addition, leaders need to be pragmatic in controversial matters (Khan, 1998). During the writing of the Hudaibiyyah treaty, the Prophet dictated the following words: "This is from Mohammad, the messenger of God." The Quraishi delegate raised objections over these words. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) promptly changed the word and ordered that Mohammad, the son of Abdullah be written. This shows the Prophet's persuasiveness as he was looking to have a peace treaty with the Quraish to win much time to talk and preach to the people about Allah's message to them. Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) used to deliver short, clear and meaningful speech. Even, the last sermon of Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) was short but very meaningful and impressive. In fact, the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) succeeded more with the Quraish to convince people to accepted Islam so quickly and largely than any other time because of his persuasiveness.

5.23 Generosity

Generosity is a virtue in Islam. Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) stated that "there is nothing worse than avariciousness". He declared, "The generous person is closest to God, heaven, people and far from hell" and "He who removes a distress, God blesses in this world and the hereafter". A man is created for nothing but to feel the needs of other humans. If that was not the case, angels were more than sufficient to God for worship. (Iqbal, 2006)

5.24 Guardianship

Guardianship is another very unique personal trait of Muslim leader. Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) said, "who has not any guardian, I am his guardian" (Musnad AlĀmed). He also said, "I am guardian of the orphan, who left wealth behind him is for his successors; but who left debt, I am responsible to pay it" (ØaĀĒĀ Al-BukhĒrĒ). There should have due pain in the heart of a leader like an authentic guardian for the followers and this guardianship trait can develop a very good relationship between leader the and the followers which ultimately helps in developing mutual cooperation between the leader and the followers which may lead to the achievement of goal more spontaneously.

5.25 Enterprise and Initiative

Enterprise is a leadership quality that distinguishes leaders from followers (Safi, 1995; Bangash, 2000). This trait is manifested by self-confidence, boldness, diligence, hardwork, initiation, and taking risks. A Muslim leader should possess enough zeal, initiative and inspiration to enkindle the heart of the followers (Ather, 2007). He should take initiative from his own to uplift the position of followers. Leading is taking the responsibility to work diligently with little compensation. Leaders should be confronted with true challenges and asked to improve their performance. Leadership is not domination. Leadership is to fulfill the responsibilities, the way that Allah wants us to live (Jabnoun, 1994; Siddiqi, 1997). This trait is revealed in the self-confidence shown by Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) when he stood on the mount of Al Safaa and called his people to the way of God (Haykal, 1976).

5.26 Perseverance

It is that quality of a leader by which he tries again and again to achieve the goals in spite of difficulties. This trait is seen among all the Prophets from Adam to Mohammad (p.b.u.h.). Muslim leader works for the satisfaction of Allah (s.w.t.). The worldly goal of a Muslim leader is to establish Islamic rules and regulation for ensuring social, political, cultural, economic and overall salvation which ultimately unchains humanity from human slavery. But in achieving the worldly goal Muslim leader needs to work continuously. He may not attain worldly goal but he would not be accountable for his success or failure rather he would be accountable for his effort.

5.27 Inviting to Good Deeds and Forbidding Bad Deeds

A leader should have the ability to encourage the people for doing good deeds and at the same time he must forbid the bad deeds. In Islam, a leader can not take middle position regarding good deeds and bad deeds. "There would have a group among you who will invite people to good deeds and forbid in doing bad deeds and they would be successful" (Al-Qur'Ēn, SĒrah ŐĀl 'ImrĒn: 3:104). Both good deeds and bad deeds can not be practiced altogether in a welfare society. Since Islam would like to establish a welfare society, a Muslim leader should work for stopping bad deeds and cultivating good deeds.

5.28 Rendering Service to the Followers

A leader can achieve the goals if the followers cooperate with the leader sincerely and dedicatedly. A good leader can create dedicated and committed followers by rendering proper and timely service to the

followers. A leader should understand the needs of the followers for meeting those needs. The door of the leader should be open for the followers for all time. Moreover, a leader should be proactive in rendering service to the followers and thereby he can buy loyalty of followers. A leader can easily win the heart of followers by rendering service to the followers, side by side a leader may lose the popularity if he cannot render proper service to the followers. Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) says "All creations are the family of Allah and who behaves well with the family of Allah is most likeable to Allah" (Bukhari). The Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) also says, "Allah shows no mercy to them who are not merciful to the people." (ØáĀĒ Muslim).

5.29 Economical

A miser can not create followers because people do not like him. A Muslim leader would not be an extravagant also. The Holy Qur'Ēn declares:

"Give the kinsman his due, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and waste not (your wealth) in wantonness. Lo! the squanderers were ever brothers of the devils, and the devil was ever an ingrate to his Lord" (SĒrah al-IsrĒ': 17: 26-27).

The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said, "Every day two angels come down from heaven, one of them says, 'O Allah ! Compensate every person who spends in your cause; and the other (angel) says, 'O Allah ! destroy every miser" (ØáĀĒ BukhĒrĒ). The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) also said, "There are two habits which are never present together in a believer; miserliness and bad manners" (TirmidhĒ).

5.30 Neat and Cleanliness

A leader is regarded as a model of followers. His life style should be homely but neat and clean. Being physically clean and well-groomed a Muslim leader can satisfy Allah (s.w.t.). The Holy Qur'Ēn says, "Purify your cloths, Shun all filth" (SĒrah al-Muddathir: 74: 4-5). The Holy Qur'Ēn also says, "...wear fine clothing...." (Sura al Araf: 31). Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) says "cleanliness is half of faith" (ØáĀĒ Muslim). The Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) also said, "All of Allah's affairs are beautiful, and He likes beauty" (ØáĀĒ Muslim). This trait of leadership helps in attracting the aristocrat followers.

6. Conclusion

Nowadays, leadership is being considered as a key factor for the success of a nation. This leadership can be meaningful and effective only when

the leader will has some essential traits. It is not possible by a leader to influence the followers without holding those essential traits. Moreover, the traits of a leader vary from culture to culture. In Islam, a leader holds some mandatory traits such as: faith on Allah, missionary zeal, vision, mutual consultation on decision-making, knowledge, persuasiveness, justice, patience, leniency, humility, self-sacrifice, God-fearing, honesty and truthfulness, keeping promise, physical soundness, moral character, no greed for position, sense of responsibility, accountability, optimism, good behavior, generosity, guardianship, striving for improvement, enterprise and initiative, perseverance, inviting to good deeds and forbidding bad deeds, rendering service to the followers, economical, and neat and cleanliness . There is no doubt that if a leader can possess those traits it would be very much easy to attain the goals and there should have continuous efforts to acquire those traits which will not only help the leader to be successful in this world but also in the hereafter.

References

- 'Abdel-Rahman, A. R. A. (1995). An Islamic Perspective on Organizational Motivation.
- 'AlĒ, A. (2005), Islamic Perspectives on Management and Organization. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- 'Ali, I. (1989). Nahjul BalĒgah, Translated and Edited by Ebeid, F. BeirĒt: DĒr al-kitĒb al-lubnĒnĒ.
- Abdel-Rahman, A. R. A. (1996). Administrative Responsibility: An Islamic Perspective.
- Ahmad, A. (2001). Islamic Leadership for the 21st Century. Paper Presented at the IGSICOJ
- Al-BukhĒrĒ, (1997). The Translation of the Meanings of ØáĀĒĒ Al-BukhĒrĒ.
- Al-NawawĒ, I. A. Z. (1993). RiyĒĒ Al-ØĒlĒĒn. Translated by A. Nassar. Cairo, Egypt: International Islamic Publishing House.
- Al-Talib, Hisham. (1991). Training Guide for Islamic Workers. Herndon, Virginia: IIIT&IIFSO.
- Al-ØabrĒ. (1987). TĒrikh al-Rasul wa al-Muluk.
- Ameenah, B. P. A. (2001). Seven Habits of Truly Successful People (Cassette Recording No. 5655-B). Alexandria, VA: Sound Knowledge.
- Asaf, M. (1987). The Islamic Way in Business Administration. Cairo: Ayen Shamis Library.

- Ather, S. M. (2007). *Islamic Management and Business* (1st edn.). Chittagong: Noksha Publications.
- Ather, S. M. and Sobhani, F. A. (2007). *Managerial Leadership: An Islamic Perspective*, Chittagong: IIUC STUDIES, Vol. 4.
- Ather, S. M. and Ullah, M. H. (2009). *Islamic Accounting Systems and Practices*, *The Cost and Management*. vol-37, no. 6.
- Bangash, Z. (2000). *The concepts of leader and leadership in Islam*.
- Bhuiyan, M. S. A. (2007). *The Government and Politics in Islam*. Dhaka, Bangladesh: Noor Publications
- Chowdbury, N. (2001). *Leadership Strategies and Global Unity for the 21st Century: An Islamic Perspective*. Paper presented at the IGS-ICOJ International Conference on Leadership and unity in Islam, Kobe, Japan: Writers Club Press.
- Da'wah and Irshad. (1986). *Meaning and Significance of Da'wah illÉ-Allah*. Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute.
- GhazÉlÉ, M. A. (1999). *Fiqh al-S'rah: Understanding the Life of Prophet Muhammad*. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: International Islamic Publishing House.
- Hawi, S. (1982). *FuÎÉl fÉ al-Amrah wa al-AmÉr. (Lectures on Leadership and Leader)*. Amman, Jordan: Al-Sharq.
- Haykal, M. H. (1976). *The Life of Muhammad*. Indianapolis: North American Trust Publications.
- Hourani. (1983). *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ibn Sa'ad, Muhammad. (1944). *ÜabaqÉt li al-'Alam Al-'Arabiyyah*. Cairo, Egypt.
- Iqbal, M. (2006). *Bang e Dara*. Allama Iqbal Urdu Cyber Library Network, Lahore: Iqbal Academy.
- Jabnoun, N. (1994). *Islam and Management*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Institute Kajian Dasar (IKD).
- Khan, M. W. (September 1998). *Prophetic Principles of Success*. Minaret: The Islamic Magazine.
- Kirkpatrick, S. A. & Locke, E. A. (1991). "Leadership: Do Traits Really Matter?" *Academy of Management Esxecutive*.
- Mohtsham. S. M. (2007). *Vision and Visionary Leadership – An Islamic Perspective*. *International Review of Business Research Papers*, vol. 3, no.2.

- Mustapha, A. O. (2000). *Leadership Qualities in Islam*. Retrieved from <http://www.jpa.gov.my/buletinjpa/j2bil1/leadership%20qualities%20in%20Islam.htm>
- Robbins, S. P. & Coulter, M. (2004). *Management* (7th edn.). India: Prentice-Hall.
- Safi, L. (1995). *Leadership and Subordination: An Islamic Perspective*. *The American Journal of Islamic Social sSciences*, 12(2).
- Siddiqui, M. (Speaker). (1997). *The Muslim Leader*. Orlando, Florida: Available from the MeccaCentric- Da'wah Group.
- Sweedan, T. M. (Spseaker). (2000). *Al-RasÉl Al-QÉ'id*.
- Syed, I. B. (2002). *ShÉrÉ*. Retrieved, from the Islamic Research Foundation International Web site: <http://www.irfi.org>
- The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 12(2).
- Trad, K. (1998). *Leadership*. <http://www.speednet.com.au/~keysar/leader~1.htm>