

## Political Leadership Malay Party

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**Abstract:** Islamic political leadership that tends to practices transparently can evoke a sense of responsibility among the people to uphold the tenets of Islam through state and governance system. The public support are seen unattractive when leadership practice among the leader is weak, corrupted and do not have a strong commitment to the interests of the nation and religion. This study aimed to explore the practice of political parties between PAS and UMNO leadership are in line with Islam and to review the practice of building a knowledgeable culture, empowerment and management of community development. This qualitative study used the methods of interviews and observations as well as other relevant documents to obtain data focusing on the state of Kelantan and Terengganu. Rabbani's leadership model will be used to see how far the appreciation of the current political leadership practices among the current local leaders with the practice of leadership in Islam.

**Key words:** Political leadership, leadership practice, knowledge culture, leadership, empowerment, management of community development

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### INTRODUCTION

Islamic political leadership practices are important in shaping the society and determine the direction of the country in accordance with the tenets of Islam. There is also a correlation with the stability of the country's political leadership. Good citizens and good leaders can create a peaceful harmony and those leaders and citizens who committed crimes can lead a country to perish (Taimiyah, 1997). However, political leaders who are committed to the Islamic practice is seen not easy to do injustice and abuse but it can run perfectly while leaders who are not practicing Islamic practice is seen as very easy to do injustice and oppression to the community (Hawa, 1988).

The importance of maintaining the Islamic practice in leadership is emphasized in Islam. Ghazali (1989) explain that religion and politics are like a pair of twins that couldn't be split off. According to him, the country would disintegrate without a leader while religion without a leadership is lost.

By nature, human beings indeed need a system of social life in which there are leaders who take care of all the needs of the community. Political leaders are very important to open the social activities such as in socio-economic, socio-political, socio-educational and socio-cultural.

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as the best role model for those who want to become a good leader. The character

shown by him such be able to convey Islamic practices (tabliqh), trustworthy (amanah), thoughtful and wisely (fathonah) and honestly (siddiq) could be followed by all human being in the universe. This quality of leaders should be emulated by all Islamic political leaders in the trust and the responsibility to lead the ummah.

Many western writers recognize the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad for having founded the religion and politics at a time but they also recognize that Islam is not just a religion but also the legal procedures, the distinctive legal and political (Olaqi and Saeed, 2015; Qharadhawi, 1999). Thus, the Prophet Muhammad is regarded as the best in leading the ummah because he was not only became a powerful leader in the field of politics but also in the religion itself (Mazhar, 1993).

In this study, the researchers examines from an Islamic 'world view' to see how far the leaders highlighting the political leadership practices based on Islamic values of the knowledgeable culture, leadership empowerment and management of community development among party members and the local community. This practice is accompanied by a sense of responsibility shaped in the form of guidance and professionalism. The study focused on the leadership of the dominant political party and is synonymous with a Malay-Muslim community of PAS and UMNO (PAS., 2011).

**Islamic political leadership:** According to Din (2003), Islam is a religion that is holistic and collective from all aspect of life and not restricted to purely religious aspects. Islam means surrender or submits to Allah SWT includes submission to God, the aspects of faith, worship, morality and law (Zaidan, 2011; Din, 2003). Islam is not just prayers, alms, pilgrimage, fasting and reciting the shahadah but jihad in Allah's way, namely enjoining the good and forbidding evil. Allah SWT says in Al-Quran which means:

“Let there be among you a party who invite to goodness, enjoining what is right and forbid evil. They are the ones who will prosper” (Surah Al ‘Imran: 104)

In Islam, the leader is called as a khalifah or Imam or Ulul Amri. According to the scholars, the Caliph means successor to the Prophet Muhammad and the prophets in the responsibility as an administrator, manager and leader of humanity on earth (Mawardi and Baghdadi, 1973; Khaldun, 1992; Taimiyah, 1997). God in nature says:

“And when your Lord said to the angels:” I will create a vicegerent on earth. “They said:” Wilt Thou (khalifah) on earth, one who will make mischief therein and shed blood when we glorify and sanctify You? “He said:” I know what ye know not” (Surat al-Baqara: 30)

Accordingly, overseeing the affairs of religion is a matter of religion but religion does not exist without the role of leader. In fact, Islam leads politics rather than politics leads Islam. Thus, Islamic political leadership response for the future of the Muslims survival as well as the trust that must be shouldered by every individual who holds the power to enforce Islamic law via a system of state and government (Taimiyah, 1997). Allah says in Surah an-Nisa', verse 58 which says:

“Allah commands you to make over trusts to their owners (who deserve it) and when you judge between men, (God made), you judge with justice. Allah is with (Nila) that instructs a handsome to you. Allah is the Hearing, the Seeing” (Surat an-Nisa': 58)

Thus, the political leaders who truly practice Islam is a political leadership that led Islam as its ideology in the system of government and religious affairs while Al-Quran and Hadith used as a reference in the drafting of laws (Mawdudi, 1977). Allah Almighty says:

“Surely you are a leader Allah and His Messenger and those who believe that prayer and give alms and bow (bow) to Allah” (Surah al-Maidah: Verse 55)

The nature of leadership itself is meant to influence a person so as to achieve a goal or agenda in any organizations or community (Bush, 2003; Northouse, 2004; Blanchard, 2007). Therefore, leaders should serve the people and lead the country in a fair and trustworthy, if not human life is in a state of chaos (Mawardi and Baghdadi, 1993).

Although, every man is responsible (mukallaf) and will be held accountable by God (Allah) in the hereafter. All activities in human's life will be questioned as leadership activities because in every aspect of human life not deviate from the scope of leadership, whether in the family, education, organization and country. Messenger of Allah said which means:

“Each of you is a leader and will be accountable for the leadership. An Imam is a leader and he was responsible for the man who led a husband is a leader and he is responsible for his family a wife in her husband's house was a leader and he will be responsible for the leadership, a servant of his master's property is a leader and he will be responsible for what led the man to his father's property will be held responsible for the property. And each of you is a leader and each of you will be held accountable for what led” (Sahih al-Bukhari: 1997; Muslim: 2005)

**Malay political leadership:** In the context of Malaysian politics, every single political party has shown their political leadership on the basis of ideology or policy of its own party. UMNO and PAS saw as the only Malay-Muslim political party that is so dominant and synonymous with Malay-Muslim community. PAS and UMNO used a different approach in support of the struggle of Islam in Malay community. PAS struggle for the benefit to uphold the Islam as the way of life which more inclined to enforce an Islamic state in pursuit of Allah's pleasure with the call of “Allahu Akbar” while UMNO saw more focus to fulfill the need of ummah which in line with the objectives of the syariah. UMNO always call the slogan ‘lifelong Malays’ for the survival of their political domination in the Malay-Muslims community (PAS., 2011).

In this respect, leadership is not a glory and splendor that have showy and snapped at each other but leadership is a trust that is hard to bear. Messenger of Allah said which means:

“Indeed Ijarah (leadership) is a trust, it will bring shame and remorse on that day except for those who get to the truth and to perform his duties” (Muslim, 2005)

Leaders elected by the people through the democratic system practiced in the country shall be responsible for the tasks entrusted. The abandonment leadership responsibilities entrusted to various abuses and tyranny will bring disaster upon not only rejected by the people in elections but also in the punishment of God will in the Hereafter. As the Prophet’s said by the Hadiths:

“Anyone who is entrusted by God to lead the people, he was destined to die. On the day he died in cheating people, then Allah has forbidden Paradise for him” (Sahih al-Bukhari: 1997)

Thus, if the task is not left to the leadership it deserves and is entitled to an era of decay and destruction as the hadith of the Prophet which means:

“When trusts wasted time then wait for destruction”. The Companions asked: “O Messenger of such trust is squandered?”. He replied: “That is when a matter left to the talks do not deserve it but if so Wait while destruction!”. (Sahih Bukhari: 1997)

Therefore, politics is a branch or a means of disseminating Islamic propaganda. Politics is the power and the ability of a leader to implement policies and any transformation. Therefore, political leaders play an important role in bringing about the political direction of the party because they are the driving force, managers and implementers.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

In term of methodology, this study uses a qualitative approach which is analytical evaluation and document as well as content analysis. The sample of this study was comprised of 4 Malays political leadership party division from UMNO and PAS. A semi structured interview was used to guide which included questions focusing on significance episodes of performing leadership political activities experiences. The hour long interviews recorded and transcribed the audio recordings.

The data of political leadership practices were coded for themes regarding leadership competencies using the process outlined by Cresswell. First, the researchers created a classification system by coding the interview transcript with labelled that corresponded to themes. Then, they performed a logical analysis across the themes to explore their interconnections with allow them to generate new insight to organize the data. Lastly, the researchers performed an interpretative analysis to more fully understand to the meanings in the data. Interpretation goes beyond descriptive data by attaching significance to what were found, finding meaning, offering explanations and drawing conclusions.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Knowledge culture:** Leaders who have a sense of professional development in building the skills of party members will lead them to have a knowledge culture in the community. Knowledgeable leaders capable of ensuring people living in peace and harmony because they have learned trust and justice are important to develop the country. His knowledge was not limited to a particular field of knowledge but extends only covered a wide range of knowledge including religious knowledge and modern knowledge for the sake of the life in the hereafter. God in nature says:

“Allah states that there is no god but Him, the upholding of justice. The Angels and the people of knowledge (also stated such). There is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise” (Surah Ali Imran: Verse 18)

**Common values:** The Muslim leaders need to emphasize the development of knowledgeable cultures by highlighting the common values in society and party members. The concept of common values adopted by UMNO slogan ‘lifelong Malay’ while PAS is calling for “Takbir! Allahu akhbar”. The common values concept imbued by sharing the Malay values from UMNO is different with PAS which more emphasize the invitation to Islam. Thus, the purpose of sharing common values is to build understanding and to unite party members and community-led, namely the Malays who are Muslims.

PAS as a party emphasizes the unity of thought for understanding the tenant of Islam and collegial works to build a party’s members as a team. Every party’s members are recommended to understand the main objective of their involvement in PAS for the sake of the betterment of the Islamic way of life for achieving the pleasure of Allah. The ultimate goal for PAS is putting Islam, the Quran and

Sunnah inappropriate place (Interview with President PAS Kuala Terengganu). On the other hand, UMNO adopted common values and a consensus meeting is important to work together in harmony (Interview with the Chief Division of UMNO Pasir Puteh).

**Learning spirit:** Political leaders need to educate party members to have a responsible, disciplined and practice of Islam jointly and collectively. Political leaders play an important role to develop the spirit of learning in any field of knowledge. In fact, it was shown that the majority of assemblymen from PAS won in the area that many school or religious institutions actively developed. There are a lot of Islamic institutions built up in Pengkalan Chepa such as Maahad, cottages, gallery of Islamic scholars and knowledge centre for the Islamic leader to convey Islamic teaching publicly in Kota Bharu such as the late Tuan Guru Nik Aziz Bin Nik Mat and many more (Interview with the Chief Division of PAS Pengkalan Chepa).

Meanwhile, UMNO shows some activities by calling to the development of science and culture from the point of ensuring that the spirit of learning among party members and the people who led through courses held a religious program such as religious speech and religious occasions like the birthday of Prophet Muhammad (Interview with the Chief Division of UMNO Besut).

**Holistic sciences:** Party leaders must highlight the importance of holistic sciences among the party members which have professional background. According to PAS, they have the most effective medium for capacity building among party members which divided by two focus group of people. The first medium was for the betterment of Islamic teaching involving few programmed such as usrah, halaqah, meetings and seminars. The second medium involving educational institutions such as madrasah (Maahad Darul Quran and Maahad Maher), SURE and ILHAM are meant for professionals who are interested in PAS and want to learn Islam more deeply (Interview with the Chief Division of PAS Kuala Terengganu). Different approach by UMNO, the sharing holistic knowledge among party members was by joining party activities either in the programs organized by the party as well as religious programs and cultural motivations and sports program (Interview with the Chief Division of UMNO Pasir Puteh).

**Management of community development:** A responsible leader will be able to manage the development of the community and always well prepared. Such leaders can innovate the patterns of society activities towards progress and developed community. The leaders will

promote some activities such as the corner thinking, educational, economic, social and community welfare. This aspect can be seen via the management procedures and the party management program which is how leaders manage and supervise all work systems and programs related to the party. In short, the practice of Islamic political leadership will not achieve its objective if the leader is not in the framework of godliness who follow the instructions of the Quran and al-Sunnah (Salamun and Ahmad, 2012).

**Procedures:** Procedures party in UMNO is working through a centralized system where all the distribution of tasks and commands necessary through flow direction from the top leadership to the lower level (Interview with UMNO Division Head of Pasir Puteh). In fact, party leaders will view the appointment of officials to manage the party program to ensure all party's activities run smoothly (Interviewed the Chief Division of UMNO Besut).

PAS applied the system of office working procedures where they appointed a regular staffs as the Executive Secretary of State (SUK) which act as the backbone of the administrative management at all levels of the party and running every single party's activities (Interview with the Chief Division of PAS Kuala Terengganu).

**Management for party's program:** As a party, PAS downsize the management scope into several units, there is a unit which focuses for a committee of area management, the wings of the party such as PAS women's wing, PAS Youth, PAS Ulama Council and committees established by Secretary Council of Standing Committee centered. In fact, there are monitoring made by the Empowerment Party committee. (Interview with with the Chief Division of PAS Kuala Terengganu).

As for UMNO, a party set up is managed by the party organization including three wings which are youth, women, women's youth whom they are willing to perform the works in accordance with party direction. Party leaders are issuing directives and making decisions in all matters relating to the party's policy and they will run the activities managed by appointed officers. Hence, this simplifies and accelerates the whole running structure of the party (Interview with the Chief Division of UMNO Besut).

**Party's supervision:** In the matter of supervision, UMNO usually will hold a meetings before taking any decision involving the determination of a majority decision. In terms of supervision, political leaders have always communicated with party members to exchange views and

advise them. Therefore, if the committee did not do their job properly then the party unit will examine ways to change a new leadership before some party members boycotting activities. But for PAS, the Empowerment Party unit will carry out the supervision for every six months. This unit will submit the Key Performance Index (KPI) report to the head of Regions for identifying and assessing the results of work for each committee members. PAS as a party would take action according to the assessment by giving a warning or showing the right way to improve. If the performance was very weak and failed to perform any related activities, then the last action will took a place which is changing the chairman of the committee (Interview with the Chief Division of PAS Kuala Terengganu).

**Leadership empowerment:** Any leaders who are unable to be a good leader will only leading a failure to the next generation in any civilization (Nor, 2010a, b). Therefore, there are process for selecting any leader who will led the effort to build up a civilized society and have ability to lead people must be strong and trustworthy (Muslim, 2005 Taimiyah, 1997). In a hadith reported by Abu Dhar which means:

Abu Dzar reported: "I asked": O Messenger of Allah not the master wanted to appoint me to be a leader? Prophet Muhammad patted my shoulder and said, "O Abu Dhar, you are not able to be a leader. The office manager is a trustee. On the Day of Judgement such a position is low and lead remorse but for the person who receives the trust in the right way and fulfills the trust" (Muslim, 2005)

Leaders with capacity building is a leader which capable of guiding the party to be skilled in managing the society and increase their level of professionalism. In fact, successful leaders are those who work by improving the level of commitment himself and the party members to continue to serve and support the agenda that brought the party to the ultimate goal.

**Skilled leaders:** According to Madhi (2010), the crisis in Islam when it is due to the absence of a leader who has the soul of an educator. In fact, successful leadership is leaders that can make an impact on individual behavior. With this qualities, leaders can perform their duties by providing direction, guidance and maintaining the core strength of the group.

In the PAS perspective, they have a unit that providing management courses relating to leadership to the leadership committee of the region, branches or the

party unit empowerment. This unit will organize the program to make sure all party members have the skills to lead (Interview with the Chief Division of PAS Kuala Terengganu).

While for the UMNO party, the approach is through the appointment of certain positions such as party deputy chairman, the Chairman of the Bureau and others. Through this approach, they will be able to learn and well versed to lead a group of people. Furthermore, there are courses organized by the UMNO focusing on leadership empowerment related party (Interview with the Chief Division of UMNO Pasir Puteh).

**The level of professionalism:** Thus, indirectly, through education and guidance by political leaders can raise the level of professionalism among the members of the party, whether in terms of knowledge, the maturity of thought and rational considerations in determining any decision taken.

**Commitment:** It's hard to be said in every aspect about the commitment of party members if a member of the party did not understand how to manage the empowerment given by the party leadership. Party members must attend the courses and programmed organized by the party in order to educate them to be more committed to the party. The activities were organized to approach them to understand the party objectives and instill values that allow party members gave their loyalty to the party. The party members who understand better about the important of religion, race and nation are those who are aware of the great responsibility to uphold Malay survival in this country (Interview with the Chief Division of UMNO Pasir Puteh).

PAS also see the determination and commitment of party members are through the religious consciousness of party members themselves. Religious education can produce individuals who have religious awareness in order to produce a sense of responsibility towards the party trust (Interview with the Chief Division of PAS Pangkalan Chepa).

## CONCLUSION

Based on this discussion, it is clear that Islamic political leadership can establish an ideology and approaches that could affect party members and the community. This also will led to an orderly and perfect system in any state government or country. In addition, it can plan future actions to create an ideal community and well-established based on Islamic way of life for achieving pleasure and blessings from Allah SWT.

## IMPLEMENTATIONS

Therefore, the implementation and application of Islamic political leadership practice through Malay political parties are capable of giving new hope to the current political atmosphere in Malaysia and its people. All the crises and internal or external conflict in PAS and UMNO can be handled comprehensively if each party leader put religion as their main aspects in leadership. The model of Islamic political leadership is very important to make country's political landscape in line with Islamic teaching.

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