

Modern Democracy in Creating Ethical Leadership in the Muslim World: A Perspective of Tawhidic Paradigm

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This paper postulates critical explanation from Tawhidic paradigm on the relationship between modern democracy and ethical leadership in the Muslim world. This paper examines whether the pragmatic democracy creates ethical leadership in the governments of the Muslim world or not. The study conducted a survey with the sample of 25 postgraduate students of Graduate School of Management (GSM), International Islamic University Malaysia in 2011. The selection of the respondents was based on convenient random sampling from 200 postgraduate students from various countries. The preliminary results of the survey indicated that the Western democracy has insignificant role in creating ethical leadership from Tawhidic paradigm – the element of Unity of God. Furthermore the this research found that, lack of accountability and transparency lead to the Muslim world to be worst off from the Modern democracy which impedes to create ethical leadership.

Key words: Democracy, Ethical leadership, Tawhidic paradigm, Muslim world.

1. Introduction

In recent years, many countries that used to be ruled by authoritarian or military government are now vocal about the need to apply democracy. The term ‘Arab Spring’ has been used for the new dawn of Arab countries that managed to topple the authoritarian or regimented rulers. Muslim and non Muslim citizens worked together to install modern democracy into their national system. According to Kurki (2010), the theories of democracy also emphasize different types of values in relative to each other, or occasionally the same values but in different priority orders. For instance, while the liberal model highlights values of political fairness, freedom from illogical power and consensus building, the Marxist and social democratic models stress values of economic fairness and justice and conflicts of welfare between classes, while participatory democrats highlight contribution and active interaction of humans as a key aim of democracy. Islamic and Confucian models of democracy on the other hand prioritize respect for communal values and challenge secular individualist focus on protection of individuals’ interests. There are then deep “social theoretical,” institutional and also value differences of emphasis between the models of democracy.

Held (1996) has said that, It is expected to differentiate between three overall clusters in theories of democracy: elite theories, pluralist theories and theories of direct democracy, which comprise deliberative and participatory approaches. Each of these proposes different roles for citizens’ involvement in the democratic process. In the elite tradition democracy is basically visualized as struggles for power between narrow elites. The role of ordinary citizens is limited to participation in regular elections, which ensure that governing elites can

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be ousted from power. Other than that, the citizens are considered to be viewers of the political game. The elite tradition foresees that a strong role for proficiency and technocracy is foreseeable in multifaceted societies, whether this is seen as terrible as an iron cage of Sachzwang (Weber, 2002) or a constructive movement towards a more realistic society.

Crocker (2008) has proposed and made a helpful list of ten choices within capability theory that can be 'outsourced' to democracy. The democratic position proposes as such:

- (1) the choice of agents and participants;
- (2) the choice of the process of decision making;
- (3) the choice of agency versus well-being;
- (4) the choice between functioning and capability;
- (5) the choice between functioning's (or capabilities) now and functioning's (or capabilities) in the future;
- (6) the choice and weighting of valuable capabilities and functioning's;
- (7) the choice of basic capabilities and thresholds;
- (8) the choice between basic capabilities and expansion of all valuable capabilities;
- (9) the choice to specify general capabilities and functioning; and
- (10) the choice of distributive and other values.

But Claassen, R. (2011) has criticized the above choices. Since the most fundamental choice is not on Crocker's list (since he is a capability theorist): the choice of metric of justice – a choice between capabilities, utility, resources, primary goods, etc. So he suggested us to add this choice as an eleventh item to Crocker's list. This is how he was actually trying to make a relationship between the democracy and the ethical leadership. Since without justice, modern democracy cannot enhance the ethical leadership. In addition to that, Ruscio, K. P. (2004) has also mentioned that, the course of modern democratic thought is really one of complementary the image of the leader as optimistic change-agent who elevates other personalities to higher moral planes of cooperative goodness against the image of leader as inherited manipulative power-seekers.

On the other hand Sadiki (2004) said that just because there is no democracy in the Western sense in the Middle East this does not mean that "democracy carries no meanings for Arab Middle Easterners." Democracy, on the contrary, is an extensively shared perfect for many people in the region, but has unlike meanings than in the West, surrounding Islamic notions of society and harmony. He was saying that, democracy has a potential to create ethical leadership and prosperity in the Muslim world but it has to meet the Islamic requirement (ethical values, accountability to Allah SWT, transparency) of ruling the country. Then we will be able to create the ethical leadership as Ciulla (1998) argued that leadership can be defined as a multifaceted moral relationship between people, which can be based on trust, responsibility, obligation, emotion, and a shared vision of the good. He also said that, heart of the leadership lies on the ethics or ethical values.

The key issue here is about ethical leadership in modern democracy. The previous models are supportive of modern democracy, but lack of emphasis on the ethical leadership. While some religious values are incorporated into the modern democracy, but relativism and universalism ethical leadership may lead to uncertainty. This paper emphasises on ethical leadership from Tawhidic paradigm perspectives. We have come up with the some findings regarding ethical leadership in the democratic countries whether this modern democracy can increase the ethical leadership in the Muslim world or not which has not been explored in the previous research. The discussion of the paper is divided into a few sections. The first section presents the introduction for the paper in terms of motivation, explanation of key constructs of the paper (modern democracy and ethical leadership), research gap, and

organization of the paper. The second section is the literature review. The third section explains the methodology of the paper. The fourth section presents the findings and discussion based on the data obtained. Finally, the paper makes a conclusion.

2. Literature Review

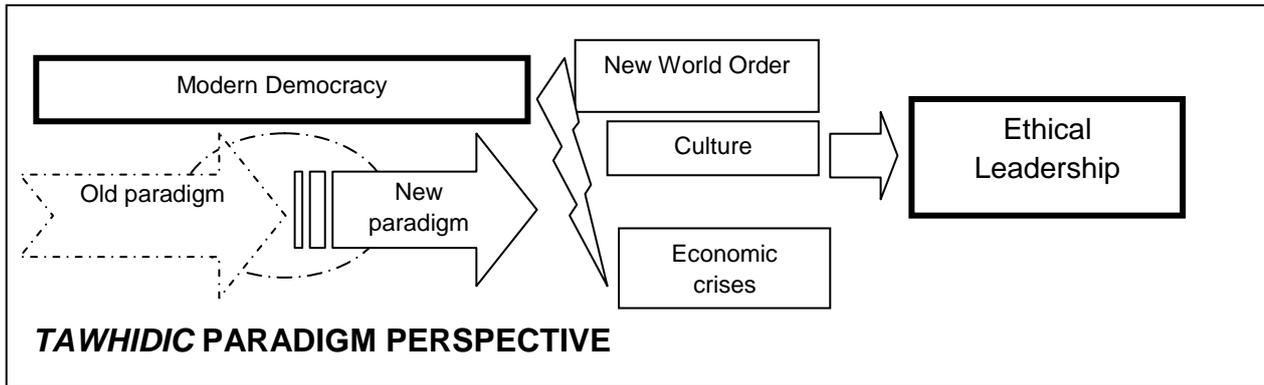
Ian Taylor (2001) distinguished four successive stages in bureaucratic reaction to popular discontent with new technologies. First, the bureaucracy considers the problem to be excessive risk aversion on the part of society. Second, it decides there is a problem with insufficient data to be solved by better quantitative analysis. Then, it realizes that there is a problem of communication with the people. Finally, when all else fails, it suggests there is a structural problem with public institutions, insufficient public participation and openness. Better institutions that guarantee disinterested professional expert advice should solve the problem. Taylor rightly concluded that all these measures miss the deeper rift between society and the elite in relation to non-instrumental values that no instrumentally rational intellectual or institutional tool can alleviate.

Michelman argues that democratic theorists may be satisfied with adherence to a democratic process that '(1) is in force, and (2) we judge to be reasonably defensible as justice-seeking' (Michelman, 1997, p. 166). Kondylis (1991) argues that in mass democracy since 1970s, the exertion of authority is open to be claimed by anybody, as long as he proves his competence in exploiting the opportunities better than his rivals. This means that the dominance of a class has been substituted by the dominant elite of politicians, who are endlessly fighting each other, dismissing or changing their making up; since the members of political elites have no certain social prerequisites. Therefore political elites have become permanent organs of authority exertion only since the splitting of society to individuals-atoms and the dominance of extensive equalizing doctrines and trending. So we can say that, if the political party is fair enough to lead the country then it will be easier for them to create the ethical leadership. But sometimes, political parties are accountable to nurture all unethical leadership who just think about themselves. This how, we can say that, democracy is not doing well to control the dirty politics among the political parties.

On the other hand, are democracies more crystal clear than other political regimes? "Yes" is often assumed to be the answer to this question. Certainly, in the minds of many, transparency has become identical with democracy. This transparency can enhance the ethical leadership in the country as suggested by Shapiro (2003), "democratic leaders can never be entirely free from a commitment to truth-telling". So if the modern democracy can enhance these two (transparency and accountability) very important elements of ruling the country, then certainly it will play a very significant role in the country to produce more ethical leadership.

Indeed the influence of globalization is inevitable due to the transformation of economy and social from domestic protectionism to liberalization and deregulations. However, a few challenges to speed up globalization at the expense of ethical values. Hence this may affect ethical leadership development. This research shows the challenges to develop ethical leadership within the influence of globalization through the following Figure 1:

Figure 1: Modern Democracy Challenges to Ethical Leadership



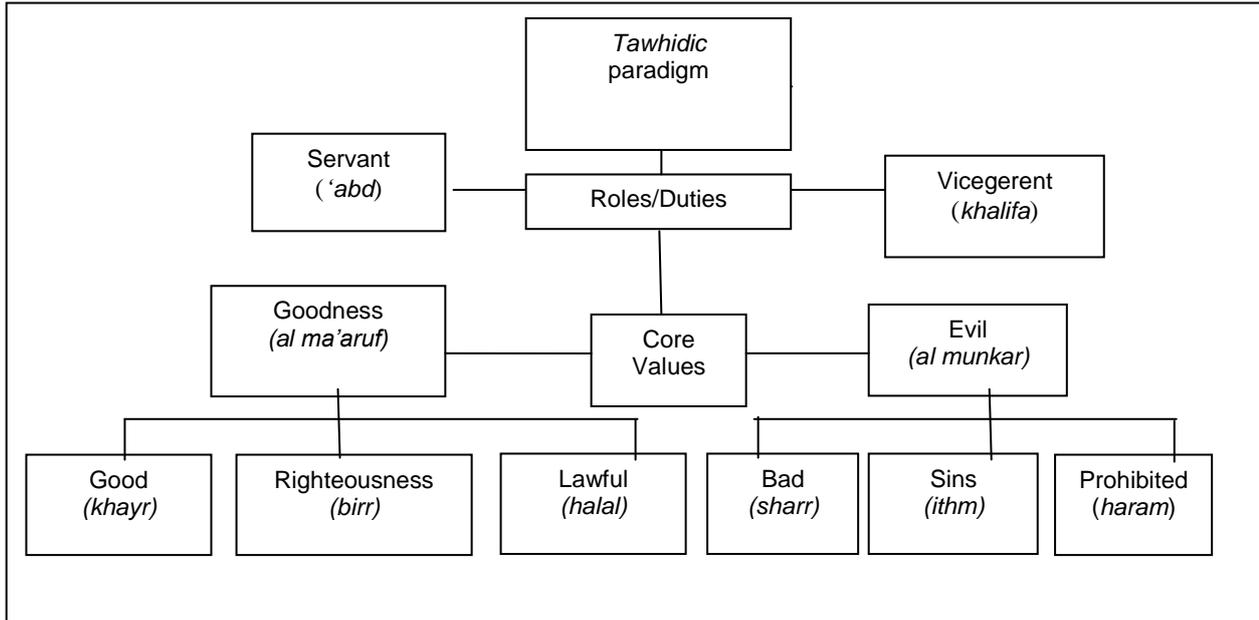
We can see a lot of corruption, economic crises arise in the Muslim world even though they are experiencing democracy. Almost all the Muslim countries are not getting worst off since it does not create ethical leadership. Such as, every time an opposition party does not satisfy with the process of election in Bangladesh under the democracy, always fighting leads to loss of numerous lives in Bangladesh, which becomes the culture! This culture is also seen in some other Muslim countries since this democracy does not make the leader as ethical.

That is why; the impact of modern democracy on ethical leadership can be explained from the Tawhidic paradigm. According to Choudhury, M. A (2007), the meaning of the original episteme of Tawhid as Oneness of God (i.e., of the divine law) in the Qur'an are firstly the Sunnah. The Sunnah encompasses the life, saying and practices of the Prophet Muhammad to whom the Qur'an was revealed. Secondly, with the Qur'an and the Sunnah at the core of the original foundations of unity of knowledge, the broad mechanism of participatory society is launched later, along with its foundations and enforcing appliances. Moreover, Sarif and Ismail (2011a) argued that the Tawhidic paradigm implies 'global' thinking emotionally, cognitively and spiritually. Ismail and Sarif (2011) contended that the Tawhidic paradigm is a very essential element to spark 'transformation' as far as the global dimension. Thus, ethical leadership can be established through the subscription of the Tawhidic paradigm along with the good deeds prescribed in Islam (Sarif & Ismail, 2011b, 2011c).

Sarif and Ismail (2011c) operationalized the Tawhidic paradigm into global ethical leadership. Figure 2 depicts three main components that Islamic worldview, namely (a) Tawhidic paradigm, (b) roles/duties, and (c) core values. The Tawhidic paradigm reflects true submission to Allah and absolute devotion to His Commandments. As a result of the recognition of kalima shahaada, man has to resume two fundamental yet inter-related roles—servant and vicegerent of Allah. The roles must be implemented with due diligence—trust and justice.

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Figure 2: Fundamental Principles of Tawhidic paradigm



Source: Sarif. S. & Ismail (2011)

There are many extensive previous works, which support that Tawhidic paradigm has great impact to their daily life and management style. Professor Masudul Alam Choudhury has written numerous writing on Tawhidic paradigm and its impact on global economics, finance, and knowledge and so on. However, authors did not find any rigorous works, which focuses on the impact of Tawhidic paradigm on the modern democracy and ethical leadership. Authors of this paper attempt to find the answer of the question, whether Tawhidic paradigm can have impact on the democracy or not and how it can help the society to get the benefit from the modern democracy though ethical leadership.

3. Methodology

This study used an opinion survey with postgraduate students of Graduate School of Management (GSM), International Islamic University Malaysia in 2011. The selection of the respondents is based on convenient random sampling from 200 postgraduate students from various countries. The study secured 25 respondents (12.5%).

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Please refer to the Table 1 below which summarizes the demographic analysis and profile of the respondents.

Table 1: Demographic analysis

25 samples from the Students				
No	Topics		F	%
1	Age	20 - 25 year	13	52 %
		26 - 30 year	11	44 %
		31 – 35 year	1	4 %
2	Gender	Male	21	84 %
		Female	4	16 %
3	Department	Management	9	36 %
		MBA	16	64 %
4	Country	Malaysia	14	56 %
		Bangladesh	1	4 %
		India	2	8 %
		Sri Lanka	1	4 %
		Iran	1	4 %
		Maldives	1	4 %
		Guinea	1	4 %
		Kenya	1	4 %
		Somalia	1	4 %
		Indonesia	1	4 %
		Nigeria	1	4 %

**“F”= Frequency, “%” = Percentage.

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To get the respondents' opinion about the democracy and the ethical leadership, we have asked some questions. Below are the questions and their answers in Table 2:

Table 2: Questions and responses

No	Question	Frequency	Percentage
1	Does this modern democracy align with the Islamic principles?		
	Yes	20	80 %
	No	4	16 %
	Do not know	1	4 %
2	Is this modern democracy can bring prosperity in the Muslim world?		
	Yes	24	96 %
	No	1	4 %
	Do not know	1	4 %
3	Does this modern democracy enhance accountability?		
	Yes	18	72 %
	No	6	24 %
	Do not know	1	4 %
4	Modern democracy helps people and leader to be ethical, do you believe that?		
	Yes	24	96 %
	No	1	4 %
	Do not know	1	4 %
5	Can we get the benefits from this modern democracy with the help of <i>Tawhidic</i> paradigm?		
	Yes	19	76 %
	No	1	4 %
	Do not know	5	20 %
6	Do you think that, <i>Tawhidic</i> paradigm can increase accountability and transparency among people and leaders to get benefit from this democracy?		
	Yes	23	92 %
	No	2	8 %
	Do not know	2	8 %

4. The Findings and Discussion

We have conducted a survey (see table 2) among students from different Muslim nations and found various aspect of modern democracy and the impact of Ethical leadership in the Muslim worlds. Most of them agreed that, Modern democracy is not aligned with the Islamic Principal. Since it says that, all power belongs to the people but Islam says that, all power belongs to Allah SWT. Therefore, leaders are misusing this power from the modern democracy and get benefitted from this. Thus, almost all of the respondents (96%) agreed that, this modern democracy can not bring prosperity in the Muslim world. Another thing is that, this modern democracy is not strong enough to create accountability among the leaders, so the leaders are becoming more corrupted then general people. 72% of the respondents said that, this modern democracy does not enhance accountability which is very important to

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run the government. Furthermore, 96% respondents believe that, the modern democracy does not help the people and the leaders to be ethical.

Modern democracy is dominated by the leaders who handle everything in the government which makes them arrogant and thus they become corrupted. That is why most of the democrat Muslim government is more corrupted then other Non Muslim countries. For example: BBC News (2005) has reported that, "Bangladesh has been ranked as the most corrupt country on earth in the latest list of corrupt nations published by Transparency International." Even though Bangladesh is Muslim majority country but in the democracy system does not help them to be ethical at all since the leaders are not maintaining the Islamic principals and ethical manners to run the government. But Muslim world can be benefitted from this modern democracy if it is based on the Tawhidic Paradigm. 76% of the respondents mentioned that, Muslim nations will be benefitted from the modern democracy if they follow the Tawhidic paradigm. The law of the countries should be based on the Tawhidic Paradigm. All things have to be done to please Allah SWT. Since most of the respondents 92% agreed that, Tawhidic Pradigm increases the accountability and transparency among people. Since Tawhidic paradigm will enhance the "fear" and accountability towards Allah SWT who observes everything (appeared or hidden). This attitude towards Allah SWT will make the leaders to be more accountable and ethical. So the leaders of the country has to take the good things from this modern democracy and match with the Tawhidic Paradigm, then Muslim world will be prosper and the leaders of the Ummah will be more ethical. That is why, this study can have a great impact for further research on the modern democracy in accordance with the Tawhidic Paradigm to create more ethical leadership in the world. Furthermore this survey gives more places for further research on what will be impact on democracy to create ethical leadership after implementing the Tawhidic paradigm.

5. Conclusion

This study found that, somehow democracy is not performing its best to create more ethical leadership in the Muslim world. The main reason is that, all leaders are not serving for the sake of people. Leaders are manipulating the situation and get the benefits from it. So at the end of the day, the general people are suffering. So this research found that, this is the high time to introduce and implement the Tawhidic Paradigm in this modern democracy and leave those parts which are controversial to the Islamic rules and regulations. Through these activities, we will be able to get the Divine Blessings (barakah/rahmat) from Allah SWT. This study shows that, we should be reminded that, we all have to work according to the Tawhidic paradigm (Unity of God) to please Allah SWT then we will be able to get benefit from modern democracy. That is why; this study has great impact for further research to create more ethical leadership under the modern democracy in the Muslim world through Tawhidic Paradigm since it enhances the accountability and transparency. However, this research has some limitations too. This research only studied 25 samples from two departments of one university (International Islamic University Malaysia) in Malaysia. Therefore the result cannot be generalized for the time being. Furthermore, this research could not use various analytical tools to make the result more vigorous. However, it is believed that, the result and findings of this research can be verified/evaluated in the future with further research.

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