The Relationship between Responsibility and Leader's Effectiveness: A Perspective from the Holy Qur'an

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Abstract: The present research aims at empirically revealing the leadership concepts from the holyQur'an. There are many studies conducted on leadership but few of them took into account the religious aspects of leadership especially from the Qur'an as a source of knowledge. According to the Qur'an, the concept of Taqwa, as a characteristic of Motaqeen, has been knownto have two distinct components, that is, Spirituality and Responsibility. This study tries to examine the relationship between the second component i.e. responsibility and leader's effectiveness. A cross-sectional field study was carried out in which responsibility was a self-constructed measurement while leadership effectiveness was constructed from existing scales in the literature. Multiple regression and hierarchal regression techniques using SPSS were used to test the hypotheses utilizing sample of 206 companies. The results show with the exception of forgiveness, all dimensions of responsibility were found to be positively related to leadership effectiveness.

Key words: Leadership effectiveness · Motaqeen · Responsibility · Spirituality · Taqwa

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays religion is becoming more influential in peoples' thoughts, actions and values. There are three signs of Islamic reawakening according to Al-Qaradawi [1] namely increasing number of people who pray in the mosque, spread of Hejab among women and increase in sales of religious books. He further mentioned the increasing desire among people to return to Allah is because they are feeling the need for spiritual matters more in their lives. This phenomenon is more evident among the Islamic nations. Some evidences are the establishment and rapid growth of many Islamic banks, schools and other institutions around the world even in western countries. For example pope [2] and Shoaib [3] indicated that the Islamic Banking and finance has seen an exponential growth from a single Egyptian bank in the 1960s to a thriving industry that now has the equivalent of $500 billion industry with annual growth rate of 15% to 20%. Particularly in Iran, Pakistan and Sudan 100% of banks are riba free. In Saudi Arabia, 95% of all retail banking transactions is done through Islamic banking institutions. Other markets such as Malaysia and Indonesia are moving dynamically through a development stage. More and more conventional banks, such as Citibank, HSBC and UBS, are converting some of their services to adapt the Islamic model [2, 3].

Even though a tremendous amount of research has been conducted to study leadership and leadership effectiveness [4-7], they were primarily focused on the Western business environment. Yuki [5] stated that research on leadership during the past half century has been predominantly conducted in the United States. Canada and Western Europe and minimal research have been conducted in non-western cultures.Furthermore the literature on leadership is lacking research from Islamic perspective. Ali [8] noting this dearth in research from an Islamic perspective emphasised that much of the current research on the issue from an Islamic perspective lacked depth and at state of Immaturity. In contrast, Shirazi [9] stressed that the principles of the management as espoused by the Prophet Muhammad and the methods of

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his leadership should not be disregarded in the pursuit to adopt Western principles of management and leadership. The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between leaders' responsibility and leadership effectiveness from an Islamic point of view.

Literature Review: Qur'an was revealed in the Arabic language, therefore to conceptualize a Qur'an term the Arabic root word of the concept should be the base. In the Arabic language the root of the word Taqwa is 'waka' which means to protect or avoid or reserve [10]. The concept of Taqwa has been interpreted in various ways by scholars. According to Ibn-kather [11] the root meaning of Taqwa is to avoid what one dislikes. On the other hand, Al-Sharawi [12] states that Taqwa means to void Allah's punishment by doing what He commands and keep away from doing what He forbids. Ali [13] described Taqwa as the fear of defying the will of Allah and likens it to the love of Him.Taqwa can be classified into two main groups of characteristics namely spirituality and the responsibility of Motaqeen against other. In this paper we focused on the latter category to find its possible impact on leadership effectiveness

Hassan [14] indicated five responsibilities of the leader in Islamic society i.e. to lead the prayers (imam), to provide guidance, to furnish directions, maintain justice and enforce ethics. Ali [8] indicated that in the Islamic society people who are capable and are in a position of having responsibility have a moral and social obligation to reduce the gap between the rich and poor. In the Islamic view employers have to deal with employees using mercy, kindness and justice to be effective [8]. Part of the leader's responsibility is to be considerate to his subordinates as in the hadith narrated by Muslim the Prophet said: "whoever becomes a leader among Muslims if he deals with them in mercy may Allah reward him otherwise may Allah punish him".

Based on the above mentioned a leader's responsibility stands for the leader's relationship toward his subordinates which he governs by controlling his anger, practicing Sadakah, being forgiving, being just, having integrity and being patient. These dimensions are ethically based on behaviors which Islam considers as basic human rights and commands leaders to observe toward both Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Qur'an views human beings as having double roles in this earth, one as a servant to Allah (worship) and one as vicegerent on earth. Servant status demands the worship of Allah and vicegerent demands the building of civilization [14].

Business as a human activity is part of the vicegerent status. Qur'an perceives business as one means, among others, to fulfill the purpose of human existence in this world. So the two statuses of human beings (worshiper and vicegerent) influence each other and should be integrated and balanced. That is why Islam considers work as a form of worship. In TafseerIbn-kather [15] Allah praised those who ask for the affairs of both this life and the hereafter. Hayyattayyibah which literally means good and happy life is described as a balanced life between the enjoyment of this worldly life and the duties towards the hereafter [16]. In the Islamic perspective the main purpose of business is not to make or maximize profit but to create and deliver goods required by members of society in order to live the good life that Islam aims to create and maintain for all human kind [1].

Business organizations are created to serve society and advance the cause of communities [17]. As the individual employee is part of society then this view creates a match between personal and organizational goals [18]. This match leads to enthusiasm on the part of the employee and commitment to shared goals. Such an organization was titled by Ali as spiritually enlightened organization [8]. Furthermore, to define Islamic business leadership effectiveness, business purpose has to be defined and considered as well. Khalifah [16] defined business purpose in Islam as to create and deliver goods needed and valued by people, to provide opportunity for people to work and realize their mission in life, to develop themselves, to contribute to their societies and to live a good life (hayyattayyibah). Business organizations would be able to reach and sustain the above purpose only by generating profit for the organization and taking responsibility in behaving people. Qur'an and tradition of the Prophet Muhammad repeatedly emphasized the importance of responsibility in work and in fact, the whole of Islam is built on firm responsibility.

Theoretical Framework and Development of Hypotheses: In reference to the literature review, a theoretical framework has been developed to illustrate the relationships between various factors of responsibility and leadership (Figure 1). Even though several factors may influence leadership effectiveness, Taqwa and particularly responsibility has been chosen due to three reasons. The first reason is that the other factors affecting leader's effectiveness have been much studied before and similar results are expected to be achieved. The second reason is that Taqwa is what distinguishes the Qur'anic
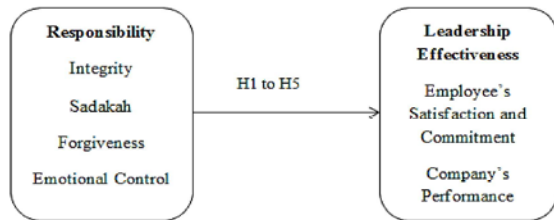
APPENDIX

Fig. 1: Research Theoretical Framework

leadership from the other leadership concepts. The third reason is the lack of empirical studies about the relationship between leadership and responsibility particularly from an Islamic perspective.

Based on this theoretical rationale the following hypotheses are developed:

H1: The more responsible the leader the greater is the leader's effectiveness.

H2: The more generous the leader is in Sadakah the greater the leader's effectiveness.

H3: The higher the integrity of the leader the greater is the leader's effectiveness.

H4: The more emotionally stable the leader the greater is the leader's effectiveness.

H5: The more forgiving the leader is the greater is the leader's effectiveness.

Research Methodology: This research tries to establish and verify hypothesized relationships between a leader's level of responsibility and business leadership effectiveness in a managerial context. Therefore, the business unit leader is the unit of analysis for this research. This study first determined the dimensions of responsibility based on the Qur'an and then developed the measurements of Taqwa manifestations. Then, cross-sectional method was used which required data to be collected from a population sample.

Sample and Sampling Method: The population of this study is all companies listed in the Chamber of Commerce in the capital of Yemen, Sana'a and Taiz. According to Hair guidelines, the sample size of this study includes 135 companies [19]. Due to unavailability of complete addresses of the companies, non-probability sampling

method was used in order for the data collection. Out of 380 leaders and their subordinates to whom the questionnaire were sent, only 278 of them participated in the survey which implies 73 percent rate of response.

Questionnaire Design: Due to the fact that most of the available instruments to measure responsibility of leaders are tailored for Christian surveys and Islamic instruments are very limited, the questionnaire used in this study is partly adopted from a measurement called Islamic Religious Behavior Questionnaire (IRBQ) developed by Dawood [20]. To better fit into the context of this study, some parts of this questionnaire were adjusted. The modified questionnaire consists of 28 questions to measure responsibility. A five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always) was employed.

Measurement of Leadership Effectiveness: As discussed in the previous sections leadership effectiveness is conceptualized to relate to employees' satisfaction and commitment and company's Performance. Since Beh [21] used the same concept, the Business Leadership Effectiveness measurement was adopted and adapted from Beh [21]. The questionnaire was constructed based on key indicators of leadership effectiveness as discussed in Yukl [5]. The questionnaire, composed of thirteen items with a five point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha values for Beh's study were 0.82 and. 84 respectively. There are two reasons for choosing this instrument. The first reason is that it measures the end-results of the leader's efforts rather than their attitude or behavior. The second reason is the instrument's simple design, which makes it easy to be administered to individuals.

Cronbach's Alpha: The most widely used index of reliability and internal consistency is the Cronbach's alpha [22]. Internal consistency is the extent to which individual items correlate with one another or with the test total [23].

As we can see in the Table 1, the Cronbach's alpha for variables range from 0.66 to 0.95 which according to Hair *et al.* [19] is considered as desirable.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha

Variable	Number of Items	Alpha Cronbach's
Integrity	8	.91
Sadakah	6	.95
Forgiveness	5	.86
Emotional Control	3	.66
Total	22	.85

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The selection of appropriate method of analysis is determined by the hypotheses and characteristics of the data. The present study intends to examine the relationship between responsibility and leadership effectiveness from a Qur'anic perspective. This type of analysis requires appropriate statistical tools. With the advent of versatile and powerful computer software programs performing such analyses has been reasonably convenient for many researchers. To test the research hypotheses of this study, a multivariate analysis was utilized.

Descriptive Statistics: Adopting the views of treating the Likert scale as interval scale [22], this study uses the mean to assess the central tendency, while the dispersion is assessed by the standard deviation. Table 2 summarizes the descriptive statistics of respondents' ratings on responsibility and leadership effectiveness.

All variables were measured on a five point scale; the mean scores of all variables were between 3.65 and 3.22. The range of standard deviation is moderately low. 59 -. 75. Integrity has the highest mean score 3.65 which indicates that Yemeni business leaders consider themselves as integrated leaders. The other three

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for research variables

Variable	Mean	STD
Integrity	3.65	.62
Sadakah	3.22	.75
Forgiveness	3.46	.59
Emotional Control	3.60	.62
Leadership effectiveness	3.80	.54

Table 3: Variables' correlation analysis

Variable	IN	SA	FO	EC	EF
Integrity	1.00				
Sadakah	0.71**	1.00			
Forgiveness	0.56**	0.61**	1.00		
Emotional Control	0.48**	0.40**	0.25**	1.00	
Leadership effectiveness	0.70**	0.62**	0.38**	0.47**	1.00

**significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 4: Factor analysis results for responsibility

	Factors			
Items	1	2	3	4
He abides by an agreement he makes to his subordinates.	.83			
He keeps his promises with his subordinates.	.81			
He pays his subordinates their rights fully.	.74			
He doesn't manipulate his subordinates.	.69			
He listens to all disputed parties before he makes his own judgments.	.63			
He accepts responsibility for his wrongs.	.61			
He doesn't overload his subordinates with assignments beyond their capabilities.	.61			
He keeps his subordinates' secrets.	.60			
He gets involve in his subordinates concerns.		.82		
He helps his subordinates even if it requires his sacrifice.		.81		
He goes around looking for needy employees to help them.		.79		
He looks for opportunities to be of service to his subordinates.		.75		
He accepts excuses from his subordinates.			.79	
He depends on forgiveness more than punishments with his subordinates			.75	
He forgives his subordinate even if they hurt him on purpose			.74	
When someone at work hurts him he doesn't recall the previous hurts			.71	
He doesn't answer the misbehaviour with the same.			.68	
He becomes angry for silly matters.				.77
He reacts to events by quick and immature decisions.				.74
He is patient in negotiation.				.65
Eigenvalue	4.38	4.69	3.51	2.03
% of Variance	22.0	21.3	16.0	9.23
KMO MSA		.94		

variables of responsibility have moderately high means 3.60, 3.46 and 3.22 which points out that Yemeni business leaders view themselves as responsible Muslim managers.

Correlation Analysis: To complement the shortcomings of the coefficient alpha, correlation analysis is used to further examine the internal consistency of the research instrument.

From table 3 all responsibility dimensions were found to be positively correlated with Business Leadership Effectiveness.

Factor Analysis: Factor analysis was conducted to summarize correlation patterns among the variables hence a smaller number of items could represent the variables [19]. A principal components analysis with varimax rotation was used to examine the factor structure of all variables. Since the sample size is 206 and in accordance with Hair *et al.* [19] each item should load. 50 or greater on one factor and. 39 or less on the other factors.

Table 4 shows the factor analysis results after omitting the items that have cross loading (higher than. 39) or low loading (less than. 5). After the deletion MSA value is 0.94 and four factors emerged with eigenvalue greater than 1.0, explaining 68.47% of the variance with all items loaded in the range of 0.83-60. All items included in the extracted factors were derived from the same theorized dimensions, thus they would be awarded the same namesi.e.Integrity, Sadakah, Forgiveness and Emotional control.

Hypotheses Testing and Results: Thefirst hypothesis stated that leader's level of responsibility relates positively and significantly to the leader's effectiveness. Therefore, multiple regressions were conducted to examine the relationships between the responsibility dimensions; Integrity, Sadakah, Forgiveness and Emotional control and Business Leadership Effectiveness.

Table 5: Result of multiple regression

Variable	Standardized β	p-value
Integrity	.49	.00
Sadakah	.27	.00
Forgiveness	-.11	.07
Emotional Control	.14	.02
F-value	20.71	
R^2	0.56	
Adjusted R^2	0.54	

According to the Table, three out of four dimensions of Leader's Responsibility were found to be positively and significantly related to Business Leadership Effectiveness. Sadakah was found to have positive and significant relationship with Business Leadership Effectiveness. Therefore, H2 is accepted at (β =. 27, p<.00). This highlights that the more Sadakah the leader provide to his subordinates the greater his Leadership Effectiveness. Similarly, Integrity was found to be positively and significantly predicting Business Leadership Effectiveness. This lends support for H3 and therefore it is accepted at (β =. 49, p<.00). This result indicates that the higher the Integrity of the leader, the greater his Leadership Effectiveness. The same goes for Emotional Control where it was found to possess positive and significant association with Business Leadership Effectiveness. Thus, H4 is approved at (β =. 14, p<05). On the other hand Forgiveness was found to be negatively and significantly related to Business Leadership Effectiveness, therefore H5 is rejected at (β = -.11, p> 05). This indicates that omitting employees' faults does not influence the effectiveness of leadership.

CONCLUSION

This research was an attempt to empirically test the relationship between responsibility and leadership effectiveness from a Qur'anic point of view. With the exception of Forgiveness, all dimensions of responsibility namely, Sadakah, Integrity and Emotional Control were found to be positively and significantly related to business leadership effectiveness. The results indicate that subordinates are more willing to follow the leader who is caring, helpful, honest and stable. Such traits and practices are considered the means by which business leaders can achieve and sustain organizational goals and growth.

According to Aquino *et al.* [24] and stone [25], Forgiveness is a contextual sensitive construct which means, its effects might be positive or negative depends on the context. Al-Tareeq [26] indicated that Yemeni society is tribal societies which, consider revenge as a sign of manhood, because of that the negative relationship between Forgiveness and Leadership effectiveness might be due to Yemeni people view of forgiveness as weakness. Aquino *et al.* [24] perceives Forgiveness to be beneficial in long-term relationships rather than in short term. This could plausibly account forthe non-significant relationship in this study as 62% of the subordinates had only spent less than three years with the respective leaders.

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