BUILDING AN ISLAMIC CULTURE OF LEADERSHIP BASED ON PRINCIPLES OF MERCY FOR ALL CREATION (RAHMATAN LIL ‘ALAMIN)

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Abstract
The primary purpose of this paper is to offer an approach to building a culture of leadership based on the Prophet Muhammad’s teaching of love. Since people are strongly motivated by values they deeply adhere to, the paradigms used as rationale for this paper embody views of leaders as motivators and values transformation as their main task. It is argued that the Prophet Muhammad’s teaching of love needs to be cultivated in an Islamic school community. The paper presents discussion on trans-rational values as the contributing factor to this view, and the main argument centres on the discussions of the Prophet Muhammad’s teaching of love and its application in developing a culture of leadership in Islamic schools.

Key words: motivation, values transformation, Prophet’s teaching of love

INTRODUCTION
There has been a growing concern within the discourse of education about the meaning of schooling. An example of this concern for the inner outcome of education is manifested in such issues as holistic education, education’s quest for meaning, spirituality and education, the imposition of business ideology in schools, and many others discussed in articles, books, seminars and academic journals.
Neil Postman\(^1\) in his book ‘The end of Education,’ maintains that “the narrative of Economic Utility is impotent to create satisfactory reasons for schooling.” The driving idea of this narrative, according to him, is that the purpose of schooling is to prepare children for competent entry into the economic life of a community. The reason why this narrative is impotent is that it diminishes the idea of what is a good learner is. Students are seen as merely economic creatures whose sense of worth and purpose is to be found in their capacity to secure material benefits. A nation which bases schooling on this narrative lets its children lose a sense of personal identity, a sense of community life, and a basis for moral conduct.

Parallel to this concern is an increasing interest in a quest for meaning in education. Palmer\(^2\) observes that “When we fail to honor the deepest questions of our lives, education remains mired in technical triviality, cultural banality, and worse: It continues to be dragged down by a great sadness... a cry for meaning.” Education should help young people find questions leading to a discovery of the meaning of their lives.

In Indonesia, there was a remark made by a former Minister of Education\(^3\) pointed out that the most alarming crisis the people of Indonesia are facing is not the economic one but rather one which is moral and spiritual. Indonesia has lost its foundation of the educational system. According to the Minister, finance is not the answer. Indonesia needs to reconstruct its educational institutions. Until these institutions help their students to hold to moral values and to develop good characters, the crisis will linger on. Therefore, promoting moral values must become a concern for every educational institution, especially Islamic schools recognized as advocates of moral values.

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3. *Gatra*, June 17, 2002
Much has been done to improve the quality of Islamic schools in Indonesia. Curriculum development and the physical development of these institutions are areas often given much attention by the government. Classroom teachers and school administrators have been trained and sent abroad so as to have a broader knowledge of school improvement. Also, providing facilities and building new classroom are often considered the best immediate ways to improve these schools. However, despite substantial government spending, there have yet to be any satisfactory results.

One of the diagnosed problems is the low motivation and commitment of teachers in performing their job. Their teaching objectives are restricted to only preparing students for exams. Often, they are unaware of their being role models for their students. They lack the motivation to stick to the main goal of Islamic education, helping students to exercise a noble character. Undeniably, teachers’ motivation to demonstrate good qualities plays a vital role in achieving this objective.

An issue that remains to be addressed is the vital role an Islamic school leader plays in being a motivator assuring the achievement of school objectives. Since the objective of Islamic schooling is to cultivate noble character, and since its success depend greatly on the qualities exhibited by its leader, a culture of leadership emphasizing character building becomes a critical demand. Basing its principles on the ultimate goal of Islamic education, which is to foster a noble character in the students, this approach to leadership is one that nourishes the human capacity to act with high morality. Since such actions as respecting, helping, and loving others are best performed by those exercising an active love of humanity, this approach finds its foundation in the teaching of the Prophet Muhammad on love. It is believed that when this teaching of love is practiced by Islamic school leaders it renders high inspiration and a transcendent form of motivation, not only to teachers but to all members of school community to nurture good characters.
This paper addresses three central questions. First, how does a noble character practiced by a leader motivates individuals? Second, how can “love for humanity” become a central spirit of a leader’s noble character? Third, how does the Prophet Muhammad’s teaching of love become the key instrument for Islamic school leaders to practice noble character?

**DISCUSSION**

The first part of this paper attempts to discover the relations between motivation, leadership and values that is aimed at finding ways a culture of leadership in Islamic schools in Indonesia can be improved. Offering Muslims values of humanity, Islam is a religion that gives an Islamic educational leader ingredients which generate in individuals a strong motivation to perform their task. The utilization of humanistic values such as love, care, and respect to instil motivation in people is considered effective particularly in a community where rational deliberation is not the absolute norm. Islamic schools in Indonesia for instance are the perfect examples where utilization of such values is worthy of attention. The primary focus of this section is to study how motivation works and to find ways in which values transformation might be carried out within an organization. Some theories of motivation will be reviewed, and processes through which motivation emerges in a person will be examined.

Motivation is a dynamic internal process that energizes and directs actions and action tendencies. In the field of organization, motivation is usually defined as the process through which behaviour is mobilized to reach certain goals, which in turn satisfy individuals and organizations. Motivation has long been a major concern for leadership studies due to its linkage to job attitudes. Transactional

leadership holds the view that motivation exists when there is an exchange between two parties, leader and follower; while transformational leadership contends that motivation comes from an individual’s moral values and ethical aspirations. In order to show how these notions of motivation, values, and leadership are tightly interrelated, a review of major motivation theories will first be discussed.

Among the most influential theories of motivation are Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, Herzberg’s two-factor motivation, and McClelland’s need for achievement. Maslow proposed that the human being have five types of needs; physiological needs, needs for safety, needs for belongingness and love, needs for esteem, and needs for self-actualization. These levels of needs are organized into a hierarchy of relative prepotency. The higher needs will only become dominant if the lower ones are relatively satisfied. A person is motivated to perform when his or her needs have not been gratified according to the hierarchy.

Herzberg et al. distinguished between contexts where work is performed and work itself. Herzberg found that job dissatisfaction was associated with the conditions that surrounded the job performance. When a person is unhappy about his or her job, it is not the job itself that is creating that feeling. Rather, it is the factors that act as a context in which the job is performed. These factors are called hygiene factors, which include supervision, interpersonal relations, physical working conditions, salary, and job security. It these factors are not fulfilled, poor job attitudes will arise. However, even when they are gratified, they cannot do much to bring about positive attitudes.

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Positive job attitudes will emerge when an individual's need for self-actualization is satisfied. Herzberg maintained that “it is only from the performance of a task that the individual can get the rewards that will reinforce his aspirations.” According to Herzberg, factors such as work itself, achievement possibility of growth, responsibility, advancement, and recognition are called ‘motivators’ because these factors reward the needs of individuals to reach their aspirations.

McClelland proposed theory that identified three important motives: achievement, affiliation, and power. Achievement as a motive is defined as behaviour directed toward competition with a standard of excellence. Affiliation is the desire to establish and maintain friendly and warm relations with others, and power represent the desire to control others and influence their behaviour. McClelland’s renowned theory of need for achievement (abbreviation of ‘need for achievement’) was deemed to be the most important factor leading to economic success. McClelland found that people who are high in need for achievement are typically interested in excellence for its own sake rather than for rewards such as money, prestige or power; they choose experts rather than friends as work partners and are more concerned with achieving success than avoiding failure.

Though well known, these theories have also been criticized. The Maslow hierarchy is considered difficult to verify, and it is mostly a philosophical framework to describe typical attitudes of US workers. Fatehi and Derakhshan hold that the individualistic framework of Western culture dominates the interpretation of Maslow’s hierarchy. Thus, it is complicated to apply the theory to given culture, ethnic, and individual differences. Herzberg’s two-factor theory has been criticized for addressing satisfaction instead of motivation and ignoring the effect of pay on motivation. One important critique of these two theories has been their inadequacy in

9. Herzberg et.al, p.114
12. Fatehi and Derakhshan, 1996
handling the theoretical problem of some kind of linkage by which individual needs satisfaction is related to the achievement of organizational objectives\textsuperscript{13}. As for McClelland’s idea, despite its cross-cultural theorizing, it has been found to be inconsistent. When there are similar levels of need for achievement between two communities, they do not necessarily have a similar rate of economic growth.

On the other hand, there are some overlooked ideas that should have been given more attention. Maslow’s notion of self-actualized people is appealing, especially when today’s research on organizations begins to recognize more intangible factors believed to be significant. Maslow identified virtuous characteristics a person possesses when he or she is self-actualized. Individuals who are self-actualized are strongly ethical, have definite moral standards and do right. Due to its nature of value-based activity, leadership constitute moral responsibility. This idea is clearly addressed by Gardner. To him\textsuperscript{14}, leaders exercise their influence in two ways: through the stories or messages that they communicate, and the traits that they embody. The values contained in leaders’ stories should be articulated by their conduct. There is an evident relation between leaders’ stories and their embodiment. Maslow called such leaders self-actualized people.

Herzberg, on the other hand, offered a more essential focus on understanding work motivation. It is not the surrounding conditions that really inspire individuals to have good job attitudes. Rather, Herzberg found that the self-concept with which individuals exercise their actual work, i.e. achievement, self-growth, responsibility, advancement, and recognition were the real factors leading to true work motivation. The concept of shared vision appears to be a further development of this idea. It is organization vision communicated by leaders that lead individuals to focusing the work


itself. Starrat\textsuperscript{15} views organization vision as immersed in an awareness of drama, which is a concept that creates a sense of action. The Herzberg theory specifically directed those concerned with organizational growth to seriously attend to the hearts of their people. Until leaders or managers sincerely focus on these issues, any attempts to create sustainable organizational success are far from being realized.

McClelland’s cross-cultural theorizing revealed that among the source of \textit{n}Achievement was a strong hold on transcendent values. To him, it was an odd coincidence that religious mysticism, from which an attitude of non-violence or reverence is derived, should be associated with business success both in the East and in the West. He described the economic success attained by the Quakers, a Protestant sect in the West and by the Jains, a Hindu sect in India. It was assumed that the religious ideas held by these communities had contributed to their high level of \textit{n}Achievement. Beliefs like inward connection with a larger personal Power than oneself, spiritual union with a holy spirit, or articulation of God’s will through perfect love were thought to establish a foundation for high \textit{n}Achievement.

Far from providing leaders with a comprehensive concept of values-motivation relationship, these ideas require more exploration. What needs to be discovered is how such ideas should be carefully understood. It is important to note that motivation is not as simple as needs or motives. Motivation should be viewed more as a process than as a given entity. Leaders or managers are required to fully understand concepts vital to individual personality. Notions such as values and belief are as essential as needs, motives and satisfaction. How all these ideas work within oneself is critical to creating a practical approach to motivation building.

A. Motivation Process

An understanding of motivation and the motivation theories held by leaders can only be fruitful when these are viewed from their main domain and put in a processional sequence. Locke\textsuperscript{16} introduced a framework of motivation sequence, which begins with needs. Although the term is used loosely in everyday phrasing, the concept of need means that which is required for an organism’s survival and well-being. However, unlike other species, humans have a higher level of self-regulation, which is conceptual and presents them with the possibility of reasoning to fulfil their needs.

Since reason does not automatically tell human what is right or wrong, it confronts people with the responsibility for validating their knowledge. Here is where values play a role. Individuals have to discover the knowledge that their survival requires, including a code of values to guide their choices and actions. Rokeach\textsuperscript{17} maintained that values are considered to be the cognitive representation and transformations of needs. Therefore, the immediate function of values is to give expression to human needs and to guide action. Although the ultimate evidence for what people value lies in their actions, values constitute what people consider beneficial to their welfare. So, values can be viewed as the link between needs and action. They bridge the gap between what is required in order to live and what the person actually des. This is also the reason why Hodgkinson defines values as “concepts of the desirable which tend to act as motivating determinants of behaviour”\textsuperscript{18}.

Values are still very general. People do not ‘do’ values. They ‘do’ actions based on their valuation. Values need to be specified for a person to perform certain actions. Or conversely, a person can only act on goals, which are derived from certain values. The relation of goals to values is the relation of the general to the specific. Goals can

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{17} M Rokeach, \textit{The Nature of Human Values}, (New York: Free Press, 1973)
\bibitem{18} Christopher Hodgkinson, \textit{The Philosophy of Leadership}, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, 1983) p.36
\end{thebibliography}
be viewed as “application of values to specific situation”\(^{19}\). In other words, goals reflect the person’s values as they are seen to pertain to a specific situation.

In any social context, there are always practices of values interaction amongst its members. The more definite the goals shared by members, the more influential this interaction on members. Hence, studies on organization have recently focused their attention on building shared goals. The more individuals in an organization feel that the organizational goals are a reflection of what they value, the more likely they will be motivated to perform their job. Locke and Latham are correct in asserting that individual’s performance in accomplishing their task is regulated directly to the conscious goals that they are aiming towards in the task.\(^{20}\)

So, how people’s performance in an organization could help it achieve organizational goals lies very much in the careful understanding of the motivation process. Before performing ‘actions’, humans have ‘needs’ and are then faced by different ‘values’, which they articulate afterwards into ‘goals’. Locke maintained that the only intervention an organization can make for individuals is at the stage of ‘goals.’ At the value stage, intervention is difficult in any fundamental sense in that it would require some form of therapy or very intense, structured experiences. Though Locke\(^{21}\) contends that intervention at the stage of values is impractical, he believes that the core of motivation lies in the value stage. He argues that the essence of motivation is individual values. Therefore, values transformation is not unattainable.

B. Leadership and Values Transformation

It is regrettable to learn that, there has been an overemphasis in administration theory, research, and training on the technical and

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rational aspect and a neglect of the supra-rational aspect of leadership. It seems that due to their resistance to empirical verification, researchers have found values difficult to quantify in any objective sense. Researchers often face difficulty in developing accurate portrayals of the impact of personal and professional values on practices. Hodgkinson maintains:

Probably because empirical behavioural science is more at ease with a concept like motivation which has at least a connotation of driving or being driven (and hence a suggestion of determination) than with a concept like value which, sooner or later, implies a freedom of actors to choose, and hence introduces a factor of uncertainty and indeterminism which is antagonistic to the project of predictive science.22

It is Herbert Simon’s work, “Administrative Behavior,” that has cast a veil over the fundamentally moral and often chaotic world of educational organizations.23 Though he accepted the place of value in the world, Simon believed that the value side of life was not amenable to study and hence should be separated from the facts. From this perspective that eliminates room for value study, leaders could only use factual or material means to motivate their followers and could not find any chances to perform “the value transformation”, which is identified as leaders’ main duty.

In his book, “The Philosophy of Leadership,” Hodgkinson proposes a value paradigm. According to him, ‘Leadership is intrinsically valuational’ 24. The concerns of leadership should encompass notions such as motives, attitudes, values, ethics, morals, will, commitment, preference, norms, expectations, and the like. Equally important, Maddock and Fulton 25 hold that leadership is motivation, and a leader is a motivator. Once motivation is properly

22. Hodgkinson, p.49
24. Hodgkinson, p.202
understood, a leader has only half way to go to perform his or her leadership. Consequently, I argue that leadership, motivation, and values transformation form a single entity that cannot be separated. To be a leader is to be able to motivate people, and to motivate means to transform one’s values.

The role of values in the practice of leadership becomes more evident when we consider that ‘influence’ constitutes a key word for leadership. Yukl 26 maintains that influencing commitment and influencing a culture of organization is the core of the concept of leadership. Through this, leaders are to shape organizational culture and transform their followers’ values and beliefs. Shamir et al 27 hold that leaders are those who transform the needs, values, preferences and aspiration of followers form self-interest to collective interest. Form this perspective, Locke’s contention that values transformation is impractical sounds pessimistic and obscures possibilities for that essential task of leaders as well. Though it is not unattainable, it is, however, of course not an easy task.

For values transformation to run well leaders have to be role models. 28 Modelling best practices and important organizational values and creating a productive school culture are identified as critical dimensions of leadership. 29 Leaders perform in ways that are the occasion of their being role models for followers to follow in due course. To set the example becomes one of the essentials of encouraging the heart in leadership 30. It is argued that values transformation could be best carried out when leaders demonstrate examples touching people’s hearts.

Vicarious learning occurs when the relevant messages are inferred by followers form the observation of leaders’ behaviour,

28. Shamir et al, p.580
29. Leithwood et al., 1999
lifestyle, emotional reactions, values, aspirations, preference, and the like. It is not the case of making others do a job through simply telling them to do it or through extrinsic rewards. It is more radiating the spirit of respect for the work itself. This can only be performed by self-actualized people, some of whose characteristics are strongly ethical and who hold definite moral standards. In doing so, leaders show themselves as models strengthening confidence in the led, who believe in their making judgments on the basis of competence and values, rather than out of self-interest.

Some types of leadership seem to reflect what has been discussed. Among them are transformational and charismatic leadership. Avolio identifies \textit{idealized influence} as one characteristic of transformational leaders. These leaders perform in ways that make them role models for followers. They are admired, respected, and trusted. Followers identify with them and sympathize with the mission they are advocating. One of the most influential actions of these leaders is ‘love for humanity’, an active power to love for others what one loves for him or herself. This love for humanity, which is often identified as altruism, is considered a prominent characteristic of charismatic leaders. People will most likely emulate their leader when they trust him. Qualities emerging from ‘love for humanity’ portray to people a figure that they can trust.

The idea of ‘love for humanity’ definitely constitutes moral responsibility. It is essentially about being honest about what leaders should do given the circumstances within the organization. Goleman argues that emotional honesty is critical in leadership practices. “Being emotionally honest requires listening to the strong feelings of ‘inner truth’.” A person exercising this quality must practice ‘love for humanity’, by which he or she performs according to a high moral

standard. For this reason, holding a high standard of morality is vital for true leadership. Sergiovanni \(^{34}\) maintains that most current leadership has underplayed the more altruistic reasons for doing things. Instead, it has overplayed the importance of self-interest, personal pleasure, and individual choice as the driving forces for what we do. Altruism can only be exercised by those who posses an active ‘love for humanity,’ thus overcoming their narcissistic ego, and it is the best approach to improving people’s lives in a humane, emphatic manner.

Consequently, leadership is a process of humanization. Leaders are those who help people to be fully human. People can only be real humans when all of their elements are actualized. Until people realize who they really are, recognize what they value the most, and experience the true meaning of their lives, values transformation will not be achieved and they are not truthfully motivated. True leaders acting as role models, therefore, should first be fully aware of themselves, have control over themselves, and then have empathy for their people in order to be able to exercise social skill to influence them. Acceptance and empathy are marks of a good leader. The true leader “always accepts and empathizes.”\(^{35}\) It is through empathy and understanding that people feel treated as humans.

Humanity is performed through sending love, understanding others, offering help, and willingness to serve. It is love for humanity. That is why ‘servant leadership’ greatly contribute to the notion of leadership explored in their thesis. A servant leader “automatically respond to any problem by listening \(\text{first}\).”\(^{36}\) If one can listen emphatically and imaginatively to the other, then any attempt at leading will be from a point of awareness. The motivation for following such a sensitive leader would be more than mere excitement


\(^{36}\) Greenleaf, 1977, p.20
and vision. Kanungo and Mendonca cite examples from two religious traditions and cultures. Both Western Judo-Christianity and Eastern Hinduism teach behaviours performed for the benefit of others: *agape* in the Western tradition and *mokshya* in the Eastern. In Islam, this teaching can be derived from many different angels. The teachings of the Prophet Muhammad on ‘love’ promote these altruistic values. The Prophet was once reported to have said, ‘You will not become true believers until you love for your brothers what you love for yourselves’.

In conclusion, values transformation is the essence of leadership. Doing so gives leaders the most effective tool to motivate people. They have the necessary legitimacy to lead. For all these to happen, however, it requires the trust of others. An exercise of love for humanity shown in high moral qualities modelled by self-actualized people, emotionally intelligent people, or those who exercise ‘servanthood’ are believed to gain peoples’ trust. Such leaders acquire this trust because the make judgments based on values, and they serve these values to shape a covenantal community.

Values emphasizing love for humanity, as this paper argues, are powerful instruments a leader can utilize to act as a model. In the context of Islamic schools in Indonesia, such values can be derived from the teaching of the Prophet Muhammad on love. The significance of values and values transformation in building motivation opens chances for building an Islamic approach to educational leadership where the Prophet Muhammad’s teaching on love serves as its foundation. These values, which are sacred and transrational, will be discussed in the next section.

### C. The Prophet Muhammad’s Teaching of Love as Principles of “Rahmatan Lil ‘Alamin”

The purpose of this discussion is to show the significance of utilizing love for educational leadership practice, particularly in

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37. Rabindra Kanungo & Manuel Mendonca, 1996  
Islamic schools. The Prophet Muhammad was an educator whose people received a love-showering education of human values. Unlike modern education, which tries to make its students capable of mastering every way possible of winning in a materialistic world, the education practiced by the Prophet Muhammad was aimed at the perfection of human beings’ noble character. Generally, what is meant by noble character is moral acts that pay respect to all humanity. The Prophet Muhammad was a leader and a teacher who exercised love as the main tool in achieving his mission, the perfection of the noble character of humans. His companions were trained how to be real humans, through respecting others, treating others with kindness and gentleness, and helping and loving them. It is basically principles of Islam as mercy for all creation.

Within an educational institution, where human values are taught and exercised, the establishment of love is believed to generate strong motivations for everyone to perform at his or her best. Emphasizing the importance of affection to work performance, Kouzes and Pousner hold that “the secret is: we all really do want to be loved”. Also, “love is the irresistible of human nature... the master emotion around which all other emotions are organized so that they work for us instead of against us”. Through love, a lover will do everything to please the beloved. Infusing love among individuals then becomes a powerful instrument to motivate them to perform at their best.

As mercy for all creation, the Prophet Muhammad’s teaching of love can be understood from his sayings about love, which in most cases pertain to two important concepts, noble characters and brotherhood. Therefore, the discussion presented in this section will also look at these two notions. Not only are the three ideas—love, noble character, and brotherhood—often mentioned together by the Prophet Muhammad, but they also represent a value system on which the Prophet Muhammad built love, and love together with noble

character becomes the best formula for establishing brotherhood. This approach of using influence rather than power in motivating people to perform their job has been given serious attention by researchers. 

a. **Love and Beauty**

The Prophet’s sayings about love centre on ‘love for humanity.’ The Holy Book, Qur’an, calls him ‘mercy for all creation.’ Different from the common perception of love held by most people, this love for humanity should be based on faith. It is humans’ faith that makes their love to others last. This love is not based on temporary conditions such as power, wealth, prestige, or physical beauty: when these are not present the love does not disappear. This kind of love is the essence of human existence whose common features have been principles held by human cultures throughout history. This love for humanity is one a person has for all humankind.

This particular notion of love is found not only in Islam but also in other traditions. In Judaism, the commandment “Love your neighbour as yourself.” As Post observes was applied to the non-Jew. In Christianity, this ideal love for humanity is also recognized as *philanthropia* which is often used interchangeably with *agape*, the New Testament Greek word for love of humanity. It is believed that humans have this essence inherent in them. Societies that are conscious about the whole being of human nature will not fail to foster this vital spirit.

Subsequently, it is the matter of the ‘tie’, whether it is faith of transient desires that control this precious seed of humanity. The Prophet has said:

“God is Beautiful and loves beauty”

“A believer loves for his brother what he loves for himself.”


41. Ferguson, 1959


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“A believer is a lover and beloved. And there is no goodness for one who does not love, nor is he himself beloved”\textsuperscript{43}

“God says, ‘My love must be granted to those who love each other for my sake, keep each other as company for my sake, visit each other for my sake, give to each other for my sake, and become friends for my sake’\textsuperscript{44}

The Prophet shows that beauty is the focal point in his teaching of love. Love needs an object, which is beauty. What makes people love something or be loved is beauty. The energy of love inside humans will not benefit them if they cannot see, find, and feel beauty. Khan says, “Love could not have manifested itself if there were nothing to love, eyes could not have seen if there were nothing to see.” It its natural that humans love something beautiful, something that gives satisfaction to the heart, something that tells them about the ‘heart’ of their humanity. Beauty ignites the potential of love inside humans.

The beauty the prophet describes is the beauty of loving others: respecting, helping, and being friends with them. It is the love to \textit{perform} beauty rather than just to witness beauty. It is true that seeing people helping others might stimulate love. Generally, all people love to see beauty, but it does not mean that all people have love or are able to perform respected deeds. In fact, what is understood by real love is an energy that creates love. In his book, The Art of Loving, Fromm\textsuperscript{45} argues that love is an active power in man. “Love is an activity, not a passive affect; it is a ‘standing in,’ not a ‘falling for’... love is primarily giving, not receiving.” Nonetheless, one’s love to see beauty needs to be constantly intensified in order for him to be able to exercise an active love. The beauty of loving others, however, is a power that produces love.

\textsuperscript{43} Al-Ghozali, p.243
\textsuperscript{44} Abd al-Ghani Al-Nabulusi, \textit{Gayat al-matlub fi mahabbat al-Mahbub}, (Roma: BardiEditore, 1995) p.11
From this perspective, love becomes an exceptional quality exercised by only few people. It requires a certain level of moral consciousness and maturity. Fromm argued that “the ability to love as an act of giving depends on the character development of the person.” Further, he elaborates this development of character as an ability to overcome dependency, narcissistic omnipotence, the wish to exploit others, or to hoard; for then the person is afraid of giving himself, hence of loving. A very simple but hard condition of a believer’s love described by the Prophet, to love for others what he loves for himself, certainly demands a strong power of overcoming one’s egoistic drives. A person who is still very much occupied by his or her selfish urges is far from practicing this active power of love. This is also reason this kind of love is often constrained with self-love, which most people are still preoccupied with.

A translation from the original Latin of the Hon. Emmanuel Swedenborg’s work mentioned that,

By love towards one’s neighbor is meant the love of Uses, ... (this love) is separate from the Self-love of Man; for he who spiritually loveth Uses hath not respect to himself, but to others without himself, by whose good he is affected. Opposite to these loves are the loves of self and of the world, for these have not respect to use for the sake of others, but for the sake of self...\(^{46}\)

For a person who is under his narcissistic ego’s control, the world outside is looked at only from the standpoint of what he can get out of it. He is interested only in himself, wants everything for himself, and feels pleasure in taking. He lacks interest in the needs of others, and respect for their dignity and integrity. He can see nothing but himself and judges everyone and everything from their usefulness to him he is basically unable to love.

Overcoming the egoistic nature is a precondition for practicing a high moral standard and an active power of love. This teaching of

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love for humanity, whose foremost pathway is eliminating self-love, which is called common sense. However, according to Khan, it is perfectly practical from the point of view of uncommon sense or super-sense. He said, “...if you wish to be happy think of the happiness of your fellowmen; if you wish to be treated well, treat others well; if you wish that people should be just and fair to you, first be so yourself to set an example.”

Hence, an active love is a moral act. For this reason, the Prophet’s teaching of love is strongly related to his teaching of noble character.

b. Noble Character

As has been discussed, the Prophet’s teaching of love places its emphasis on the concept of beauty. If a person has love, he will give the beauty of himself. Without having beauty, it is impossible for one to have love. The act of giving identified by Fromm as the power of love is best construed by demonstrating noble character. The Prophet Muhammad has said:

I was sent for the perfection of humans’ noble character.

The best thing a person can give is good character.

The best Muslim is one showing the most virtuous character.

In the relationship between love and noble character, two important points must be given attention. First is the Prophet’s emphasis on the importance of noble character. It is his mission to perfect this noble character. He regarded it as the best thing to give. The critical role of leaders’ high standards of moral values has received much attention. Repeatedly in the research literature, portraits of exceptional leaders describe people with unusually high standards, commitments they keep with a self-discipline that can seem excessive, even fanatical. Evans identified honesty and fairness as being

49. Al-Ghazali, p.210
50. Al-Ghazali, p. 210
among an authentic leaders’ chief tenets. Though these leaders might not be religious, their belief in practicing high standards of morality acts as a strong guide for their leadership practices.51

Second, there is a kind of formula that says, “to have Love is to love first.” The first love, with a capital ‘l’, is an active love. And the only way to attain this power of love is to first love that beauty. As mentioned earlier, despite its being passive, one’s love to see beauty needs to be constantly intensified in order to be able to exercise an active love. In Islam, this beauty is the noble character exercised and lived by the Prophet Muhammad. Thus, to have love is to first love the Prophet Muhammad. The love for the Prophet Muhammad is fundamental in Islamic education and in every aspect of a Muslim’s life as well.

Pertinent to this formula is the saying of the Prophet that, “A person is not yet called a believer until I become dearer (more beloved) to him than his family, his wealth, and all people”.52 This saying has a very strong implication on his teaching of love. Until a Muslim loves the Prophet more than anyone he cannot exercise a noble character. It is because, as believed in Islam, the Prophet is the best example of the perfection of human’s noble character. Then, to love noble character is to love him. As a staunch admirer of a musician for instance gets satisfaction by emulating everything his or her idol does, by loving the Prophet Muhammad, an inspiration to emulate his noble character will grow in a person. However, one cannot love someone whom he or she does not know.

Imam Ghozali’s contention of love is worth mentioning here. He said that love will only come after knowledge. Unless a person is constantly and intensely exposed to the beauty of the Prophet Muhammad’s noble character, he will not build that Love. By learning about the life of the Prophet Muhammad and his respected attitudes towards family, friends, children, elders, and the poor, a

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51. Badaracco & Ellsworth, 1989
52. Al-Ghozali, p.181

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Muslim is able to grow his or her love for him. That is the reason the life of the Prophet Muhammad become a subject taught in Islamic schools. It follows that those who constantly make an effort to learn about the Prophet Muhammad can grow love for him and acquire spirit to practice his noble character. The more a person learns about and loves the Prophet Muhammad, the stronger his or her devotion to emulate the Prophet’s noble character.

When a person demonstrate noble character, he then builds love within his community and creates a strong bond of friendship and brotherhood among its members. Here is the meaning of good character explained by the Prophet, “A good character is: to rekindle your relationship with those who cut it, to forgive he who oppresses you, and to give he who deprives you”53

D. Love as Heart Values

As has been pointed out in previous chapters, the aspects of leadership discussed in this paper are those of motivation and values. Leaders are motivators. Since motivation depends largely on the values a person subscribe to, the practice of leadership is by all means valuational, and the elemental task of a leader is to transform people’s values into ones aiming at the achievement of organizational objectives. When an individual subscribes to transrational values he or she will render the strongest vitality to perform certain actions. These values entail deep-seated commitment and powerfully determined motivation. When they are present in a field of action the value calculus is radicalized. Motivation becomes supercharged and reason may become subservient to intuition.54

Human’s heart needs to be nourished. In the realm of motivation, when humans are encouraged to perform actions, they will use their utmost vitality if all elements of their humanity are valued. Today’s world is creating humans who spend most of their

54. Hodgkinson, 1983
time looking at their physical and intellectual needs and desires. What a person values from his or her study, work, and community involvement is limited to materialistic aspects of his or her life, be it wealth, power, prestige, or physical needs of satisfaction. This results in the impoverishment of other parts of human life; compassion and affiliation centered on heart satisfaction.

The main cause generating this condition is the abandonment of the nourishment of the most essential aspect of human life, the heart. Rarely does the human heart become the concern of military generals, company managers, bank executives, city mayors, school curriculum designers, principals, or even classroom teachers. Education reform will fail when “We fail to cherish – and challenge – the human heart... the source of good teaching”\(^5\). Human activities are about an exchange. When people work, study, or meet for whatever purpose, they exchange with each other. Not only do humans’ heart need to be nurtured in these exchanges, but they also will perform better when they are valued in every respect. When the human heart is forsaken, humanity is being destroyed.

In the field of leadership, a harmony between leaders and followers occurs when the values shared are those that nourish the hearts of individuals. Shared values are the foundation of relationships between individuals. Values shared by members of an organization constitute a network of known and shared understanding and norms that people judge their actions and evaluate those of others. When the shared values are those nourishing hearts, it is easier for the organization to achieve its objectives. These values are, hierarchically speaking, on the top.

Values are not unitary or homogeneous but hierarchical, and people usually prefer a higher value upon being confronted with two or more values. At the highest level, values are equated with beliefs, ethical codes, moral codes, and ideologies. These can be understood as principles people refer to as they perform their presumably crucial

actions. However, in an organizational context, people usually do not consider that all the things they do have the same level of importance, which requires them to make any necessary assessment and thus form a judgment based on their beliefs or ideologies. They also often do things based on mere preferences. To put a photograph of faculty members on an office wall might not be as important for a school leader as hiring a new moral education teacher. There are, therefore, levels of value.

Hodgkinson\textsuperscript{56} introduces three types of values, which are conceived differently based on their grounds of justification: principles, consequences or consensus, and preference. To him, type I values that are based on principles are transrational, go beyond reason and imply an act of faith or intent or will. Hodgkinson believes that the most lucid expressions of this type of values, such as the doctrines of Zen or Karma Yoga, are to be found not in Western but in Eastern philosophy. Furthermore, he argues that this type of values must occur if organizational corollaries are to be at all significant. According to him,

Where type 1 values exist... they will tend to colour the organizational context in which that consciousness interacts with other selves so as to give it a charismatic quality. The transcendental or religious values need not be shared by members of the organization for the effect to be present, but when shared fully there can be a galvanizing and synergetic effect upon organizational performance... Even when they are not shared at all I would argue that the mere presence of a single actor with type 1 commitments is enough to radically affect the organizational character, such is the potency of Type 1 value and the mystery of social chemistry.\textsuperscript{57}

Hodgkinson’s value paradigm is a significant contribution: the most deep-seated values render the strongest motivation. Such values are trans-rational and nourish the intangible part of the human self.
the heart. The Prophet Muhammad’s teaching of love, in which the concept of love for humanity is apparent, is comprised of faith-based codes of respected manners. It offers a very humane approach to leadership practices for it highlights the importance of giving love, respect, and care to people. Exercised by school leaders, this teaching of love can generate a school atmosphere where individuals are inspired to exhibit noble character.

The love for humanity translated by the Prophet Muhammad into a value system consisting of such notions as love and noble character constitutes a heart approach to leadership practice. By making this value system grow in a school community, Islamic school leaders can employ the most powerful instrument for the promotion of fundamental human values. The active power of this love can only be cultivated when humans can persistently overcome their narcissistic ego. As these egoistic desires are controlled, the energy to exercise a noble character begins to rise. This is where the human heart plays its role. Such qualities as loving others, helping them, and respecting them are easily exercised when the human heart is nourished earnestly.

The argument of this paper has its basis on the nature of values vital to human motivation to perform all his or her activities. Since the strongest motivation comes from one’s subscription to principles built on trans-rational values, Islamic school leaders should take on a very serious responsibility to utilize these values. At present these values are barely supported by those performing leadership roles, but Islamic schools are environments where sacred values could play a very leading role. Therefore, nurturing the love for the Prophet Muhammad, form which inspiration for exhibiting noble character finds its strongest form, could be considered as the effective ‘heart’ approach of leadership for Islamic school leaders.
E. **Practices for Islamic School Leaders**

The concept of love taught by the Prophet Muhammad offers Islamic school leaders an approach on leadership practices. As Islam views human beings as multi-dimensional creature, all exchanges occurring within an Islamic school community must also consider this fact. Furthermore, since suprarational values render the strongest vitality to the holder, especially when shared together, and that the heart approach is much more powerful than that of the intellect, a faith-based love exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad would serve as the most effective tool for Islamic school leaders to motivate all individuals within school community. Having said that, this paper proposes practical approaches considered applicable within an Islamic school community: demonstrating noble character, communicating values, and celebrating rituals.

a. **Practicing noble character**

A noble character is the first thing Islamic school leaders must have. A value system consisting of such notions as love and noble character—as derived from the Prophet Muhammad’s teaching of love—must serve as the basis of Islamic school leaders’ behaviour. First and foremost, they are role models. Being a Muslim and moreover a model for a school community, an Islamic school leader unquestionably must perform the prescribed obligations of Islam. However, this lies outside the scope of the paper, although the latter strongly argues that performing these obligations must constitute the fundamental personality of an Islamic school leader. Here the focus is on the leaders’ noble character stemming from their possession of Islamic faith-based love. To this end, the idea of servanthood becomes central.

The secret of leadership founded on love is that the leader is a servant first. Many of the problems school leaders have result because they often reverse this order. That is, they concentrate too much on controlling others rather than serving them. Service and leadership are
inseparable. Those who would be leaders must be servants. *The great leader is seen as a servant first.*

In the Islamic tradition, it is clearly stated that “a leader of a society is its servant.” The Prophet Muhammad’s teaching of love emphasizes doing for others what a person loves to do for him or herself. It is a very far-reaching concept of divine love. Since in Islam human beings are servants of God, their lives are but centred on attaining God’s love through serving Him. But to love and serve the Creator is in essence to love His creations and serve them. That is why the Prophet Muhammad has said that God’s love is guaranteed for those who love each other for His sake.

*b. Communicating the values*

One major task of leaders, to communicate central values, has been given great emphasis in leadership discourse. The first step toward credibility as a leader is clarifying personal values. It is something quite thought-provoking, according to Kouzes and Posner, that clarity of personal values is the force that really makes the difference in an individual’s level of commitment to an organization. Deal and Kennedy suggest that organizations become meaningful to members only after leaders infuse them with values. By communicating values, leaders form a network of known and shared understanding and norms that provide for the foundation of community in organizational life. Leaders have to internalize the new behaviour first, before asking others to do so. A leader’s work habit style, timing and acts, through which values are communicated, will establish the organizational norms. Behaviour, even if a leader is not cognizant of it, does express the leaders’ personal values.

Communicating values through actions is critical, but emphasizing them and clarifying them particularly by infusing in them

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transcendental importance is also crucial, especially in an Islamic community where sacred values play their vital role. Two things that Islamic school leaders could do for this values communication are acknowledging moral excellence and telling stories.

c. Celebrating the rituals

Let us imagine a concert of one famous rock music group in a huge stadium filled with thousands of fans. How strong is the energy, how palpable is the joy that people have in the crowd? Imagine the gathering of grieving family members of lost people in the New York World Trade Centre tragedy. How deep is the emotion, how intimate and dear is the feeling they have for the lost people they love and for the people between them experiencing and feeling the same sentiment? What a celebration can bring to an organization is to infuse life with passion and to fulfil the need for affiliation.

Celebration is an integral element of culture that provides the symbolic adhesive welding a community together.\(^62\) When people who share the same feeling, love the same people, subscribe to the same values, or believe in the same faith meet together and express what is in their hearts, they increase the intensity of their love and faith and strengthen the bond between them.

The celebration of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad helps people increase their love for him, offering them vitality to emulate his noble character, which is the purpose of Islamic education. It is an event where people are reminded of a person who spread love amongst his people. This celebration also intensifies the love between members of school community. Through celebrations community is established and the sense of belonging is increased.\(^63\) Celebrations bring people together, where relationships can be nourished and a sense of a shared destiny can be sustained. It is an honorable task of a leader to “let people feel a sense of belonging to an integrated

\(^{62}\) Deal & Key, 1998
\(^{63}\) Kouzes & Pousner, 1998
enterprise”64. Though teachers and other staff might see each other every day, this celebration which honours the Prophet Muhammad creates a more passionate and compassionate atmosphere.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Islamic school leaders need to practice these essentials—discussed above—in order to help all members of school community to subscribe to the trans-rational values of exercising noble character, which is the heart of Islam Rahmatan lil ‘Alamin principles. First, they must be role models, and servanthood is the key ingredient. Second, Islamic school leaders need to communicate the values comprising a noble character by acknowledging respected character seen in school environments. They also could also utilize the value of storytelling by animating the life of the Prophet Muhammad. Finally, by celebrating the event honouring the Prophet Muhammad, they could cultivate in individuals love for the Prophet Muhammad amongst themselves. This cultivation of love is critical for people to be able to possess the strong vitality to exercise a noble character, which is the goal of Islamic education.

The significance of utilizing the ‘heart’ approach of leadership is indispensable especially when the impact of globalization on an Indonesian Islamic schools is considerable. Promotion of moral values is the core responsibility of Islamic schools. It is incontestably only by nourishing the love for humanity that these leaders could make members of Islamic schools aware of and inspired to achieve the treasured duty of Islamic education, attaining God’s love through practicing noble character.

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