

# LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY MODEL FOR IMAMS IN NEGERI SEMBILAN

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## 1.0 Research Background

Mosque is a noble institution in Islam. The glory of Islam in the past was outwardly when it came from the institution of the mosque which could complete all the needs of human life as well as manifest the strength and unity of Muslims. Thus, the legacy of Prophet and his followers did not waste their time enlivening and prospering the mosque with deeds of worship and activities that benefit them in this world and in the hereafter. What is gained is the reward promised by Allah through Rasulullah S.A.W about the advantages and privileges of those who enliven and develop the mosque as mentioned by Allah in Surah Al-Jin:18

وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا

18. And [He revealed] that the masjids are for Allah, so do not invoke with Allah anyone.

(Al-Qur'an. Al-Jin 72: 18)

Among the things that can no longer be hidden is that the mosque has a huge role in the lives of individuals and society. It is not only a place for congregational prayers, but it also has an important task apart from that because it is all an act of worship to

Allah SWT. In Islam, the mosque is an institution that first cares about human beings and is a source of courage, a place to cultivate the spirit of compassion and kindness, brotherhood, love, and friendship between believers. (Shaikh Ali Mohamad Mokhtar, 2003).

We can find the function of the mosque has been clearly demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad SAW and his companions. The role of the mosque institution since its inception has been more focused on policy matters such as those related to national affairs, discussing war strategies, serving as a community centre, economic and welfare centre, and acting as a centre of superior and distinguished ummah unification.

During the migration, Prophet Muhammad SAW established the first mosque in history of Islam which namely by *Quba'* Mosque. This mosque which used as a place of worship and a centre for Islamic activities. After Prophet Muhammad SAW was arrived in Medina, he also took the same step of establishing the *Nabawi* Mosque as an effective step in creating unity among the Muslim people in Medina. Past history was proven the glory of the mosque administration in the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW by making the mosque a place to gather, discuss and plan the strategy and agenda of the country's governance thus bringing about progress in the Muslim movement. The mosque is not only focused on religious rituals and the field of *dakwah*, but also on jurisprudence, community, trade, and economic welfare as well as other community activities.

The role of the mosque was developed collectively around 622 AD based on planning of Prophet Muhammad SAW and the negotiations of the companions at that time. The Prophet Muhammad SAW acts as the leader in the administration of the mosque to ensure the administration of the mosque institution through the approach and

encourage the companions to perform the worship of *fardhu* and *sunnah* besides making the mosque as a place for the construction of thought, knowledge, and the formation of the Muslim community.

The role of the mosque at that time was so great and felt by the surrounding community that it was able to reflect the perfection in Islam as recorded in the Quran:

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَءَاتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَلَمْ يَحْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَعَسَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ أَنْ يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ

18. *The mosques of Allah are only to be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day and establish prayer and give zakah and do not fear except Allah, for it is expected that those will be of the [rightly] guided.*

(Al-Qur'an. Al-Taubah 9: 18)

In general, instead of mosque management should include the following:

1. Management and administration
2. Worship and belief
3. Welfare and community
4. Science and education
5. Cleanliness and cheerfulness
6. Economics and finance

## 7. Da'wah and politics

According to Umair Uddin 2014, mosques play many roles in society. First, it can be the centre of Islam. That's means mosque as the driving force of Islamic preaching in society. Second, the mosque as a court. Mosque can be the place that the Muslim society can giving all complaints and problems faced by the community are referred to the imam, especially in matters related to religion. Third, the mosque as an educational centre. All are invited to attend the mosque regardless of age, gender, status, skin colour and so on. The mosque should function 24 hours a day without hindrance to visitors.

### 1.1 Problem Statement

Nowadays, when we arrived at the era of technology and developed country, so several situations are changed. For example, when the people faced on the situation of increasing in population and the opening of new towns and housing estates. Because of that situation, the number of mosques has also increased. Based on statistics released by the JAKIM website until September 2021, the number of mosques registered throughout Malaysia is 6510 mosques. From the total, there are four categories of mosques in Malaysia namely by Government Mosques, State Mosques, District Mosques and Mukim Mosques. Meanwhile, in the context of staff, there are 12,080 imams with 9919 of them receiving remuneration and the remaining 2161 imams are not receiving remuneration from JAKIM.

According to Ibn Khaldun in his book *Muqaddimah Ibn Khaldun* mentioned that the most contributions of the existence of mosque among the Muslim community when the management of the mosque is excellent such in early days of the rise of Islam. Because of that particular situation, we can see at that time was able to produce many



Islamic scholars (*ulama'*) scattered throughout the Islamic world. Unfortunately, the situation like that was changed when we see in the current context. There are newly built mosques with modern and beautiful structures, but there are still weaknesses in their management and function. Most of the mosques were built as iconic buildings and landmarks to express the greatness of the nation, architectural prowess, and power by emphasising on aesthetic values, but there are neglect in terms of its functions and goals.

Unfortunately, the problems nowadays when the management of the mosque institution which is not functioning as a whole and effectively to attract the community to love the institution of the mosque. Most mosques throughout the country are not only not prospered, but mosques are usually locked and look lonely and only open during prayer time (Nasoha Saabin, 2001). In addition, the involvement of the congregations in the activities of the mosque still very low when compared to the number of Muslims around the mosque. Nowadays, become a habit when Muslim people are going to the at certain times only such as *Maulid*, *Isra' Mi'raj* and certain worship activities such as *Eid al-Fitr* prayer, *Eid al-Adha* prayer and on the early nights of *Taraweh* prayer, while routine activities are only followed by a small number of congregations (Drs H Ahmad Yani, 1999).

However, mosque institutions need to be managed and administered efficiently to provide a comfortable place for prayer and human development to produce a harmonious, developed, and competitive society in various aspects. The words of Allah S.W.T in surah al-Nur verses 36-37 which means:

فِي بُيُوتٍ أَذِنَ اللَّهُ أَنْ تُرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ

36. “[Such niches are] in mosques which Allah has ordered to be raised and that His name be mentioned therein; exalting Him within them in the morning and the evenings”

37. “[Are] men whom neither commerce nor sale distracts from the remembrance of Allah and performance of prayer and giving of zakah. They fear a Day in which the hearts and eyes will [fearfully] turnabout”

(Al-Qur'an. Al-Taubah 24: 36 & 37)

According to Ibn Katsir, he explained that mosques are the most beloved part of the earth by Allah SWT and are the houses in which He is worshipped and worshipped. Ibn Katsir cited the opinion of Qatadah that the meaning of houses is the mosques commanded by Allah SWT to be developed, assembled, honoured, and purified.

Sayyid Qutb (1994) stated that the meaning of Allah SWT's permission is to refer to an order to be executed. In other words, as an institution, the mosque is not just a place of worship for prayer, but also an important role in shaping a society that understands the needs of religion and can guide towards a good life and avoid evil.

Abdul Munir Ismail (2018) stated that the foundation of a mosque's success is to see professional and efficient governance that can put the role of the mosque in the right place. According to him, the individuals involved in the governance of the mosque must have the skills to administer and manage as well as have faith and piety in Allah SWT.

Among the issues of management weakness is that most mosques have lost their attraction and have been interpreted as specific places for worship only so that there are fewer activities that can attract the community to the mosque (Roslan Mohamed, 2008).

In addition, the mosque has lost its identity and its original purpose to accommodate the community because of political and social change among the modern Muslim community (Kristel Kessler, 2015).

In the issue of management weaknesses, we find that the mosques that are problematic are such as lack of awareness and skills of the committee members in planning activities, lacking the skills to complete the mosque program calendar and not being creative to diversify activities (Abg Mohammad Hamberie Abg Azemi and Hafizul, 2018).

Based on previous studies, Muhammad Faisal Ashaari and Firdaus Mokhtar (2018) concluded that there are six factors that lead to a small attendance to the mosque, namely:

1. The limited function of the mosque.
2. Individual problems.
3. Basic convenience is not perfect.

4. Non-strategic location.
5. Disadvantages of administrative management.
6. Weakness of financial management as well as the personality of imams and mosque officials.

Based on this problem statement, this study tried to identify factors that caused the lack of leadership qualities among imams and mosque management as well as the impact to the mosque programs and congregations. The data collected is expected to be a better guideline to the management of other mosques in prospering the house of Allah in line with its position as the heart of the Muslim community.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

In this research questions and objectives from this research will provide a clear picture with respect to the issue to be researched by the researcher. Here are the questions and objectives for this research.

### **Research Question**

1. What are the elements of mosque entertainment through a leadership perspective?
2. How does the element of imam competence affect the value of an imam's leadership?
3. To what extent can the role of leadership improve the management of imams for mosque institutions?
4. What is the effect of the imam's competency model for the maintenance of the mosque?



## **Research Objectives**

1. To study the elements of mosque entertainment through the perspective of leadership.
2. To identify a list of competencies related religiously for imams.
3. To study the role of leadership and management of imams for mosque institutions.
4. To build an imam competency model for mosque entertainment.

## **1.3 Significance of the Research**

In general, this study has some importance that can be used as a guide by the imams in carrying out their duties as leaders and administrators of the mosque according to the Islamic perspective based on the model of imam competency.

The findings of this study, it is hoped the results will provide benefits and understanding related to the practice of Islamic leadership according to the good leadership characteristics. This study also hoped to help imams re-evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each leadership that has been implemented over the years through empirical findings and detailed studies. As a result, the imams will gain new knowledge and guidance, especially when practicing leadership based on *syara* 'as required in Islam and so that the imams can lead the mosque efficiently.

This study was conducted as an effort to increase the knowledge about the leadership that should be practiced by imams according to the passage of time and technology. Previously, many did not notice that the imams were the main pillar and became the best role model in the community.

Besides that, the results of this study are also able to be a reference and can used as alternative to solve problems related to the practice leadership of imams. For sure this can make the ranks of imams can implement the elements of leadership and improve the level of leadership efficiency. The information obtained from this study can also help the ranks of imams re-evaluate their elements of leadership according to the model that has been outlined.

With the results of this study, it is hoped that the ranks of imams can focus and practice 3 main areas in leadership. The 3 main areas are basic competence, work related management and relationship related which is human resource. Hopefully the results of this study can benefit all who read.

#### **1.4 Scope of the study**

This study will focus on the role played by the imams in the mosque in empowering the worship of congregation. This study will be related to the selected literature in the field from both conventional and Islamic perspective. This study also makes an interview to the selected respondent for making the data collection parallel with the topic.

#### **1.5 Literature Review**

According to Hasni and Abdullah (2004), Abdullah (2009), and Wan Mohammad (2008) stated that imams and mosque officials need to have management and leadership knowledge other than religious knowledge. This allows them to carry out their responsibilities well and successfully carry out various activities that can attract the community to go to the mosque.

Meanwhile, most of the book of leadership mentioned that the leader must have the element of knowledgeable, Allah SWT said in surah *Al-Mujadalah*: 11

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجَالِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَإِذَا قِيلَ آنشُرُوا فَآنشُرُوا يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

11. O you who have believed, when you are told, "Space yourselves" in assemblies, then make space; Allah will make space for you. And when you are told, "Arise," then arise; Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees. And Allah is Acquainted with what you do.

(*Al-Qur'an. Al-Mujadalah* 58: 11)

Besides that, the achievement and performance of the mosque can be measured from various angles including the number of congregations come to the mosque, list of activities carried out, and the financial stability of the mosque. However, the large number of congregations is the most important factor that is an indicator of the success of a mosque (Mahazan & Abdullah, 2013).

According to Zawiah et. al. (2011), each member of the organization should equip themselves with knowledge and skills related to their respective fields of work in order to achieve the level of competence and professionalism in organizational management.

In order to make the mosque institutions can attract the Muslim society and to be a role model to the world, they should be made professional institutions that adopt a systematic management system to achieve the objectives of the mosque. The characteristics of a professional mosque are having a professional leader, professional mosque facilities, having a professional congregation or surrounding Muslim community in terms of maturity of thought, and professional planning and management (Mohd Rozaini et. Al. 2014).

Like other organizational leaders, the quality of leadership is determined by a combination of experience and education. Therefore, it is very important that the education of the imams is considered in the evaluation of the effectiveness of his leadership. Islam is a way of life that encompasses all aspects of life such as politics, economics, religion, social and others. Accordingly, education is very important for imams or mosque leaders for the effective management of the mosque (Syarif. A. Muhammad, 2008).

The mosque is not just a place of worship. In the history of Islamic civilization, the mosque has a huge role in the development of society. Among them as an administrative centre, centre of worship, centre of education and learning, centre of community activities, and become the heart of national development (Adnan, 2013). Therefore, it is necessary for the imams to have adequate knowledge in the field of religion and society. According to Republika Online (January 26, 2015), the existence of mosque imams who have the ability is less. In this regard, the Indonesian government through *Pesantren Hilal Bogor* took the initiative by providing an educational program with scholarships for a year for participants who are ready to preach as mosque imams after the program.



Meanwhile in France, it is a requirement for imams in French mosques to have at least a diploma in law, society, and religious plurality. This situation aims to occupy religion in the secular country. In 2011, the University of Strasbourg became the first university in France to offer such a diploma program. The French government has said it will open diploma education for imams of all religions at 12 universities. The main purpose of this opening is to facilitate foreign imams to integrate with French society and the French Republic (Koran Yogya, 2015). While the study conducted on preachers who are also imams in Kuwait also showed that most preachers or imams in Kuwait have an education in Administration Degree and are over 35 years old (Essam A.H. Mansour, 2014).

According to Sohirin (2008), mosques since the time of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W have had a huge responsibility in community development. Therefore, mosque officials, namely imams, *bilal*, *siak*, and all mosque committee members need to be proactive and creative in providing activities, facilities, and assistance to attract the Muslim community to the mosque. Even in line with the mosque as a community centre. In addition, imams need to have skills outside their field so that the community sees the mosque as a best place to motivate, solve problems and improve a good standard of living.

## **1.6 Research Methodology**

This research is interpretative falls under the category of interpretative social science (ISS). The main method applies in this research is critical content analysis on selected literature in the field from both conventional and Islamic perspectives. On top of literature analysis, an interview session with the field experts will also be conducted to rationalise the findings from literature analysis.



The research methodology also used in this research in the form of a library study that involves reading and collecting materials related of the study. In this study, researcher use several methods namely:

**Data Collection Method:**

1. Library studies were used to obtain primary and secondary data. Such resources consist of thesis, journal dissertation, papers, books, magazines and so on. Imam Al-Ghazali books is the primary resources and followed by the other references books.
2. Interview method was used to obtain primary data and information, Formal and structured interviews and interviews conducted with experts in the field of literature will be obtained through this method.

This process take place in the field of interview approach. This process known as practical qualitative method to finding out how respondent think and respond. According to Che Su Mustaffa (2019), field interviews are a qualitative research method that indirectly takes the form of conversation with the aim of obtaining participants point of view. So, this field of interviews are one of the processes to gained more in depth of information.

**Data Analysis Methods:**

The data that has been collected based on the methods that have been mentioned above, the information and data will be collected and then will be analysed, evaluated, and screened using several methods. The rules are as follows:

## **I. Inductive**

This method is a way of analysing the data through the materials found in this study. Then the classification of data to be arranged more neatly and structured in research based on the research title of this study.

### **1.7 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the researcher has been described and explained the things that form the basis and direction of this study. In the objectives section of the study, the researcher has set the goals to be achieved at the end of this study. The research questions are also determined based on the objectives that have been set in advance. It is hoped that this study can provide useful benefits to the ranks of imams in the mosque. This study is also limited in scope so that it is easy and reasonable to do.