



Toward an Integrative Ethical Governance Model: Quranic and Hadith Perspectives in the 21st Century

Amelia Mustafa¹, Nila Khoirunnisa¹, Mustamin Giling¹,
Muhammad Hakim Parta²

¹Institut Agama Islam Negeri Ternate, Indonesia

²Al-Azhar University, Egypt

✉ ameliamustafa93@gmail.com *

Abstract

This article aims to develop an integrative conceptual framework of governance by synthesizing normative principles derived from the Quran and Hadith with the challenges and practices of 21st-century governance. This study employs a qualitative method using content analysis and thematic exegesis to explore key concepts, including *shura* (consultation), *al-'adl* (justice), *al-amanah* (trustworthiness), *uli al-amr* (authority), and *maslahah* (public interest). The findings indicate that these core Islamic values are dynamic and can function as a universal foundation for public ethics that transcends specific forms of government. In the context of increasing digitalization, social complexity, and multiculturalism, this study argues that contemporary governance requires a robust ethical foundation to address moral deficits such as corruption, injustice, and social fragmentation. These findings confirm that the principles of the Quran and Hadith can serve as the foundation for a dynamic public ethics framework, while also offering the MIKEN model as a practical framework for improving the quality of governance, accountability, and policymaking in the 21st century.

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INTRODUCTION

Governance in the 21st century faces increasingly complex dynamics. On the one hand, the advancement of democracy, digital technology, and the principles of good governance has created opportunities to enhance transparency, public participation, and efficiency in public administration (Bovaird & Löffler, 2016). On the other hand, significant challenges persist, including crises of political legitimacy, declining public trust, the rise of populism, and increasingly adaptive forms of corruption. In addition, states face difficulties in managing social inequality within increasingly plural societies (D'Ambrosio, 2019; Mietzner, 2020). In the context of Muslim-majority countries, including Indonesia, these dynamics are accompanied by ongoing efforts to balance the demands of modern governance systems with aspirations to integrate religious values into public life (Salim, 2020).

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In the discourse on the relationship between Islam and the state, debates often fall into two opposing poles: a formalistic approach advocating the establishment of a structurally religious-based political system, and a secular approach that separates religion from state affairs. This polarization tends to overlook the richness of Islamic political thought, which not only addresses the form of the state but also emphasizes the ethical dimensions of governance and universal principles (*kulliyat*) that can be critically engaged with contemporary political systems (Abdullah, 2015; Fuadi, 2024). Therefore, an alternative approach is needed one that moves beyond institutional debates and instead focuses on the substantive values and ethical foundations of governance.

Furthermore, it is important to situate this study within the broader development of contemporary governance scholarship, which increasingly highlights ethics as a central element in the effectiveness of governance systems (Butler & Current, 2022; Caena & Redecker, 2019; Engkizar et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2023). A growing body of research suggests that governance failures are not solely the result of institutional or technical weaknesses, but also stem from deficiencies in integrity, accountability, and value orientation in the exercise of power. In this context, integrating religious normative values into governance discourse is not intended as an effort to formalize religion within the state, but rather to strengthen the universal and contextual dimensions of public ethics. Accordingly, an approach that connects Quranic and Hadith principles with modern governance frameworks becomes relevant in addressing the need for governance systems that are not only administratively effective but also just and oriented toward the public good (Engkizar et al., 2024; Nabel, 2021; Ropiah, 2018).

Based on this background, this article seeks to develop an ethical governance framework derived from the Quran and Hadith and to examine its relevance to the challenges of 21st-century governance (Caena & Redecker, 2019). The study focuses on identifying and elaborating key normative principles, including *shura* (consultation), *al-'adl* (justice), *al-amanah* (trustworthiness), *uli al-amr* (authority), and *maslahah* (public interest). The research addresses the following questions: (1) what governance principles can be derived from the Quran and Hadith through a thematic approach; (2) how these principles can be critically engaged with the challenges and practices of modern governance; and (3) what kind of conceptual model can be formulated to integrate these values into a contemporary governance framework.

This article proceeds from the assumption that the Quran and Hadith contain a set of ethical values that are relevant to socio-political contexts, including governance. Concepts such as *shura*, justice, and trustworthiness are not limited to individual piety but also have broader implications for social and institutional practices. In this regard, these values can be understood as a foundation for public ethics that may contribute to strengthening the moral dimension of modern governance systems.

Theoretically, this article seeks to contribute to the study of Islamic political thought by shifting the focus from debates over state forms toward the ethical and governance dimensions of political life. Practically, it proposes an Integrative Value-Based Ethical Governance Model (MIKEN) as a conceptual framework that can serve as a reference for public policy formulation, leadership practices, and governance evaluation, particularly within Muslim societies.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach using content analysis and thematic exegesis to examine the concept of governance in the Quran and Hadith (Engkizar et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2025; Engkizar et al., 2025; Ghasemi, 2023; Pohontsch, 2019). The subject of the study consists of primary religious texts, namely Quranic verses and Prophetic traditions related to governance, leadership, justice, and collective life, supported by secondary sources in the form of academic literature on governance and Islamic political thought. Data were collected through document analysis by identifying relevant texts from standard Hadith compilations, such as *Mawsu'ah al-Hadith al-Sharif (Kitib al-Tis'ah)*, as well as digital Quranic exegesis tools used to facilitate data identification and classification (Akem et al., 2025).

The primary instrument of this study is the researcher as a human instrument, responsible for determining the research focus, selecting relevant data, and conducting contextual interpretation. Data analysis was carried out through several stages: identifying the central theme of governance; collecting and categorizing relevant Quranic verses and Hadith; conducting thematic analysis by considering socio-historical contexts (*asbab al-nuzul* and *asbab al-wurud*) and referring to both classical and contemporary exegetical scholarship; and interpreting normative values using a *maqasid*-oriented approach to capture their universal ethical dimensions (Adam, 2020; Nasir et al., 2022). The findings were then critically engaged with contemporary governance theories and practices through a literature-based dialogue to identify their relevance and potential contributions to the development of a contemporary governance framework.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From Traditional *Shura* to Digital Deliberative Governance

The following visualization highlights the dominant themes associated with *Shura* in the context of digital governance.



Fig 1. Wordcloud of Shura and Digital Deliberative Governance

This figure illustrates the transformation of traditional Islamic consultation (*shura*) into modern deliberative practices, emphasizing participation, inclusivity, and challenges such as misinformation and algorithmic manipulation. QS. Ali 'Imran [3]:159 (“...and consult them in affairs...”) and QS. al-Shura [42]:38 (“...whose affairs are conducted by consultation...”) establish *shura* as a defining characteristic of the Muslim community. In contemporary interpretation, *shura* is understood not merely as a formal mechanism, but as a principle of participation, inclusivity, and knowledge-based collective decision-making (Choudhury, 2024).

In the context of the 21st century, the practice of *shura* has expanded significantly through digital platforms that enable broader public participation. However, digital spaces also present new challenges, including the emergence of

echo chambers, the spread of misinformation, and algorithmic manipulation that may undermine the quality of public deliberation (Bovaird & Löffler, 2016). Therefore, the mere availability of digital platforms is insufficient to ensure substantive *shura*.

A critical analysis indicates that meaningful *shura* requires conducive deliberative conditions, including equitable access to information (*‘adl*), integrity in communication (*amanah*), and a commitment to public interest (*maslahah*). In this regard, governments play a crucial role in fostering such conditions through policies such as open government data, digital literacy initiatives, and participatory mechanisms that have a tangible impact on policymaking (Amri & Baskoro, 2025; Yumna et al., 2024). Thus, *shura* can serve as a foundation for meaningful digital deliberative governance that goes beyond procedural tools such as e-voting or e-petitions (Albshkar et al., 2025; Muthatahirin et al., 2025).

***Al-‘Adl* and *Al-Amanah* as Foundations of Public Accountability**

The following visualization highlights the ethical principles of *al-‘adl* (justice) and *al-amanah* (trustworthiness) as the moral foundation of governance.

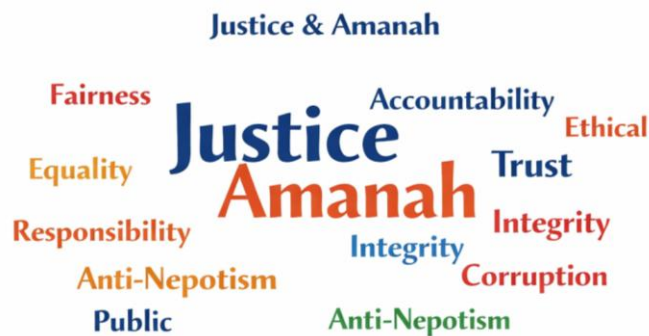


Fig. 2. Wordcloud of Justice and Amanah as Foundations of Public Accountability

This figure illustrates the central values of fairness, integrity, accountability, and anti-corruption, emphasizing their role in strengthening ethical governance. Justice (*al-‘adl*) represents a central principle in Islamic governance, as emphasized in QS. an-Nahl [16]:90. In the governance context, justice encompasses both procedural dimensions fair and non-discriminatory legal systems and substantive dimensions, particularly policies aimed at reducing socio-economic inequality. This substantive dimension is highly relevant in addressing persistent global and national disparities (Parton, 2020).

Justice is closely linked to the concept of *al-amanah*, which serves as the ethical foundation of authority. Practices such as corruption, abuse of power, and nepotism constitute violations of public trust. The Hadith, “*Each of you is a leader and each of you will be held accountable...*” (HR. Bukhari-Muslim), universalizes the concept of leadership and accountability across all levels of society.

Within this framework, accountability operates on two levels: horizontal accountability to society and legal systems, and vertical accountability to God. This dual accountability provides a deeper ethical dimension compared to purely legalistic approaches (Basri et al., 2024; Ruhullah & Ushama, 2024). In the Indonesian context, where corruption remains systemic, internalizing the value of *amanah* as a form of transcendental awareness may strengthen ethical governance beyond formal legal sanctions (Fahmi, 2023).

***Uli al-Amr* and the Reconstruction of Legitimacy in Modern Systems**

The following visualization presents the concept of Uli al-Amr and its role in defining legitimate authority.

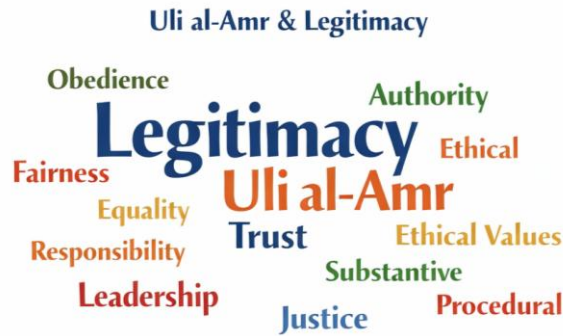


Fig. 3. Wordcloud of Uli al-Amr and Reconstruction of Legitimacy

This figure depicts the integration of ethical values, justice, and trust in leadership, emphasizing that legitimacy must align with divine and moral principles beyond procedural democracy. The command to obey *uli al-amr* in QS. an-Nisa' [4]:59 is often interpreted normatively. However, a contextual reading suggests that such authority is conditional, as it is positioned after obedience to God and the Prophet. This indicates that legitimacy and authority must align with fundamental ethical values derived from these primary sources (Fuadi, 2024).

In modern state systems, legitimacy cannot rely solely on procedural mechanisms such as elections, but must also be grounded in the extent to which leaders and institutions uphold justice (*'adl*), trust (*amanah*), and public welfare (*maslahah*). Therefore, *uli al-amr* can be understood as a form of legitimate authority that is both normatively and substantively grounded. This perspective suggests that procedural democracy should be complemented by substantive democracy infused with ethical values, thereby enabling a meaningful integration between modern political systems and Islamic ethical principles.

Maslahah as a Paradigm for Contemporary Public Policy

The following visualization highlights *maslahah* as an ethical compass guiding contemporary policymaking.

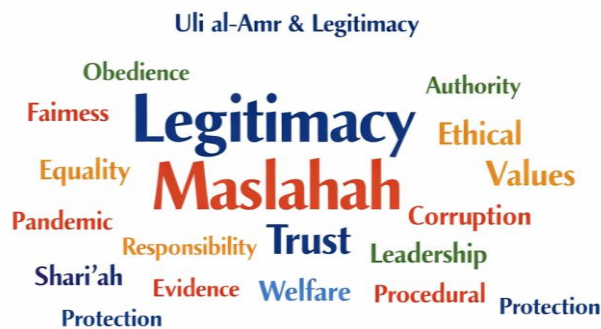


Fig. 4. Wordcloud of Maslahah as a Paradigm for Public Policy

This figure illustrates how *maslahah* functions within the framework of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, balancing competing interests such as health, economy, and welfare in modern governance. The concept of *maslahah*, within the framework of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, offers a flexible and context-sensitive approach to public policy (Syihab, 2023). It emphasizes the protection of fundamental aspects of human life, including religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property.

In the 21st century, challenges such as pandemics, climate change, and technological disruption require responsive and evidence-based policymaking.

Maslahah can function as an ethical compass in evaluating such policies by balancing competing interests. For instance, pandemic-related lockdown policies can be analyzed through the lens of *maslahah* by weighing the protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*) against economic sustainability (*hifz al-mal*). This approach aligns with the paradigm of evidence-based policymaking while providing a strong ethical foundation. Thus, *maslahah* is not only normatively relevant but also operationally applicable in contemporary governance contexts (Jaafar et al., 2025; Kassymova et al., 2025; Okenova et al., 2025).

Ethical Leadership (*Quwwah al-Amin*) in Complex Governance Contexts

The following visualization highlights the balance between competence (*quwwah*) and trustworthiness (*amin*) as the foundation of ethical leadership.



Fig. 5. Wordcloud of Ethical Leadership (*Quwwah al-Amin*)

This figure visualizes the integration of technical capability and moral integrity, inspired by Prophet Yusuf's model of leadership. The story of Prophet Yusuf in QS. Yusuf [12]:55, which highlights competence (*quwwah*) and integrity (*amin*), illustrates an ideal model of leadership. In contemporary contexts, effective leadership requires a balance between technical capability and moral integrity.

The complexity of modern challenges such as digital economies and global crises demands competent leadership, while declining public trust necessitates trustworthy leaders. The Hadith stating that unjust leaders will not attain salvation (HR. Ahmad) underscores the serious moral consequences of political actions.

This principle functions as a form of internal moral restraint that complements external oversight mechanisms. Therefore, leadership development in the 21st century, particularly in Muslim contexts, should integrate both competence and ethical integrity as inseparable components (Az-Zahra et al., 2025; Kalsum et al., 2025).

The Integrative Value-Based Ethical Governance Model (MIKEN)

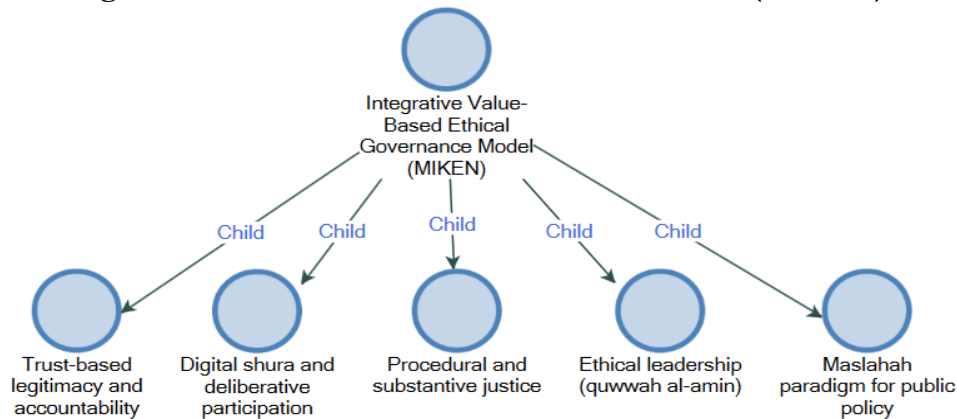


Fig 6. Five pillars integrative value-based ethical governance model

Based on the thematic analysis and its engagement with contemporary governance discourse, this study proposes the Integrative Value-Based Ethical Governance Model (MIKEN) as a conceptual framework. The model consists of five interrelated pillars: trust-based legitimacy and accountability; digital *shura* and deliberative public participation; procedural and substantive justice in plural societies; ethical leadership (*qumwab al-amin*) and *maslahah* as a paradigm for public policy.

These pillars collectively form a normative-operational framework that integrates Islamic ethical values into modern governance practices. The model is not intended as an institutional blueprint, but rather as a flexible framework that can be adapted within various political systems, whether presidential or parliamentary, to enhance both ethical quality and governance effectiveness (Akem et al., 2025; Rambe et al., 2025).

CONCLUSION

This study highlights that ethical principles derived from the Quran and Hadith can be contextually interpreted within contemporary governance frameworks. Values such as *shura*, *‘adl*, *amanah*, and *maslahah* demonstrate conceptual flexibility that enables their integration into modern public ethics discourse, particularly in addressing complex challenges such as declining public trust, social inequality, and digital transformation. In this regard, the Islamic tradition functions not only as a normative source but also as a reflective foundation for enriching governance practices by balancing technical and ethical dimensions.

The main contribution of this study lies in the formulation of the Integrative Value-Based Ethical Governance Model (MIKEN) as a conceptual framework that bridges normative values with the operational needs of modern governance. This model provides a basis for developing value-oriented public policy, leadership education, and the role of civil society. However, its implementation requires contextual adaptation and the active involvement of multiple stakeholders, including government institutions, educational bodies, and society at large, to ensure the effective internalization of ethical principles in governance practices. Therefore, this study offers a foundation for future research to further examine the application of this model in broader empirical contexts.

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Author contribution

Amelia Mustafa: Writing-Preparation of original manuscript, **Mustamin Giling:** Conceptualization, Methodology, **Nila Khoirunnisa:** Visualization, Investigation, Improve Content, **Muhammad Hakim Parta:** Data accuracy and analysis, Improve Language.

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