

'Keluarga Malaysia' Strives for National Leadership after Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to discuss the extent to which Keluarga Malaysia aspires to be national leaders after the Covid 19 pandemic. A leader is a person who is entrusted with the management of an organization and is trusted to carry out the trust and responsibility given to him or her. Islam emphasizes that every Muslim who is mukalaf is a leader for himself and his family and, moreover, a leader for society in general. The aspiration of the Keluarga Malaysia is to have rabbinic leaders who have faith and morals, are progressive, have a high level of knowledge and form superior personalities today. This study outlines three objectives, namely the aspirations of Keluarga Malaysia towards national leaders, political leaders according to the Islamic perspective and the role of leaders in relation to Keluarga Malaysia after the Covid 19 pandemic. The method used in this paper is conceptual analysis through document analysis of previous writings and studies related to the topic of this study. The study shows Keluarga Malaysia have very high expectations from the national leadership to ensure that every development and sustainability is implemented to achieve the desired goals that they need. It is important for leaders to highlight praiseworthy qualities and uphold the principles of Islam so that there is a balanced combination of leadership in this world and the hereafter. However, it is certain that after the Covid-19 pandemic, it will be a great challenge for the leaders of the country to revive all forms of mechanisms that the community needs to continue life and return to normalcy and prosperity.

Keywords: Malay Family, Leader of the Islamic View, Role of the Leader

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Introduction

A leader is an important figure in shaping a nation that is dynamic and capable of overcoming various challenges and problems (Rahmani & Ratnawati, 2014). The existence of a society must be sustained by a great leader who is full of efficiency, skill, moral perfection, high knowledge, and future orientation. In the face of a progressive global environment, there is no doubt that society is laden with challenges and high hopes, that leaders can ensure the stability and well-being of society is more guaranteed. The practise of leadership must be a pillar to lead society in a more perfect direction. Leadership in a pluralistic society like Malaysia, which places great emphasis on justice and an attitude of mutual tolerance.

Islam attaches great importance to a leader who supports the religious teachings in his leadership and becomes the desire of Keluarga Malaysia today. According to Shaharir (2010), the leadership theory emphasised by the West has its roots in everyday culture, its great personalities and in other civilisations adapted to the pattern of Western society. However, this study found that Islam must use religion as a guide for a leader's government so as not to deviate from the foundation of truth and the guidance of religion itself.

Leaders must demonstrate inclusiveness in the context of integrating intellectual and spiritual dimensions in defining leadership roles to continue to meet the aspirations of Keluarga Malaysia. Peace and well-being in society is built from high values in life. However, when community life deviates from the norms and nature of life, it contributes to destruction such as war and oppression (Mohd Farihal, Noor Habibi & Ahmad Bashir, 2016). The expectations of the leadership of the country are very high, because leaders are the most important fortress in shaping the civilisation and landscape of the life of a society.

The biggest challenge facing society today is the Covid-19 pandemic, which is claiming more and more lives every day, especially Malaysians. A pandemic is an epidemic that affects a larger area and is not confined to one community or district. The spread of this epidemic is very far-reaching and can threaten states, countries, continents, or the entire world if it fails to materialise, as it has so far. The Corona virus crisis (COVID-19), which is currently affecting the entire country, has also been classified as a pandemic by WHO.

Aspirations of Keluarga Malaysia to National Leadership

The term Keluarga Malaysia was coined by the 9th Prime Minister of Malaysia, YAB Dato' Sri Ismail Sabri Yaacob, during his inaugural speech on 22 August 2021, in which he called on all Malaysians to find common ground and put aside differences for the sake of the Keluarga Malaysia. Keluarga Malaysia aspirations to lead the country is very high to make the country a respectable government as the duties of the leader strengthen the government holistically. The discussion on leaders makes a lot of sense, but the fact is that charismatic and competitive leaders are very important in leading society. In the Malaysian context, elections are a means of selecting national leaders (Abdul Razaq, Mohd Mahzan & Jamil Ahmad, 2017) and there will be general elections throughout Malaysia every five years. The registered voters will elect a leader in a free election to represent their vote to the highest party.

The leader portrayed is a person who has the qualities of a leader that Keluarga Malaysia wants today. The multi-ethnic, socio-cultural, and socio-economic situation of the community has its own perception and mindset about the desired leadership of the country. The success and ups and downs of a leader depend on the power of the people. According to Ibrahim, Hassan & Abdul Hamid (2018), there are three characteristics of an ideal leader who truly meets the expectations of Keluarga Malaysia.

The researchers identified three characteristics described by previous researchers. The first is that a leader must have extensive knowledge in the area he or she leads, such as a political leader who must be familiar with the affairs of the society he or she leads. Secondly, leaders must have good communication skills. Leaders have public speaking skills and can perform tasks well, including the ability to give instructions, lead meetings and interact with outsiders.

The third characteristic presented is physical and personal, where the leader must have proactive qualities, enthusiasm, attractive appearance and so on.

Furthermore, the two pillars of leadership that a leader must have been *qudwah* and trust. The definition of *quwwah* in establishing law between people is the ability to justly execute the laws based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Amanah also includes three main aspects, namely fear of God (fear of God putting something unjust, treachery and negligence), not using the verses of the Qur'an only to gain worldly rewards, and not being afraid of people (Uthman Khalid, 1993). It turns out that under such conditions it is very difficult to find people who have both the qualities of *quwwah* and confidence in themselves. How important is the practise of Islam, for it shapes the personality of human life in various aspects of leadership, management, administration and other (Muhd Akmal Noor et.al, 2015). These two qualities of leaders are undoubtedly the demands of Keluarga Malaysia so that the administration they dream of is always based on pure values for common welfare and prosperity.

A leader who is powerful, intelligent, energetic, articulate, and argumentative, has social and interpersonal skills and can manage well as a leader is also one of the qualities of a leader (Andi Nurfitri, Suhana Saad & Azmi, 2015). However, Western (2008) also explains the qualities that a leader should possess, namely having a vision and a clear plan, high physical and mental stamina, charisma, and great determination. The qualities of the leader explained above can produce a person of stature and an effective catalyst, as well as guiding the leadership he or she brings. Everything presented by past researchers shows that the character of superior leaders in society is very important to realize leadership in a more holistic and competitive direction for the sake of Keluarga Malaysia.

Political Leadership According to The Islamic Perspective

The institution of leadership occupies an important position in Islam because it is the role of a leader in a country. The story from the time of the Prophet himself proves how determined the Messenger of God was: he refused Abu Zar's request to be appointed leader by His Majesty. Abu Zar was warned by the Messenger of Allah that the position of a leader is very humiliating and will be regretted in the Hereafter if he is not able to execute his trust and responsibility well (Shukeri et.al, 2012). Islam teaches a very complete and perfect method of guidance by putting hidden and written secrets in the content of the Quran. If we examine how the history of glory during the leadership of Rasulullah s.a.w and Khulafa al-Rasyidin so many lessons and examples that can be taken as an evaluation for leaders.

Malaysia is known as a multi-ethnic country and the society practises inter-racial respect due to the calibre and dynamic leadership of the country. The teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah speak a lot about leadership, including the sources of Islamic leadership, such as in Surah an-Nisa', verses 58-59, as the most important reference example of Islamic leadership. The core of meaning behind the content of the verse has outlined four essential things for a leader to fulfil a trust, namely that a leader must obey God, obey and be loyal to the Messenger of God S.A.W. to implement obedience to God, obedience and loyalty of all people to the government i.e. the person who is empowered to be the leader of the community and lastly he must use the Quran and Sunnah as a reference in resolving all disputes (Ahmad Tarmizi, 2017).

The meaning explained here makes it clear how important it should be for a leader to fulfil the trust placed in him.

Nevertheless, the concept of leadership is a fundamental component in the analysis of the dynamic process in an organisation. Leadership encompasses all aspects of life, so that the success and progress of a nation are shaped by the ideas of leadership (Zuraidah, Zahir & Nuwairi, 2014). This study addresses the question of how generous and magnanimous leaders can translate perfect behaviour and dare to change. In such a situation, the leader is given confidence and power to carry out the tasks assigned to him or her (Zuraidah, Zahir & Nuwairi, 2014), because for Hostede (2001), leaders are cultural heroes and can shape a culture of a more civilised and respected society.

Furthermore, the priorities of the Malay community, especially in Malay urban circles, are very important to the candidate's ability in the context of implementing the manifesto in the community. How the leader's charisma works from the point of view of control over issues and integrity are elements that are considered when choosing (Paimah Atoma et al, 2013). Good leadership is given space by the community to direct the administration of the country. The transition from Malay interests at the beginning of independence to openness in the selection of leaders up to the present requires a serious space for discourse (Hairol Anuar & Zakaria Stapa, 2016). In summary, the researcher concludes that the credibility of political leaders is an important element that must be present in a home political leader to complement the aspirational goals of the Malay family dreamed of.

God calls on people to manage and care for this earth as best they can, i.e. to follow God's law by doing well and forsaking his prohibitions (Mohd Izhar Ariff, 2010). How important is the existence of man in this world that the name *al-insan* (man) is measured in the Qur'an (Muhammad Hilmi & Mohd Yusof, 2017). The appointment of a leader in a country is very important, as is the orientation towards Islamic principles in the management of an organisation that is being set in motion. The emphasis on leadership in religion is not a trivial matter but has a very great impact on the implementation of the aspirations of society currently.

Relatively speaking, the concept of leadership introduced by Islam is holistic and is not limited to matters of government, justice, and laws, but Islam manifests all aspects of human life without exception (Muhd Norizam et.al, 2017). The privileges of rank are conferred on leaders until they are called caliphs, introduced by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The concept of just is the most important core that must be present in a caliph or leader as explained in the Qur'an for all, namely: "Verily, God commands to act justly and to do good and to assist one's kinsmen and forbids to commit detestable and evil deeds and tyranny. he teaches you (with these commandments and prohibitions) so that you may be admonished to obey them" (Surah al-Nahl: 90).

Leaders or caliphs not only perform their duties and responsibilities with confidence but must also act justly in all aspects of solving all problems and imposing punishments. But leaders or caliphs who not only bring prosperity to the whole world but must also prove themselves obedient servants of God's commands (Nor Asma & Muhd Norizam, 2016). Respect for a leader is not only seen in terms of height of knowledge, but purity of good manners is an option for a prosperous country. The Qur'an describes several words for leaders and according to Siti Arni et al., (2016) these include:

1. Khalifah

Based on the Quranic verses: “And (remember) when your Lord said to the angel, “I will create a caliph on the earth” (surah al-Baqarah: 30)

2. Ulu al- ‘Amr

Based on the Quranic verses: “You who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger of Allah and the ‘Ulil-Amri’ (those in authority) from among you. Then if you argue (disagree) in a matter, then you should return it to the (book) of Allah (Al-Quran) and (al-Sunnah) of His Messenger - if you truly believe in Allah and the Hereafter. That is better (for you), and the end is even Better (surah al-Nisa’: 59).

3. Iman

Based on the Quranic verses: “And (remember), when Prophet Ibrahim was tested by his Lord with several words (commandments and prohibitions), then Prophet Ibrahim completed them. (After that) God said: “Indeed I appointed you to be the Iman (leader of followers) for mankind”. Prophet Ibrahim begged by saying: “(my God!) Make (whatever it may be) from my descendants (following leaders)”. God says: Your request is accepted., But) my promise will not be found by the unjust people”. (al-Baqarah: 124)

4. Malik

Based on the Quranic verses: “And their Prophet said to them: “That God has appointed Talut to be your king, they replied: “How did he get the power to rule over us when we are more entitled to the power of the rule than him, and he was not given the vastness of the wealth?” Their Prophet said: “Indeed, God has chosen him (Talut) to be your king and has bestowed upon him an advantage in the field of knowledge and prowess of the body”. And (remember), it is Allah who bestows the power of government on whom He wills: and Allah is Vast (His grace and bestowals) and covers His knowledge” (al-Baqarah: 247).

The conclusion from the four verses explained in the Qur'an proves that the role of leaders in the administration of this earth is very important. Leaders are followers of the true ruler who is God in managing the earth in a good way, leaders with knowledge of various sciences and religions, leaders with a noble personality who set a good example such as performing prayers, paying zakat, cultivating virtue, and *amar maa'ruf nahi munkar*. All these elements become the aspirations of this modern Malay family.

The Role of Leaders in Facing Malaysian Families after The Covid-19 Pandemic

The pandemic COVID -19 is a global crisis that has hit the world, including Malaysia, which is forced to revive economic growth to ensure the continuity of Keluarga Malaysia. For almost 2 years, the country has been facing this health crisis and all sectors have suffered, especially the economic sector, and of course the national leadership is very committed to taking up this responsibility in fighting the pandemic that is spreading in the country. Leaders must take various effective measures to ensure that life in communities returns to normal after the pandemic and economic growth stabilises again.

The researchers explored how the views of Hall and Hord (2014) suggested that the role of a leader is explained by six forms of action, namely solving problems, communicating effectively, using the latest technology, being sufficiently flexible, combining old and new concepts, and being a promoter of change. Applying this role in the context of national leadership will have the best impact on dealing with emerging issues such as COVID -19. As the government takes preventive measures to ensure that the outbreak of COVID -19 can be addressed, the announcement of the implementation of the MCO by the Prime Minister. The transmission of this pandemic has major implications for the security, economy, and social life of the community, especially in Malaysia.

A special study by the Malaysian Bureau of Statistics on the impact of COVID -19 on the Malaysian population found that only 6.2 per cent of people were less financially affected during the MCO period, while 52.6 per cent were severely affected during this period. Among the self-employed, a total of 46.6 percent were affected by job loss. This shows that 71.4 percent of the self-employed survive only with savings that do not even last a month. Nevertheless, the role of leadership is very important in finding a solution and thinking about the best way to reduce the burden of this problem on Malaysian families.

Figure 1 below explains in detail how the prevalence of COVID -19 affects community employment in Malaysia. Various occupational categories are described, such as self-employed, employers, government employees, private employers, and employees of multinational companies, which are explained as follows:

Job Status	Impact On the Transmission Of COVID-19						
	Work From Home	Half Paid Leave	Unpaid Leave	Lost Job	The Number of Hours Worked is Reduced	Total Working Hours Increase	No Impact
Self Employed	25.1	0.9	9.2	46.6	13.8	0.6	3.8
Employer	30.9	3.8	14.5	23.8	22.2	1.4	3.3
Government Worker	73.7	0.6	1.1	0.4	14.7	1.4	8.2
Link Companies							

(GLC)							
Private Workers	48.9	7.0	13.2	1.8	17.5	1.8	9.8
Multinational Company Employees (MNC)	80.8	0.9	2.0	0.4	7.2	2.1	6.6

Figure 1: The impact of covid-19 transmission according to employment status (DOSM, 2020)

The above results show that the economic factors of the community were severely affected during the outbreak of the pandemic COVID -19. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), Malaysia's GDP contracted by 5.6 per cent due to the pandemic COVID -19. The business sector is vital to the lives of the Malaysian people and is the mainstay of the country's economic growth. Furthermore, the spread of this epidemic also has implications for the growth of the tourism sector in Malaysia. According to the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the decline in international tourism due to COVID -19 in 2020 (Gossling et.al. 2020) is up to 30 percent. This clearly shows that various sectors are also affected and that these impacts are due to the epidemic that has hit the country and the world.

After the pandemic COVID -19, Keluarga Malaysia need to make a fresh start to ensure that they can continue to be productive and engage in social activities as before. According to Nurul Adilah and Asmak (2020), the main stability for society lies in the social and economic context. The social aspect includes health, environment, and public safety, while the economic aspect includes education, transport and income and distribution. These two elements are achieved to create a prosperous and welfare-oriented state.

According to Briggs (1961), there are 3 aspects that need to be implemented to improve the country, namely a minimum income suitable for every family and individual, good treatment for them when they experience crises such as sickness, old age, and unemployment, and finally the granting of the best rights regardless of standard of living or class. This clearly shows how the leader's responsibility is to ensure that every community is in a prosperous and secure state despite a crisis in their lives.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the role of leaders in society is very important as they can shape and change their lifestyle by producing human capital and high moral values. Civil society's aspiration is to ensure that it can compete in harmony with the developing country's revolution. Leader as a platform to lead a superior institution of thought to success in accordance with the will of religion. In addition, leaders who have a more committed and futuristic mindset can attract their attention so that they continue to be trusted, consistent with the solidity of intellectual and skilled leaders capable of bringing spiritual and physical stability under them.

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