ISLAMIC-BASED EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

CHALLENGING EXPECTATIONS THROUGH GLOBAL CRITICAL INSIGHTS

Edited by
Khalid Arar, Rania Sawalhi, Amaarah DeCuir
and Tasneem Amatullah

ROUTLEDGE

Islamic-Based Educational Leadership, Administration and Management

Offering a vital, critical contribution to discussions on current perspectives, practices and assumptions on Islamic education, this book explores the topic through a wide range of diverse perspectives and experiences.

This volume challenges current assumptions around what is known as Islamic education and examines issues around educational leadership based on Islamic principles to confront xenophobia and Islamophobia in educational systems, policies and practices. Arguing for a new term to enter the discourse – 'Islamic-based' educational leadership – chapters approach the issue through critical reflexivity and diverse perspectives, addressing issues such as the higher education of immigrant students around the globe and the rising tensions in Muslim and non-Muslim populations. Exploring topics ranging from the leverage of leadership to religious education, this text brings together a wide range of case studies, experiences and examinations to shed light on the different approaches of Islamic-based educational leadership, administration and management.

This book will support researchers, doctoral students and scholars involved with multicultural education, school leadership and management studies, and education policy and politics more widely to explore new theories and practices that pave the way for future educational systems to meet faith-based demand in the school choice era.

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Challenging Expectations through Global Critical Insights

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Contents

Illustrations

Figures

Tables

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Introduction

Khalid Arar, Rania Sawalhi, Amaarah DeCuir and Tasneem Amatullah

Education from an Islamic perspective has a rich and complex history of published thought and examination, representing hundreds of years of work by scholars and theologians. Although early works were disseminated as published material, they sought to communicate primarily with Muslims seeking to deepen their faith practices rather than exploring educational leadership opportunities. So, how did Muslims and Arabs design educational systems that led to the Golden Age? While many researchers, such as Shah (2015) and Brooks (2019), have tried to examine educational leadership from an Islamic perspective, today's scholars have opportunities and capacities to produce scholarship for global audiences and seek to provide quality education to all learners (including Muslim learners in secular areas), learn from previous experiences, and redesign educational and schooling systems to prepare students for the future rather than react to current educational challenges, which are increasing rapidly during times of uncertainty.

Islamic scholarship bears the weight of the historical legacy of Islamophobia. Defined as a "fear of Islam, and a fear of Muslims", Islamophobia is commonly attributed to discriminatory interpersonal relationships and biased public discourse. But Islamophobia, operating across academia, has had devastating marginalizing impacts on Islamic scholarship, making the intellectual contributions of Islamic thought invisible, although some scholars claim that they are trying to uncover the values and Islamic principles involved in developing the whole person and improving educational opportunities, such as uncovering the veil to recognize new prospects.

This transformation is remarkable within academic structures that privilege secular constructs and Western practices. It is likely attributed to renewed motivations to uncover what has been socially marginalized and contributes to the increasing number of scholars examining Islam-based work. Many of the researchers examining these educational paradigms and practices are outsiders to the communities they seek to study. This increases the academic risk of reproducing voyeuristic studies that confuse readers and mislead other researchers and practitioners. Therefore, this field of study can only advance with the inclusion of researchers who clarify their positions and epistemologies, especially since the

Muslim diaspora continues to change as it responds to contemporary political and social realities, and the research emerging from these spaces reflects those changing dynamics. This transformation has resulted especially from the rise in Muslim emigration to Western nations in recent years because of globalization and conflict, increasing forced migrations from the Middle East due to the collapse of different states experiencing constant wars (e.g., Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Libya), and migration from the Global South (e.g., Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other Asian countries) to the Global North for a better life and education (Arar et al., 2017; Shakeel, 2018). The liberation of the European colonies has also led to an upsurge in the migration of Muslims to states that were formerly colonies—sometimes by invitation and sometimes due to economic challenges—for example, from Pakistan and India to the UK, from many countries in Africa to Belgium and France, and from Indonesia to Holland (Burnett, 2017).

This global rise of Muslim migration has engendered racism and Islamophobia that has manifested in the rise of anti-migrant political parties in Europe and other countries. At the end of 2018, there were 25.8 million Muslims in Europe (4.9% of Europe's population). This reality and social dynamic increased the number of Islamic or Muslim schools, which were the subject of public and political debate throughout the world (Arar et al., 2017). Therefore, many voices have highlighted the need to provide quality education to Muslims in both Muslim and non-Muslim countries (Arar et al., 2017; Ezzani & Brooks, 2019; Hashim & Jemali, 2017; Nthontho, 2018). In addition, many countries around the world are witnessing a rise in Islamic schools that are private and public, formal and informal (Clauss et al., 2013; Merry & Driessen, 2016; Muslih, 2019), due to these dynamics of global migration.

Educational opportunities for Muslims

In his book *The Development of Educational Theories in Islam* (1985), Al-Kaylani presented how different types of teaching and learning methods and institutions evolved during the Muslim centuries and compared these to modern educational theories. Although the book is written in Arabic, Al-Kayalni had a unique way of defining the terms based on the Quran and Hadith. His approach highlights the need to avoid using ambiguous terms based on assumption, especially when translating the terms to another language, or without a sound knowledge of the Quran and Arabic. In addition, his book shows how educators neglected what had been achieved by previous Muslim and Arab scholars, especially in providing educational opportunities for learners to help them prepare for the future and the afterlife.

Although Samier and ElKaleh's (2019) book provides an overview of several topics that are relevant to constructing an approach to teaching educational

administration and leadership in Muslim countries, a review of previous studies shows confusion over the terms used—e.g., Islamic education, Islamic educational leadership, Muslim schools, Islamic schools, madrasa, Islamic teachers, and Muslim teachers. This confusion might be due to several reasons, such as the translation of the terms, different understandings of scholars' interpretation of the Quran and meanings of Hadeeth, and different practices according to the context, culture, and purpose. For example, the word "madrasa" might refer to schools in general, or it might describe a specific type of education that focuses on teaching the Quran and Islamic subjects (Ayagan et al., 2014; Bano, 2014; Park & Niyozov, 2008), as will be explained in the next section.

Therefore, we found a need to delve into the current status of educational leadership related to Islam and Muslims, voice some experiences, and try to provide suggestions regarding Islamic educational leadership. It is notable that scholars define an Islamic school as "a religious school where the Quran is taught in the Arabic language and where Islamic principles and core values are instilled along with academic courses required by the state in which the school is situated" (Clauss et al., 2013, p. 3). The integration of secular academic subjects and religious education makes Islamic schools distinct from madrasas or Quranic schools that solely teach the memorization or exegesis of the scripture. In addition to other schools that have Muslims as the leaders, teachers, students, and stakeholders, they may or not include religious education, but they are Islam-based for the incorporation of Muslim values and practices by the community. Although Islamic education has deep roots in community-based education, there are examples of government-led schools with Islamic practices located in Muslim-majority and minority contexts. These schools employ both Muslim and non-Muslim educators in leadership roles. Together, all of these school types are what we call "Islam-based", a term meant to capture the diverse range of school types that are united through context, curriculum, or learning objectives that reflect Islamic practices.

Having said this, it is important to note that although many Muslim students attend public schools with the aforementioned criteria, many Muslim countries are witnessing the rise of Islamic schools, which might be due to the parents' choice to provide better educational opportunities based on Islamic principles. However, Almoharby and Neal (2013) show that the terms "Muslim" and "Islam" are sometimes used inappropriately in a way that might confuse or conflate Islamic practices with tribal practices. While Islam spread and consolidated its influence around the world, tribalism remained entrenched in the politics and social organization of Arab and Muslim countries, and confusion has persisted for many non-Muslims about what is truly Islamic.

Islamic jurisprudence has developed over the course of 14 centuries. Various schools of jurisprudence have emerged in this span of time, each with its own interpretation and application of the Shari'a. Muslims follow different interpretive approaches and applications. Given this enormous complexity, we have been concerned with highlighting the need to avoid assumptions in exploring schools driven by faith or value systems and to contribute to multicultural understanding given the current state of global migration and the unavoidable meeting of different cultures (Arar & Haj-Yehia, 2018).

In both Western and Eastern settings, Muslims face challenges that reflect their socio-political-cultural environments (Ulfat, 2020). Scholars state that educational leadership from an Islamic perspective is informed by diverse cultural and faith-based traditions such as Sunni, Shi'a, Ahmadiyya, and Sufi (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018; Shah, 2006).

These traditions shape the values and beliefs within these communities and influence the leadership styles that thrive there. Ezzani and Brooks (2019) highlight that "[b]y virtue of this affinity, a premium is placed on the harmonization between the values and beliefs of the school leader with those of the school and its community" (p. 784). As such, research is needed to examine how school leaders express their beliefs and values in multiple Muslim contexts and how their leadership practices shape their work across their schools.

By introducing a new term, "Islam-based educational leadership", this book aims to challenge the current perspectives, practices, and assumptions toward what is known as Islamic educational leadership—especially since Western perspectives on the topic emphasize the ethical and moral system that is considered to be the core of the Islamic leadership framework—and in this way contribute to cross-cultural understanding of school leadership and faith-based schools. Furthermore, Almoharby and Neal (2013) write,

> Islam is a universalist rational-legal worldview in just these ways. If one reads the argumentation in Ibn Khaldun's analysis of leadership in the Islamic world, one is struck by the logical similarities with later Western discourses on the subject, particularly those of Weber (1978)). Likewise, the deliberations of Al Farabi on subjects such as education, governance and justice are clearly rational-legal in their argumentation and analysis (Al-Talbi, 1993). Indeed, Muslim discourses, drawing lessons from the Quran and the Sunnah, are in the most part identical in logical and discursive structure to later Western jurisprudential argumentation (Weeramantry, 2001;). In both, there is a common seeking for ruling on

the particular from precedent, and universal principles; and, there is the striving to clarify universals through argumentation about prior particulars and agreed-upon universals.

Despite the long history of institutionalized education in Muslim-majority nations, defining educational leadership from an Islamic perspective is still in its theoretical stages and requires more in-depth studies and investigation (Jubran, 2015; Shah, 2006). And in Western contexts, there is limited examination of educational leadership in Muslim schools centering on leadership experiences and fewer attempts to define its theoretical constructs (Ahmed, 2011; DeCuir, 2016; Khalil & DeCuir, 2018).

In this book, we differentiate between leadership and being a leader, as educators can demonstrate leadership without occupying formal positions (Sawalhi & Chaaban, 2019; Sawalhi & Sellami, 2021). Hallinger and Leithwood (1996) wrote that culture must be centered on the examination of leaders and leadership, and Brooks and Mutohar (2018) indicated that Islam conceptualizes the enactment of leadership in a manner that reflects its faith tenets. As such, our representation of Islam-based leadership demonstrates a unique form of leadership that is rooted in religious knowledge and practices. In Islam, leadership is a community mandate to establish justice and equity codified in religious texts. Uniquely, it is assigned to those who lead prayers and community institutions and governments, for both men and women. Therefore, Islam-based leadership in educational institutions is understood as a spiritual act just as much as it is an administrative, managerial, or strategic act of leadership (Arar & Haj-Yehia, 2018). Our text examines how Islam-based leadership is conceptualized and practiced in Muslim education spaces globally, and we show how authors understand Islamic-based educational leadership, management, and administration differently, which led to our model presented in the conclusion chapter.

Islam-based forms of education leadership, management, and administration

Our attempt to define what we call Islam-based education is an effort to bridge the core concepts associated with schooling in Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority contexts. It is inclusive of public and private institutional structures and covers the spectrum of Muslim ideologies. It is Islam-based regardless of the context and

structural distinctions because it is rooted in the traditions of Islam as practiced by diverse Muslims.

The attention given to multiple geographic contexts enables us to propose a concept that transcends socio-cultural and political boundaries that often divide Muslims according to how they practice Islam. Instead, we seek to identify the essential practices of school leadership that are present in nation-states led by Islamic law, as well as in minoritized communities where leadership is often resistant to dominant secular discourse. This contributes to some leaders' roles as bureaucrats tasked with implementing policies and political initiatives through their schools. Others perceive in their work as community leaders a responsibility for developing a school institution that advances faith practices. Across these spaces, leaders are tasked with examining their local contexts and developing leadership competencies that reflect the tenets of Islam and affirm the practices of their Muslim school communities.

Islam-based educational leadership, management, and administration occur in both public and private educational spaces, often depending on the political context in which they occur. Notably, establishing Islamic schools in a Muslim country or leading schools in Muslim countries is different from leading and managing Islamic schools or educating Muslim learners in secular societies (Danish Shakeel, 2018; Merry & Driessen, 2005).

Muslims encourage formal and informal teaching and learning to instill lifelong values. In early centuries, mosques played an important role as an Islamic educational institution, and then madrasas became predominant until the 19th century, when Muslim countries began following the Western models of schooling (Asadullah & Chaudhury, 2010; Bano, 2014; Park & Niyozov, 2008).

Park and Niyozov (2008) attempted to categorize education related to Muslims into four types. The first type is education of Muslims, which describes the process of teaching future generations about Islamic subjects, and which might be offered formally or semi-formally, such as through mosques and study circles. The second type is education for Muslims, where Muslim learners study Islamic subjects and secular subjects in Islamic schools. As Park and Niyozov write, "Islamic schools aspire to embed Islamic epistemology and praxis into the formal and hidden curricula and teach all subjects from an Islamic perspective" (2008, p. 324). The third type is education about Islam, which happens in public schools where the curriculum is enriched with information about Islam and Muslims and certain religious accommodation services are provided to Muslim students. The fourth type is education that is diffused through socialization processes, through which Muslims get exposed to Islamic education without participating in any formal education.

However, we believe that the distinction between the Islamization of knowledge and the classification of secular subjects is still unclear, as Muslim scholars study medical subjects and astronomy in addition to learning the Quran and Hadeeth.

Parents may choose to raise their children with Islamic values that might not be reinforced in public schools, even in Muslim countries. Unfortunately, the negative stereotyping that occurs with the labeling of educational practices with Islamic subjects affects educational provisions in many countries, not only in the West but also in many Arab countries where increasing rejection of many Islamic values and thoughts is taking place under the umbrella of Islamophobia or the renewal of Islam. Moreover, as scholars emphasize, many educators have benefited from reviewing Islamic values to develop their own educational systems and practices (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018; Ezzani & Brooks, 2019).

While many scholars such as Brooks and Mutohar (2018) have tried to develop what they call Islamic educational leadership frameworks, we argue that "Islam-based educational leadership" is an umbrella term that might occur in different forms and at different levels. In the West, non-Muslim leaders provide educational opportunities for Muslim students in public schools with the consideration of their culture and religion. Sometimes non-Muslim leaders head international Islamic schools in Muslim countries. There are also Muslim leaders who lead schools in both Muslim and non-Muslim contexts and integrate high morals within the educational systems they lead. Since previous studies have introduced new concepts such as Islamic feminism (Khalil & DeCuir, 2018), Islamic instructional leadership, Rabbani leadership (Hammad & Shah, 2019), Islamic character-building curriculum or values (Ahmed, 2012), and Murrabi (Kazmi, 1999), scholars need to clarify the meaning of the terms they are using. They must not assume that the suggested principles represent Islam or Muslim leaders across all centuries and countries.

This book

Undoubtedly, notable scholars in this field have contributed significantly to the growing field of Islamic leadership, but in this book, we introduce the term "Islam-based educational leadership" by adding more clarity to the existing literature and presenting a wide range of scholarship, including novel insights and emotional, ethical, and social justice perspectives and cases in K–12 and higher education from some regions of the world. This book presents voices from different countries and even from the same country to share different insights and perspectives. The following section provides an overview of the 14 chapters, which are divided into three parts.

Part I: Between past and future: New insights

This part encourages the reader to rethink how we define Islam-based educational leadership and how to present old or new concepts from a new perspective that might encourage scholars to connect previous Muslim scholarship with contemporary trends through an analytical lens with new insights.

Part II: Islam-based educational leadership in secular countries

The authors in this part provide a tour of different contexts that might be affected by secular policies, including those of the USA, the UK, Türkiye, and Southeast Asian countries. We acknowledge that these countries do not include all practices, and such a scope cannot be achieved in one book. However, these chapters aim to encourage the reader to re-explore their own context.

Part III: Models, voices, and new insights from Muslim communities

This final part focuses on different models the authors have shared from the countries they selected and that they have called a Muslim community. We might as editors disagree or agree with many of the findings mentioned by the authors. But we prefer to provide a space for each author to present their own insight and encourage the reader to reflect upon and connect the shared insights and ideas as we try to model a conclusion that could be used by researchers and practitioners when they work on educational opportunities from an Islamic perspective.

Chapters overview

Part I: Between past and future: New insights

Part II: Islam-based educational leadership in secular countries

Part III: Models, voices, and new insights from Muslim communities

This cutting-edge edited volume advances our collective understanding of Islamic-based educational leadership as it exists and is imagined in different education systems, cultures, and nations and contributes to fostering a multicultural landscape. The book encouraged scholars to produce new knowledge across the intersections of Islam and education leadership. The book includes three parts following the introduction, in which we clarify the main terms and trends related to Islamic-based educational leadership stemming from different national and cultural contexts.

Part one bridges the gap between the past and future of Islamic-based educational leadership by presenting novel insights in the field and includes four chapters. The first chapter offers a comprehensive mapping of Islamic-based educational leadership scholarship from the 1990s and 2000s using a systematic review approach. The chapter identifies the literature in two broad themes of leadership and policy with the majority focusing on leadership models and issues. The second chapter sheds light on new insights driven by significant leverage for leadership in the history of Islam. Al-Attari and Essa in their chapter "The Islamic 'Khilafah' Model to Educational Leadership: From the Prolegomena to Desiderata" advance an Islamic-informed "non-language intensive" model to educational administration entitled the *Khilafa*-Model. The term *Khilafa*, as used in the Quranic,

verse no. 30, captures the quintessence of man's existence on earth. The model integrated the Islamic core belief system, particularly the positions on man, universe, and life besides some ontological and epistemological issues; the value system, the characteristics of the Islamic worldview, and *Maqasid Al Shar'ia*, which are brought about to bear on organizations. We find that Maqasid Al Shari'a is a very important concept that should be included in educational leaders' preparation and development programs to equip them with proper understanding and decision-making. The third chapter of this part introduces another model of teacher leadership and how teaching is a profession of faith. The orbit model Sawalhi developed highlights how teachers can influence others both inside and outside the schools. In the final chapter of this part, "Managing Emotions in Schools: Insights from Religion Sources and a Model for School Leadership", Toprak and Karakus reveal how leaders are expected to convey effective emotional signals by utilizing appropriate social and emotional expressions to create a positive emotional climate at school. In Islamic leadership, it is advised to spread the salutation of peace as frequently as possible and use nice words and gestures to inform others about our positive feelings.

The second part of this book presents examples of Islamic-based educational leadership from secular countries. With Islamophobia and racial stereotyping at their peak, Chapter 5 highlights that antiracism is not a 21st-century call to action nor a modern social concept; it is a deeply rooted faith-based obligation embodied in Quranic and Prophetic foundations of justice and equity. DeCuir shows that Islamic antiracist school leadership exists within the defined work priorities of American Muslim school leaders. This work is Islamically rooted because it is grounded in Quranic and Prophetic principles of equity and justice, and privileges faith as a motivation for leadership work. The next chapter in this part guides us to issues related to higher education, such as maintaining Islamic identity through teaching Islamic studies online and market-driven practices. Lahmar contributes to the ongoing debate around the growth and development of Islamic-based educational institutions in Western contexts. Specifically, it focuses on Islamic-based higher education institutions within the British context, with particular emphasis placed on analyzing the impact of changing policy contexts on the possible development of accredited and validated institutions. In Chapter 7, "Educational Leadership in a Muslim and Secular Country: The Case of Türkiye", Karatas discusses different aspects of school administrators in Muslim societies in the case of Türkiye compared to other countries. Türkiye has a modern education system, and most of its population is Muslim. Social and cultural reasons and pedagogical and institutional consequences of the differentiating qualities of school administrators

in the Muslim community are emphasized. In the following chapter from Türkiye as well, Er, Sahin, and Doğru offer another case of Imam-Hatip schools of Türkiye by examining the historical integrity and the purposes of the establishment of these schools while shedding light on the overall schooling system and administrative practices of religious education. Thus, they examine a school founded with the aim of training imams and preachers within a central education system where the state control is intense. Sumintono and colleagues in the closing chapter of this part, review literature on Southeast Asian Islamic leadership categorizing the research evidences based on methodological approach as conceptual, qualitative, and quantitative.

In the third and final part, we present five chapters sharing unheard voices from Muslim communities. First, Blaik, Litz, and Ali conceptualize two key features of UAE reforms within the realm of medieval Muslim scholars' perspectives and contemporary educational trends. These include the adoption of moral education (ME) and English as a medium of instruction. Specifically, ME will be conceptualized in terms of critical pedagogy and the principle of social justice. Second, Türkoğlu and colleagues draw attention to the gap in the literature by presenting the case of a successful Islamic high school with a distinctive character of Imam-Hatip School in Türkiye that has been at the center of political discussions surrounding their purpose and outcomes since their establishment. Third, Amatullah shares a story of a female educational leader, analyzing it with an Islamic leadership framework. She advocates the all-encompassing nature of Islam in community life, emphasizing that these leadership behaviors and practices are not restricted to Muslims alone to practice; rather, all communities can embrace them. Fourth, El Odessy, in her chapter entitled "Islamic Humanocracy and Educational Leadership: The Story of a Community School in Egypt", presents a new model called *Iqra's* leadership model through a number of foundational pillars and practices—namely, (1) *shura* and collective decision-making, (2) empowering culture of freedom, (3) self-accountability, (4) shared and distributive leadership, (5) decentralization, and (6) relational trust. Fifth, Fauzi and Muhammed take the reader to the context of Islamic studies in Malaysia as they explore some new neo-traditional initiatives, examining their educational contents, motivation, and leadership backgrounds and style to show the potential of the newly empowered traditional Islamic learning axes within the existing conventional Islamic studies milieu.

Finally, the book ends with closing thoughts, drawing conclusions and presenting recommendations. In this chapter, we compare the various models/concepts discussed in the book and highlight lessons to be learned from them, including their shortcomings. We propose a comprehensive Islamic-based educational leadership

model based on the ecological framework for researchers and practitioners to critically reflect on their epistemologies. In addition, the book provides a profound overview of the preceding chapters, draws conclusions from the main findings, suggests recommendations for various stakeholders, and discusses implications for further research, policy, professional development, and praxis, as fully explored in the concluding chapter.

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9
Islamic educational leadership
Southeast Asia perspectives

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Introduction

The study of leadership is abundant and informs that contextual conditions are essential to form its style and characteristics. A comprehensive bibliometric study conducted by Hallinger and Kovacevic (2019), for instance, shows that educational leadership, as a subset of educational administration, is developed progressively. Based on more than 22,000 journal articles as a corpus of literature in the span of 58 years, ideas of educational leadership have been changing dynamically. The discussion of educational leadership was highly dominated by researchers from a Western context, and its constructs were derived from North America and Europe. The knowledge base underwent a bit of a change in the 2000s in terms of the origin of empirical research studies, such as from Asia, Africa and Latin America, but they were still mostly adopted from Western concepts. One perspective that started to emerge in the 2000s was original research on the topic of educational leadership from the Islamic view that offered a different understanding of the body of knowledge. As Shah (2017) shows because education consists of cultural activities that involve values and beliefs in each society, the notion of Islamic educational leadership is unavoidable since approximately a quarter of the world's population are Muslims. Such an Islamic notion views education as not only to make people smart, to increase their knowledge and skills, but it plays as an act of worship and manifestation of good deeds as well (Othman et al., 2017). However, the face of Islam itself is not merely monolithic, even the teaching that comes from the same source of the Quran and the *Sunnah*,[1] but it also interacts with local tradition, geography and its history to make the manifestation itself salient in every region.

This chapter explores ideas and practices of Islamic educational leadership in the Southeast Asia context. The efforts to incorporate Islamic values and principles in

terms of leading school management and administration are shown in peer-reviewed journal articles that are discussed from Southeast Asia perspectives. The first section will provide a brief history of the school system in the Southeast Asia region. This section informs colonial experiences as well as Islamic revivalism. This is then followed by discussion about Islamic conceptualization in regard to educational leadership. After that, theoretical and empirical perspectives of the growing corpus of Southeast Asia's Islamic educational leadership are explored. The chapter will close with discussion about the future direction of the issue.

Brief information on Islam in the Southeast Asian context

The expansion of Islam since the 7th century from the Arab Peninsula up to now has been showing differences in terms of races, locations, cultural norms, languages and traditions which are also syncretic and amalgamated with many other aspects in different civilizations. It is something common that similar concepts and procedures in Islam can have slightly different perceptions in meaning and understanding. As a result, such meaning and understanding lead us to know the conceptual and practical aspects of Islamic educational leadership perspectives in each education system better, being a worthwhile endeavor to pursue (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018; Shah, 2017).

Southeast Asia has the largest share of Muslims in the world, making up more than 240 million people or nearly 25% of the total Muslim population in the world (Aljunied, 2019; Feener, 2004). Having the largest adherents of Islam, Southeast Asia, which is a unique topographical and strategic location lying between two oceans and two continents, with so many islands, is usually called the Muslim archipelago (Yusuf, 2021). In Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines, Islam is an officially recognized religion; whereas, in Malaysia and Brunei, Islam is the official religion. Even Indonesia is the most populous Muslim country in the world, reaching to estimated 230 million Muslim people or 87% of the country's population (Arifin et al., 2018; Brooks et al., 2020; Weintraub, 2011). Muslims in the Southeast Asia region come from different ethnic groups in their respective countries. They speak different local languages; however, it is also regarded as an ethnic identity. For instance, Malays are Muslims who either resided in Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, South Thailand or South Philippines. Unlike in the Middle East, most Muslims in Southeast Asia are Sunni sect[2] and follow predominantly Shafi'i madhhab[3] (Yusuf, 2021) among the four major Sunni madhabs (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali).

Historically, Southeast Asians were estimated firstly to know Islam in the 12th century. It was brought by the merchants from south India and China and then continued by another wave up to the 17th century directly from the Arabian Peninsula (Lambourn, 2008; Shamsul, 2005). The adoption of Islam made traditional religious teachings in the community smoothly change from prior Hindu or Buddhist teachings to Islam, which was initially introduced by Sufi mysticisms being familiar with the locals (Johns, 1993; Ricklefs, 2006). Islamic teachings were mostly conducted traditionally in informal institutions known as *pondoks* or *pesantrens*[4] which were managed locally by local Muslim scholars with classical Islamic textbooks (Hefner, 2008). Later, with the availability of steamships, Southeast Asia Muslims could travel for Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca; many of them stayed longer and studied Islam in the Middle East. When they returned home, other movements such as puritanical Wahabism and Islamic modernism emerged (Yusuf, 2021).

In addition to traditionally managed Islamic institutions, modern school education was introduced by colonial governments from Europe (British, Spanish, Portuguese and the Netherlands) in the Southeast Asia region and it grew widely in the 19th century. However, the colonial governments mostly practiced secular and segregated education systems between elite European and local people with the intention based on their interests. Islamic teachings were mostly conducted in a traditional way across the archipelago. Countries in Southeast Asia gained independence in the 20th century. Then the states and communities built and developed their schools and education systems, firstly mirroring practices from their previous colonial governments usually for public school systems, but gradually searching for practices based on their own values and philosophies, including the religion they practiced.

. The current education situation in each country in this region is unique. For example, the two Muslim-majority countries in Southeast Asia, Indonesia and Malaysia, have very diverse school types, including public and private school systems that provide both secular education and Madrasas (Parker & Raihani, 2011). The latter combines Islamic teachings and secular subjects. However, typically, private institutions continue the legacy of providing traditional Islamic teachings with *pondoks* or *pesantrens* which mostly offer religious/*dinniyah* (Islamic) subjects such as *fiqh*,[5] *syariah*[6] and Arabic language in a residential learning type directed by a Muslim scholar (Ahmad & Salamun, 2017). In the case of Indonesia, Islamic schools or Madrasas originated and evolved from *pesantrens* which show Islamic education transformation (Mutohar, 2020) and are nearly similar to those in Thailand (Raihani, 2017). This dualism between the religious and the academic system is always the biggest challenge for countries in Southeast Asia (Othman et al., 2017).

Further, Ahmad and Jory (2011) asserted that the development of Islamic education can be seen from a historical context, and each country in Southeast Asia has its unique history. For instance, Indonesia experienced a hard struggle for Islamic education during the secular nationalism period under Sukarno's Old Order regime (1950–1965) and a highly political control period under Suharto's New Order regime (ended in 1998).

In Malaysia, the struggle for the development of Islamic studies has been about integrating Islamic studies into the university system. The implementation of knowledge Islamization has also been underway due to dissatisfaction with knowledge Westernization. In Brunei, like in Malaysia, knowledge Islamization has been integrated into all education levels and Islamic studies have become a state agenda (Ahmad & Jory, 2011).

Meanwhile, Islamic schools in Thailand and the Philippines where Muslims are the minority tell a different story. They have a very challenging situation because of the continuing history of ethno-religious conflict between Muslim groups and the central government (Al-Qurtuby, 2013). In Thailand, Muslims mostly live in its southern provinces. Another influential aspect in southern Thailand is that Islamic education has been in a struggle against national assimilation projects initiated by the Thai state since the 1940s. Whereas, in the southern Philippines, Muslims have also become minorities and have been in a long struggle due to their minority status, where the state is reluctant to provide the Muslims with more autonomy in education, in addition to limited resources (Ahmad & Jory, 2011).

Theoretical aspect: Islamic educational leadership

Leadership as well as educational leadership has been defined and theorized in various ways (Shah, 2010). For instance, based on its components, Northouse (2021) defines it as a process where a leader influences his/her followers in the pursuit of a shared goal. It takes place in a context, and "no single form of leadership is effective for all contexts, particularly when the contexts are differently characterized" (Raihani, 2017, p. 273). Most of the leadership theories and models on leaders' personal perspectives and their influence on their leadership practices are Western-based and their applicability in a non-Western context remains arguable (Qian et al., 2017) as leadership is context-specific in nature (Hallinger & Wang, 2015; Pan et al., 2017). Such contexts as societies, cultures, ethnics and religious beliefs result in different interpretations of leadership (Shah, 2006)—that is, certain leadership is appropriate for a certain context. For example, in the context of

Muslim society or organization, Islamic leadership is claimed to be appropriate (Egel & Fry, 2017). Even more is that educational leadership is differently conceptualized across and even within societies and cultures. This is then people differently interpreting leadership, reflecting how they look at leadership as well as how they philosophically and theoretically assume it (Shah, 2017).

However, in fact, it is an imbalance that leadership has been so far discussed from Western researchers' perspectives, with many perspectives focusing mainly on Western contexts and constructs (Davies, 2005). This is because "[e]thnocentric concepts, theories and practices in education, predominantly embedded in western philosophy and values, tend to ignore the growing multicultural nature of educational institutions" (Shah, 2017, p. 363).

The difference in leadership, as aforementioned due to its different interpretations, also takes place in a geographical context. To illustrate, Irawanto et al. (2011) compare how leadership is defined in the Western context and Eastern context. In the Western context, scholars tend to define leadership by looking at the functions of leaders in organizations and classifying leadership into leadership styles, with little consideration of cultural value effects despite influencing the effectiveness of leadership. In the Eastern context, such cultural values are much considered, and thus paternalistic leadership is more appropriate to be applied. This phenomenon can also apply to the context of Southeast Asian countries. However, Islamic educational leadership remains a question of whether it varies across and within countries in the Southeast Asia region.

Specifically, in terms of educational leadership, Islam views educational leadership as raising teaching and learning to a holy responsibility of the uppermost command created from the links between knowledge, education and religion. These links lead to the model of Islamic educational leadership (Shah, 2006) and such a model lies in three dimensions: parent (caring, commitment and responsibility), educator (teaching with knowledge and understanding) and prophet/leader (guiding with values and wisdom). Caring, teaching and guiding are intertwined activities, with a broader responsibility (Shah, 2006). Such educational leadership in Islam is educational leadership which is elevated to the level of holy and religious responsibility. Such responsibility is an internal drive of the leaders to provide the best they can do for the communities, and this is devoted merely to Allah and for the sake of Allah (Shah, 2017).

Another interesting concept of Islamic educational leadership is proposed by Brooks and Mutohar (2018), where the second author is Indonesian, completed with sources from other scholars. They outline that the Islamic educational leadership framework consists of an inner ring and an outer ring. The inner ring of the

framework consists of four leadership belief domains: Islam, education, culture and leadership. Such domains influence the worldview of leaders practiced routinely. Further, elaboration about this is provided next.

Firstly, Islam means submitting to God's will and commandments to obtain His favor for life in both the world and hereafter. For this to happen, Muslims need to reach *taqwa* (God-fearing), which can be gained with knowledge or *ilm*. Thus, knowledge acquisition is obligatory for every Muslim. There is no dichotomy between intellect (*al-aql*) and spirit (*al-ruh*), but they are closely linked for knowledge creation with implications for Islamic ontology (what is knowledge) and for epistemology (how knowledge is acquired) leading to a religious activity as previously explained. Supreme spiritual, moral and intellectual values must be practiced in the world. The primary sources of knowledge which are used to guide Muslims in their life are the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (Almoharby & Neal, 2013). This concept of knowledge shapes the Islamic philosophy of education (Shah, 2017).

Secondly, education, as a process of obtaining knowledge in Islam, is aimed at providing Muslims with knowledge not only to develop individually, to get employed and to gain economic benefits but also, and more importantly, to gain knowledge on how to worship Allah or how to do a religious activity. Shah (2017) asserts that, based on the Quran, the Islamic philosophy of education highlights the role of education not only for the individual but also for the society to seek a happy life from this world to the hereafter. Such education comprises three types: *tarbiyah* (nurturing), *ta'lim* (learning) and *ta'dib* (goodness). The first term, *tarbiyah*, broadly means to increase and grow, underlining the elements of nurturing and care. The second is *ta'lim*, which means *to know*, with an emphasis on learning. The third term is *ta'dib*, which is drawn from the Hadith, and it means disciplining the mind, body and soul; its root word is *adab*, which implies the teaching of good manners, ethics and politeness (Shah, 2008). Each of these terms has been debated by Muslim scholars to support specific views of Islamic education. These three terms, *tarbiyah*, *ta'lim* and *ta'dib*, have been most commonly used to define education in Islamic thought, which taken together might convey the meaning and scope of education in Islam, both formal and non-formal (Iqbal, 1996). However, scholars have interpreted each term according to their own understandings and views, using them separately or in combination to emphasize their preferred interpretations of Islamic education (Shah, 2017). In essence, the educational concepts of Islam as noted by Shah (2017) include the command of learning (*iqra*), compulsory education, education for all and lifelong learning.

Thirdly, cultures, as well as societies and communities, contribute to different interpretations of leadership, including educational leadership (Shah, 2006). For example, in Malaysia, as Islam becomes its state religion, the cultures are dominated by Islamic traditions and sources (Shah, 2020). In an Islamic school in Thailand, Raihani (2017, p. 281) conducted observations and found "the Islamic schools' rituals, ceremonies, day-to-day interactions, and events that can be inferred as typical of the Islamic school culture". Another illustration, in their interview, Khalil and DeCuir (2018, p. 101) found that an assistant principal has conducted spiritual leadership as described as Islamic culture, where a leader is required "to be honest and ... to be forgiving, and ... to be compassionate and merciful, even when nobody is watching it ... [because even] if nobody saw it, then Allah [Almighty] has seen it".

Fourthly, leadership including educational leadership as noted by Shah (2017) is influenced by culture and there is the interplay, as well as the relationship, between leadership and culture. In Islam, it is emphasized that "Muslim culture represents the worldview of faith" (p. 41). Muslims and other people from faith backgrounds have different conceptions and perceptions of educational leadership. The differences result in the ways educational leaders exercise and practice educational leadership in their faith communities. Members of such communities join in activities associated with their cultural and ideological knowledge (Shah, 2006).

There is an interplay between these four domains and the outer ring (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018), which are the beliefs of the leaders hold about, and these domains encircle Islamic values in the outer ring in the context of the Islamic educational leadership framework. The outer ring of the framework includes eight values: *nasiha* (good counsel), *ikhlas* (sincere conduct), consultation (shura), *ikhtilaf* (dissent), *maslaha* (public interest), *al-amr bi al-maruf wa'l-nahy an al-munkar* (encouraging right and discouraging wrong), *hisba* (accountability) and *tafakkur* (reflection) (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018).

To practice good counsel/*nasiha*, Muslim leaders need to have good knowledge and information about the problems to be solved, search for the best course of action and act with others in mind. In terms of sincerity/*ikhlas*, Muslim leaders, when making decisions, need to act sincerely to result in the greatest results for all. For the effective practice of good counsel/*nasiha* and sincerity/*ikhlas*, Muslim leaders need to have such attributes as just, principle and moral (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018). To practice *shura*/consultation, Muslim leaders need to do consultations with well-informed people to attain an agreement to achieve a resolution and make a balance between individual and community needs. It promotes the democracy and justice

mandate because *shura* encourages involvement and serves dissent (*ikhtilaf*). When practicing *ikhtilaf*, Muslim leaders need to be flexible in making a decision and try to make ummah in agreement. All these efforts are intended for *maslaha.*

Maslaha, also called public interest, is an Islamic concept that necessitates Muslim leaders to determine decision-making to achieve the common good for all community members. In schools, such leaders should apply any appropriate leadership, for example, democratic school leadership, to fulfill student needs—that is, the common good (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018).

The next value is *al-amr bi al-maruf wa'l-nahy an al-munkar*, which means enjoining the right/honorable and forbidding the wrong/dishonorable. This concept is used in the Quran nine times, referring to the collective duty of the Muslim community to encourage righteous behavior and discourage immorality, as recognized by reason and the Islamic moral and legal system. It aims to remove oppression from society and instead establish justice. It is applied to moral, social, political and economic facets of life. It is, ideally, the distinguishing trait of the Muslim nation (Esposito, 2004). For Muslims, this concept is mandatory because Islamic law lists it at the mandatory level of law (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018).

The next value is *hisbah*. It is an endeavor used to make sure that everything related to human life is accountable or on the right track, leading to doing the right and avoiding misdeeds. This is a way of implementing *al-amr bi al-maruf wa'l-nahy an al-munkar* following the command of Allah, to ensure human life well-being in both the world and hereafter (Ibrahim, 2015).

Finally, *tafakkur* is one of the eight values in the outer ring of the Islamic educational leadership framework. *Tafakkur* is a way to self-reflect on what Allah has created and to improve knowledge and faith in Allah. It is a value that can stimulate students not only to acquire knowledge but also to think outside the box toward a higher thinking level. Also, teachers can use the *tafakkur* approach to promote higher-order thinking skills (Jamil et al., 2018).

This section depicts Islamic educational leadership that is possibly similar to as well as, of course, different from that of non-Islamic educational leadership. However, it is clearly noted by Shah (2017) that leadership works in any context in which two or more people are engaged; leaders are responsible for their followers. However, in the Islamic educational perspective, leaders' responsibility is not only to the followers but also to Allah, the Only God, aimed to obtain His favor for life in both the world and hereafter. The following section explains research evidence of the Islamic educational leadership perspectives in Southeast Asia.

Southeast Asia perspective: Research evidence

One Indonesian Islamic intellectual stated that there are two faces of Islam: conceptual Islam and actual Islam (Rakhmat, 1991). The former is an ideal thing based on Islamic knowledge sources as elaborated in the previous section, where ideas of Islamic educational leadership are discussed. On the other hand, the latter is something that is manifested and conducted by the Muslims to develop the society and civilization, where in this context it is actualization of Islamic educational leadership in Southeast Asia. As Shah (2017) put it, that leadership is the product of social interaction in certain cultural contexts and is influenced by location and geographical elements. Then, understanding Southeast Asia perspectives of Islamic educational leadership requires one to see it as a work in progress based on empirical study of a larger knowledge corpus about the field.

The corpus of literature on Southeast Asia's perspectives on Islamic educational leadership is limited for the time being (year 2021). We have tried to gather empirical research papers from many available databases such as ERIC, Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar with specific keywords like "Islamic educational leadership", as well as with more general keywords like "educational leadership", but not many articles appeared in the context of Southeast Asia. For instance, using ERIC, there were 48 articles, while in the Scopus database, document search using multiple field methods, such as in using the fields "article title, abstract and keywords" and "affiliation country" in Southeast Asian countries with the aforementioned keywords, a total of 113 publications were generated. The number of papers became fewer when we sorted to remove non-education field publications or practicing other religions of educational leadership. Next, selections were based on better publication quality (e.g., peer-reviewed and non-predatory journal manuscripts). After this screening process, 19 publications remained. Another illustration of this, Adams et al. (2021) conducted a comprehensive bibliometric study about educational leadership and management in Malaysia but only identified five articles (1.5% of the total) that focus on Islamic leadership, where three of them are written in English. So far, four Southeast Asian countries that published in this category, respectively, in terms of the number of papers, come from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines.

The approaches that were used by the prior authors are various. Few of them used a literature review method on the concept of Islamic educational leadership (see Jaffar et al., 2019; Othman et al., 2018; Salleh, 2018); several used a quantitative approach (for instance, Abdullah & Kassim, 2012; Othman & Wanlabeh, 2012; Saleemad et al., 2012; Taib et al., 2016); some used a mixed-method approach (see Ahmad & Salamun, 2017; Ail & Abdullah, 2016; Salamun & Shah, 2012; Salamun, 2015). However, studies that used fully a qualitative paradigm provide more

insights into the issue and show interesting findings about Islamic educational leadership in the Southeast Asian context (see Arifin et al., 2018; Abbas & Tan, 2020; Brooks et al., 2020; Milligan, 2010; Mutohar, 2020; Raihani, 2007, 2017; Shulhan, 2018). The following section discusses these approaches and their findings further.

Conceptual papers

Salleh (2018) points out that, based on his perspective, Islamic educational leadership can be explained by the acronym LEADERSHIP, for which he elaborates each letter (where L stands for *leading*, E for *education*, A for *aims*, D for *delivery*, E for *empowerment*, R for *resilience*, S for *style*, H for *humbleness and humility*, I for *integrity* and P for *piety*). This informs about the Muslim competency based on guidance from verses in the Quran and the Prophet's (PBUH) words and practices. For instance, when discussing the first letter L for leading, Salleh (2018) explained traits possessed by a leader such as intelligence and good cognitive ability. In Islam, the task of a leader is doing good deeds for the society for the sake of Allah as instructed in the Quran. The exception is letter S (style), which explains various leadership patterns of behavior; ideas that are borrowed from Western research.

In addition, Jaffar et al. (2019) analyzed 16 Quranic verses about *ulul albab* theme, which simply means gifted individual, and proposed the concept of *ulul albab* principal leadership. They found that this type of leadership has three dimensions: Quranic, encyclopedic, and *ijthadic*. The first dimension means that Quran is the only and absolute preference for a leader as well as a way of life; the second dimension portrays an educational leader's intelligence and knowledge quality; the last dimension context is an effort to do continuous improvement and consistently commit toward perfection (Jaffar et al., 2019). As can be shown, this is an effort to try an approach to characterizing ideal educational leadership based on Quran verses.

While Othman et al. (2018) proposed to relate a collegial model in the educational institution context to Islamic approaches. They emphasized that effective Muslim educational leaders are those who practice shared decision-making where the Quran and Sunnah are common values of the educators. This is similar to the concept of *Jamaah*, not only as it is a genuine Muslim identity but it is also a basic condition of Islamic faith (*iman*). Othman et al. (2018) identified three relevant leadership models for the collegial model in Islamic educational institutions: transformational, participative and interpersonal leadership, all reflecting the leadership attributes of the Prophet (PBUH). The classical text mentions that characteristics possessed by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are *shiddiq* (honesty), *amanah* (trustworthy), *fathanah* (wisdom) and *tabligh* (conveying messages), where

these attributes are articulated when practicing collegiality in Islamic educational institutions.

Quantitative approach

One distinctive feature from the Malaysian authors is that they use Islamic terms such as Rabbani, Murabbi, and Ulul Albab addressed to the Islamic educational leadership compared to others. For example, they use terms like Rabbani leadership (Ahmad & Salamun, 2017; Salamun & Shah, 2012; Salamun, 2013; Salamun, 2015), Murabbi leadership (Ail & Abdullah, 2016) and Ulul Albab leadership (Jaffar et al., 2019; Taib et al., 2016) to articulate values from Quran and Sunnah in terms of practices of educational leadership. This type of leader is "someone whose mission and vision in life are solely for the divine path, to be acceptable in the eyes of the Creator" (Ahmad & Salamun, 2017, p. 43). The basic thing from these three concepts is to explore school leadership practices based on Islamic values and influenced by moral judgment according to God's divine acceptance.

These three leadership terms also offer specific research instruments to measure Islamic educational leadership's latent traits. Rabbani leadership has 3 constructs with 15 items using a 5-point rating scale of frequency (Ahmad & Salamun, 2017). Similarly, Ulul Albab leadership has also three constructs with a total of 73 items using a 9-point rating scale of agreement (Taib et al., 2016). Lastly, Murrabi leadership is developed from a qualitative study in order to identify important constructs from experts and has 13 constructs with a total of 132 items (Ail & Abdullah, 2016). There are similarities in terms of constructs used in these three instruments in terms of attitude/perception toward Islamic faith and knowledge, learning and skills and educational leadership practices. All the articles examined the research instruments using the classical test theory approach. The Rabbani leadership research also provides descriptive statistics information, and the other two proposed a structural model that emphasizes the relationship between constructs. All the instruments have been used in the secondary school context, where all respondents were Muslims. The findings show that the education leaders have the attributes of Islamic educational leadership.

The influence of Western leadership models and their instruments are also salient from publications in this region, and they adapted and modified such instruments, for example, the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale or PIRMS (Abdullah & Kassim, 2012) from Malaysia, and Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire or MLQ (Othman & Wanlabeh, 2012) and Leadership Practices or LP (Saleemad et al., 2012) in Thailand. Interesting findings are reported from the studies. Research that used PIMRS found that the perception of promoting the

learning environment is higher at Islamic religious schools compared to schools that have government assistance (Abdullah & Kassim, 2012). While the research that used adapted LP indicates that in Islamic schools, leaders perceived practices more often in all leadership dimensions compared to general schools' leaders (Saleemad et al., 2012). The study by Othman and Wanlabeh (2012) reported that principals in Islamic private schools tend to practice transformational more than transactional leadership, whereas their teachers also perceive that idealized influence and inspirational motivation are more salient in their school leaders.

As such, the results of these typical studies show that Islamic school leaders' traits are also confirmed by Western leadership theories and their research instruments. Although the researchers have used the available models and instruments, they could not capture all the realities that happen in the schools in Southeast Asia since cultural and social variations are so wide. When using the quantitative approach in this area, some limitations emerged from the studies, for example, not applying accurate and precise measurements to the latent traits, and relying on group-centered statistics. When implementing a different approach, Item Response Theory (IRT) is needed because it can reveal more important information and at the same time provides complete psychometric attributes of the instruments (see Salleh et al., 2017). Thus, it is evident that applying this modern measurement model, for instance, can better inform latent traits measured to provide crucial constructs. Also, further testing of the instrument is needed to confirm its qualities in terms of validity, reliability and usability to be like other well-established leadership scales (e.g., Halinger's PIMRS, Bass & Avolio's MLQ) to be used in future research. Thus, possibly due to a lack of these qualities, the instruments measuring the three leadership styles (Rabbani, Murrabi and Ulul Albab leadership) have not been used by other researchers yet (Adams et al., 2021).

Qualitative approach

Research of Islamic educational leadership in Southeast Asia that applies qualitative method provides more rich findings and shows essential information. It reveals a big picture of social realities and surroundings faced by the schools and how the education leaders adapt to challenging situations. Research findings from Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines clearly indicate that principals' leadership practices are based on their personal set of Islamic beliefs and values that represent their moral purposes for the students and school institution (Abbas & Tan, 2020; Brooks, 2015; Brooks et al., 2020; Milligan, 2010; Mutohar, 2020a; Raihani, 2007, 2017; Shulhan, 2018). Studies from Indonesia (Brooks et al., 2020; Raihani, 2007), Thailand (Raihani, 2017) and the Philippines (Milligan, 2010), for instance, have applied a

bottom-up grounded approach when analyzing the phenomena that provide distinctive perspectives, while other researchers borrow a Western framework, such as transformational leadership used in their studies in Singapore (Abbas & Tan, 2020) and in Indonesia (Shulhan, 2018).

Muslim school leaders in all of the empirical studies clearly show religious belief. This is the core of their leadership practices as well as the basis of the ways they view education. Interestingly, each study showing unique types of values comes up as salient findings, such as *amanah* or entrusted leadership in Indonesia (Raihani, 2007), *shura* (mutual consultation) and *ihsan* (compassion) in Singapore (Abbas & Tan, 2020), trust and building cohesion in Thailand (Brooks, 2015; Raihani, 2017) and the Philippines (Milligan, 2010). The findings actually somehow reflect social and political situations in their respective countries that make Muslim educational leaders have to make strategic decisions for the good of students, schools and the Muslim community in general.

Raihani's (2007) study found that Islamic belief and values of the three Muslim principals from public secondary schools in Indonesia, which were secular schools, really underpinned their leadership style and practice. The notion of *amanah* in the school context has been actually reflected in the Indonesian situation since the beginning of democracy in the reform era, where rampant corruption became top news (Sumintono et al., 2014, 2015). So, the statement that the struggle to become accountable as leaders in public institutions is supported by religious belief is a wise statement. The principals also state clearly that apart from *amanah*, the most important thing for them is IMTAQ (short for the words *Iman* and *Taqwa*, meaning faith and piety). This is like a declaration of self-identity that put them also as religious leaders, whereas another study conducted Brooks et al. (2020) in Indonesia also mentions it specifically but in the form of education leaders as socio-religious.

Furthermore, studies by Brooks et al. (2020) and Mutohar (2020) show more current situations in Indonesia that Islamic schools' identity is related to radicalism. For Muslim education leaders, Brooks et al. (2020) found that there was tension between two continua, which are progressive and conservative school leadership. Interestingly, whatever the choice of the principal, the "decision based on their interpretation of Islam that was manifest in the policies, practices and procedures in their school" (Brooks et al., 2020, p. 13). On one hand, the principals' socio-religious beliefs and behaviors put them in the category of open, inclusive and plural; on the other hand, they can choose to be in a closed, exclusive and unitary position. In line with that, Mutohar's (2020) study found that leading with diversity in Islamic schools shows a similar spectrum where one end is the choice to embrace local identities and respect various expressions of Islam, compared to a more

exclusive view. The choice of Muslim educational leaders in this case is very strategic because the impact directly leads to school culture and students' understanding, attitudes and behaviors.

Interestingly, Indonesia's local flavor emerges in these studies. Raihani's (2007) found that kekeluargaan values (family-like relationship) stated by the Muslim principals are considered "uniquely important to help foster effective school teamwork, which creates the cultures of togetherness and collaboration" (p. 487). Whereas, Mutohar (2020) writes that traditional Islamic locals seldom practice in other countries such as "praying at the grave and reciting surah Yassin for a family member who passed away" (p. 3), as an indication of tolerance and implementation of diversity by Muslim educational leaders, embracing many faces of Islam even in the same country.

In addition, a study of Islamic school principals in Indonesia as informed by Shulhan (2018) and Arifin et al. (2018) has to be seen in the context of an effort to improve educational quality. While research by Cardozo and Sri Mulyani (2018) fills in the gap in the context of the gender role of educational leadership role. In his study, Shulhan (2018) found that Islamic educational leaders rely on managerialism in order to improve school quality by improving performance of the teachers, whereas Arifin et al. (2018) found that principals at Islamic primary schools apply a traditional approach (known as Islamic crash course), which is usually practiced in pesantrens in order to improve their school organizational culture, leadership and application of Islamic value.

The only study in Singapore about Islamic school leadership conducted by Abbas and Tan (2020) found that the situation of schools typical in a developed country situation clearly pursues improvement of quality educational services. They conducted a case study of a Singaporean Madrasa (Islamic school) using interviews, observations and artifacts to collect the data. They revealed that school leaders of the Madrasa exhibited the four transformational leadership domains (inspirational motivation, individual consideration, idealized influence and intellectual stimulation). The leaders behaved by articulating a vision, consulting, motivating, supporting, and exemplary manners, following behaviors of the Prophet Muhammad. The salient Islamic principles and values from the research are shura and ihsan. Shura (consultation) reflects common democratic practice in a stable society, and ihsan (compassion) actually shows practice of improvement and commitment to benefit others, a kind of significant contribution in a competitive society.

Studies from the southern areas of Thailand and the Philippines, where ethno-religious conflict has been going on for years (Al-Qurtuby, 2013; Brooks & Sungtong,

2014, 2016; Brooks, 2017; Brooks & Brooks, 2019), inform different perspectives about Muslim educational leaders in Southeast Asia. Raihani (2017) used a multiple-case study in three selected Islamic schools in three provinces in Thailand, with such participants as students, teachers and principals to explore how principals in the schools practice their leadership. Research results suggest that building trust is the top priority for school improvement (Raihani, 2017), whereas Milligan (2010) conducted an ethnographic study on the island of Mindanao southern Philippines and found that combining religious authority and technological competencies aspiration is more effective in developing schools by the Muslim education leaders in the form that he called pragmatic prophetic leadership. The principals from both countries made their school progress in very difficult and challenging situations, showing that their leadership qualities and characteristics fit the local context with appropriate strategies in place.

Milligan (2010) and Raihani (2017) have noted that Muslim educational leaders were keen to collaborate with the central government and abandon their traditional and kinship-based leadership, accepting general (non-Islamic) curriculum as well as non-Muslim teachers who teach those subjects in their schools. The principals at the same time establish this compromise by involving school stakeholders to provide the community with services from their students and teachers and by building trust so that they are supported by all parties (Brooks, 2015). The principals whose schools are in the conflict zone see themselves as being accountable, with resources to be fulfilled based on their religious belief, and providing educational services that make parents believe and choose Islamic schools for their children. This shows that leadership improvisation really works for the greater good of society.

Discussion and conclusion

In this chapter, we have explained Southeast Asian perspectives of Islamic educational leadership. We see that the knowledge corpus of this area starts to grow and provides some unique but limited contributions.

The conceptual papers offer, differentiate identity and present Islamic elements to the issue of Islamic educational leadership. Something that is salient from the articles is directly related to sacred text (Quran and *Sunnah*) and educational leadership context (see Jaffar et al., 2019; Othman et al., 2018; Salleh, 2018). Other writers (e.g., Brooks & Mutohar, 2018; Shah, 2006, 2017) have crafted their arguments, which are more adequate and comprehensive in nature despite explaining mostly the same thing. The limitation of its explanation can be seen when trying to justify sacred text in order to make the English word 'leadership' fit

to the discussion (Salleh, 2018), or fulfilling *ulul albab* theme from an educational leadership perspective (Jaffar et al., 2019). When seen closely, one of the restrictions of the articles in this approach does not rely on comprehensive sources that can guide and expand the available research arguments presented. Promoting more publication in this kind of study is a good priority to elaborate the Islamic educational leadership ideas since few samples and locations have been represented so far.

Meanwhile, developing a new educational leadership research instrument is a huge task that needs certain expertise. The three research instruments discussed in this chapter that measure Islamic educational leadership's latent traits—Rabbani leadership (Ahmad & Salamun, 2017), Ulul Albab leadership (Taib et al., 2016) and Murrabi leadership (Ail & Abdullah, 2016)—have used the analyses of the scales using the classical test theory approach that, unfortunately, does not provide accurate and precise measurements of the empirical data collected. The validation only confirms at the variable level, which does not provide individual-centered statistic information, and it will be more interesting to know if comprehensive validation uses other approaches like IRT (see, for example, Hallinger & Wang, 2015).

Nevertheless, the studies conducted in this Southeast Asia context have a close intersection in terms of ideas, arguments and perspectives presented in the theoretical aspects of Islamic educational leadership in this chapter. As shown from the findings of the qualitative research studies, the researchers emphasize that some Islamic values from educational leaders are more salient compared to others as suggested by the framework presented previously (Brooks & Mutohar, 2018; Shah, 2017).

Interestingly, the research findings also reflect each country's situation and issues faced by the Muslim educational leaders in the region. The condition of Madrasas in Singapore (a developed country) makes the Muslim school leaders focus more on their democratic process and continuous improvement for the society in terms of the choice of Islamic values they pursue. In the southern area of Thailand and the Philippines, it is about survival and finding the best way to reconcile, requiring Muslim principals to invest much in terms of trust building and connection to the community. Meanwhile in Malaysia, producing a unique instrument for Islamic educational leadership traits shows they want to emphasize their identity as a modern Muslim country. Whereas in Indonesia, tension in regard to accountability, radicalism and educational quality makes Muslim educational leaders express their religious beliefs and values differently. All of this research evidence in Southeast

Asia shows that different contexts need different types of Islamic educational leadership, where the contexts themselves are differently portrayed.

Notes

1. Sunnah in Islamic term refers to Prophet Muhammad's sayings, actions, and approvals recommended to follow.
2. Sunni sect comprises Muslims who follow Prophet Muhammad's closest companion (Abu Bakr) as the first caliph and the other three caliphs (Umar, Ustman and Ali), accept Quran, Hadith and five pillars of Islam, as well as follow the four major madhabs (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali).
3. A madhab is a method on how scripture is interpreted by a school of scholars thought to be used as guideline in practicing the teachings of Islam.
4. Pondoks or pesantrens, and also called pondok pesantrens, are Islamic education institutions where students reside to learn and practice the teachings of Islam.
5. Fiqh is a set of rules concerning human understanding and practices of Islamic law, particularly on how to worship and to carry out *muamalah*, based on the Quran and Sunnah.
6. Shari'a is a set of Islamic law regulating religious rituals and human life aspects, including solutions to human problems.

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