



ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Caliphate as a Foundation for Socio-Political Stability: A Theoretical Reconstruction of Authority and Governance In Islamic Administration

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to reconstruct the concept of caliphate as a normative governance paradigm that functions as the foundation of socio-political stability within the framework of Islamic political thought. This study also examines the epistemological interaction between the concept of caliphate and modern state theories. Methods: This study employed a qualitative-interpretative approach based on doctrinal analysis. Primary data were obtained from normative Islamic political texts, while secondary data were derived from classical and contemporary literature related to Islamic governance, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, political legitimacy, and modern governance theories. The analysis was conducted through conceptual classification, *maqāṣid* synthesis, and comparative epistemological dialogue. Results: The study found that the caliphate is conceptually positioned as a normative authority that maintains legal unity, multidimensional stability, and moral legitimacy. Stability within the caliphate framework is not limited to political order but includes spiritual, social, economic, and legal stability. Furthermore, political authority in Islam is fundamentally based on the concept of *amanah* (trusteeship), rather than absolute sovereignty. This study offers a reconstruction of the caliphate as a moral governance paradigm grounded in *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and provides a dialogical framework between Islamic political theory and modern governance discourse.

Keywords: Caliphate, Islamic Governance, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, Moral Governance, Socio-Political Stability

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk merekonstruksi konsep khilafah sebagai paradigma tata kelola normatif yang berfungsi sebagai landasan stabilitas sosial-politik dalam kerangka pemikiran politik Islam. Studi ini juga mengkaji interaksi epistemologis antara konsep khilafah dan teori-teori negara modern. Metode: Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif-interpretatif yang didasarkan pada analisis doktrinal. Data primer diperoleh dari teks-teks politik Islam normatif, sedangkan data sekunder berasal dari literatur klasik dan kontemporer yang berkaitan dengan tata kelola Islam, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, legitimasi politik, dan teori tata kelola modern. Analisis dilakukan melalui klasifikasi konseptual, sintesis *maqāṣid*, dan dialog epistemologis komparatif. Studi ini menemukan bahwa khilafah secara konseptual diposisikan sebagai otoritas normatif yang menjaga kesatuan hukum, stabilitas multidimensi, dan legitimasi moral. Stabilitas dalam kerangka khilafah tidak terbatas pada tatanan politik, melainkan mencakup stabilitas spiritual, sosial, ekonomi, dan hukum. Lebih lanjut, otoritas politik dalam Islam pada dasarnya didasarkan pada konsep *amanah* (tanggung jawab sebagai pemegang amanat), bukan kedaulatan mutlak. Kebaruan: Penelitian ini menawarkan rekonstruksi khilafah sebagai paradigma tata kelola moral yang berlandaskan *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* serta menyediakan kerangka dialogis antara teori politik Islam dan diskursus tata kelola modern.

Kata kunci: Khilafah, Tata Kelola Islam, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, Tata Kelola Moral, Stabilitas Sosial-Politik

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1. INTRODUCTION

The debate concerning the relationship between religion and the state represents one of the most fundamental discourses in the history of human political thought. In the modern Western political tradition, the state is understood as a rational construct that derives legitimacy from social contract, popular sovereignty, and public rationality. This tradition developed through the thoughts of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and extending to John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas, who position democratic procedures, public deliberation, and positive law as the foundation of state power legitimacy. Within this paradigm, religion tends to be placed in the private sphere, while the state is positioned as a secular institution that operates through administrative mechanisms and formal legal rationality (Rawls, 1993; Habermas, 1996). The modern state subsequently developed as a political entity based on the concepts of sovereignty of the people, constitutionalism, and bureaucratic rationality as explained by Max Weber in his concept of legal-rational authority (Weber, 1978).

However, the Islamic political tradition possesses a different epistemological horizon from the modern Western political paradigm. In Islam, power is not merely understood as an administrative construct and mechanism for power distribution, but as a normative trust (*amanah*) that encompasses theological, moral, social, and spiritual dimensions. Politics in Islam does not stand autonomously from religious values but is integrated within the structure of sharia and the ethical purposes of human life. Therefore, governance in Islam is oriented not only toward administrative effectiveness but also toward the realization of justice (*'adālah*), public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*), and the protection of the objectives of sharia (*maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*). Within this framework, power is

understood as a moral-transcendent responsibility that must be accounted for not only to society but also to Allah SWT (Al-Māwardī, 1996).

The concept of caliphate (*khilāfah*) in the classical Islamic political tradition is positioned as the continuation of the prophetic function in preserving religion and managing the socio-political life of the community. Al-Māwardī in *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah* defines *imāmah* as general leadership to protect religion (*ḥirāsah al-dīn*) and manage worldly affairs (*siyāsah al-dunyā*). This definition demonstrates that politics in Islam cannot be separated from the value structure and objectives of sharia. The state is understood not merely as an instrument for power distribution but as a means to maintain social order, enforce law, protect the rights of citizens, and realize public welfare (Al-Māwardī, 1996). Ibn Taymiyyah even asserts that the existence of political authority is a fundamental human necessity because religion and social life cannot function without authority that maintains order and justice (Ibn Taymiyyah, 2005).

In the classical Islamic perspective, the caliphate is not only concerned with formal governmental structure but also with moral legitimacy and social integration. Ibn Khaldūn explains that humans have a tendency toward conflict and therefore require political authority to maintain social solidarity (*‘aṣabiyyah*) and prevent societal disintegration (Ibn Khaldūn, 1967). Thus, socio-political stability within the caliphate paradigm is not merely understood as the absence of conflict or stability of power, but as normative order that enables society to fulfill its religious functions, obtain social justice, and live within a legitimate legal system.

Nevertheless, in contemporary discourse, the concept of caliphate often undergoes reduction of meaning. Some circles view it merely as an ideological political symbol synonymous with the formalization of an Islamic state, while others consider it a historical artifact no longer relevant to modern state systems. This polarization causes the discourse on caliphate to often become trapped in ideological opposition between political fundamentalism and modern secularism. Wael B. Hallaq states that the modern state is epistemologically different from the classical Islamic normative system because it is based on human sovereignty, positive law, and secular bureaucracy, whereas the classical Islamic political system is based on the supremacy of sharia and moral-transcendent authority (Hallaq, 2013). On the other hand, Andrew F. March explains that Islamic political theory has transcendent sources of legitimacy that cannot be fully translated into the modern liberal paradigm because Islamic politics speaks not only of power procedures but also of moral orientation and the ethical purposes of society (March, 2019).

These problems indicate a conceptual void in contemporary caliphate studies. Most research is still dominated by historical, legalistic, or ideological approaches, while the dimensions of normative governance based on *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah* have not yet been systematically reconstructed. In fact, various classical literatures show that the caliphate is positioned as the foundation of multidimensional stability encompassing spiritual, social, economic, legal, and political stability. Within this framework, the caliphate can be understood not only as a formal political institution but as a moral governance paradigm that places trust, justice, and public welfare as the basis of public governance.

In the perspective of *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*, socio-political stability is not understood merely as the absence of conflict or state power dominance, but as normative order that enables humans to

protect religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property harmoniously. Al-Shāṭibī positions the protection of these five primary objectives of sharia as the core of Islamic social life (Al-Shāṭibī, 1997). The *maqāṣid* approach was then developed more contextually by Jasser Auda through a systems approach that emphasizes flexibility, multidimensionality, and orientation toward public welfare in understanding Islamic law and modern governance (Auda, 2008). Thus, the *maqāṣid* approach opens space for reinterpretation of the concept of caliphate to be understood more substantively and relevant to the challenges of contemporary governance.

In the modern global context, the relevance of the moral governance paradigm is becoming increasingly important amid crises of political legitimacy, structural corruption, abuse of power, social inequality, and moral degradation in public governance. Modern political systems based on administrative procedures and formal legality often fail to produce substantive justice and moral integrity. Therefore, the caliphate paradigm based on trusteeship and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* offers a conceptual alternative that can enrich modern governance discourse through the integration of administrative accountability and transcendent accountability.

Previous research has extensively discussed the relationship between Islam and the state, democracy, Islamic law, and modern Islamic political theory, but not many have specifically reconstructed the concept of caliphate as a moral governance paradigm based on *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. Moreover, studies on socio-political stability from the caliphate perspective are still more dominant in using historical and ideological approaches rather than in-depth conceptual and epistemological analysis. Therefore, this study attempts to reconstruct the concept of caliphate as a foundation for socio-political stability through the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* approach and epistemological dialogue with modern state theories, hoping to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of Islamic political studies and contemporary governance.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative-interpretative approach based on doctrinal research. This approach was chosen because the object of study consists of normative texts, the intellectual tradition of Islamic politics, and conceptual constructions regarding the caliphate that cannot be reduced to quantitative empirical variables. The quantitative positivist approach generally works through empirical observation, statistical measurement, and generalization of social behavior, whereas this study seeks to understand the structure of meaning, normative legitimacy, and epistemological foundations of the concept of caliphate as a governance paradigm in Islam. Therefore, the research is more appropriately situated within the interpretative research tradition that emphasizes understanding of meanings, values, symbols, and the structure of ideas that shape a socio-political reality (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

In the tradition of Islamic legal and political research, the doctrinal approach is used to examine normative principles found in authoritative texts, whether derived from the Qur'an, hadith, works of *fuqahā'*, or classical and contemporary Islamic political literature. Doctrinal analysis functions not only to describe texts but also to reconstruct the normative logic, legitimacy structure, and philosophical orientation contained within a political concept (Hallaq, 2009). Thus, this study is

not directed to empirically test particular political practices but to reconstruct the concept of caliphate as a moral governance paradigm through hermeneutic and epistemological reading of the Islamic political thought tradition.

Ontologically, the research views the caliphate as a normative reality whose existence is determined by the value structure, objectives of sharia, and moral constructions in Islam. In this perspective, the caliphate is not understood merely as a historical institution or formal power system but as a governance paradigm rooted in the concepts of trusteeship, justice, and public welfare. Therefore, the research focus is not directed at the empirical political practices of contemporary Muslim countries but rather at the conceptual construction that shapes legitimacy, stability, and governance in the Islamic political tradition. The ontology of this research departs from the assumption that socio-political reality in Islam is not neutral and value-free but is always tied to the moral structure and objectives of sharia (*maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*) (Kamali, 2014).

Epistemologically, this research operates within the interpretative-constructivist paradigm. This paradigm views knowledge not as an objective fact that stands alone but as the result of dialogue between text, intellectual tradition, interpreter, and socio-historical context. Knowledge is produced through the process of interpretation of symbols, language, and structures of meaning that develop within a particular intellectual tradition (Crotty, 1998). In the context of this research, the concept of caliphate is understood through a hermeneutic process that moves between classical texts, the historical context of their emergence, and the need for reinterpretation in the modern context. The hermeneutic approach allows researchers to conduct critical reading of Islamic political texts without falling into textual literalism or historical reductionism (Gadamer, 2004).

The interpretative paradigm also allows the research to understand that Islamic political concepts possess epistemological dimensions different from modern Western political theory. In modern political theory, state legitimacy generally rests on social contract, public rationality, and popular sovereignty (Rawls, 1993; Habermas, 1996). In contrast, in the Islamic political tradition, political legitimacy is rooted in divine trusteeship, the supremacy of sharia, and the orientation toward public welfare. Therefore, this research does not merely describe the concept of caliphate but also conducts epistemological dialogue between the Islamic political tradition and modern state theories in order to discover its conceptual relevance in the context of contemporary governance.

Axiologically, this research aims to produce a conceptual reconstruction that has not only academic value but also ethical and social relevance for the development of public governance and Islamic Education Management. The research views science as not value-free but as having a moral responsibility toward the development of a just, moral, and civilized society. Therefore, the concept of caliphate in this research is understood as a moral governance paradigm that integrates administrative professionalism, public accountability, and transcendent responsibility.

The primary data sources for this research consist of normative Islamic political texts that discuss the concepts of *imāmah*, *khilāfah*, *siyāsah shar'iyyah*, and Islamic governance. Primary data include classical works such as *al-Aḥkām al-Sultāniyyah* by Al-Māwardī, *al-Siyāsah al-Shar'iyyah* by Ibn Taymiyyah, and *al-Muqaddimah* by Ibn Khaldūn. These texts were selected because they represent the conceptual foundations of classical Islamic politics regarding legitimacy of power, social stability, and the relationship between religion and the state. Additionally, the research also

uses classical *maqāṣid* works such as *al-Muwāfaqāt* by Al-Shāṭibī and *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah al-Islāmiyyah* by Ibn 'Āshūr to understand the normative orientation of Islamic governance.

Secondary data sources come from classical and contemporary literature discussing Islamic political theory, governance, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, and modern state theory. This literature includes works by Jasser Auda on the systems approach in *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, Wael B. Hallaq on criticism of the modern state, Andrew March on sovereignty in modern Islamic politics, as well as theories of legitimacy and deliberative democracy from John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas. The simultaneous use of classical and modern literature aims to build an epistemological dialogue that enables reinterpretation of the concept of caliphate in the contemporary context.

Data analysis techniques were carried out through four main stages. First, identification of normative propositions in the text relating to stability, legitimacy, authority, law, and socio-political governance. At this stage, the researcher conducted textual and contextual reading of the main propositions in classical and modern works. Second, conceptual classification into normative-legal, theological, administrative, sociological, and ethical dimensions. This classification aims to build a systematic conceptual structure of the caliphate paradigm.

Third, theoretical synthesis based on *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* was conducted. At this stage, Islamic political concepts are analyzed through the *maqāṣid* approach to understand the orientation toward public welfare, justice, and social stability that are the main objectives of Islamic governance. The *maqāṣid* approach was chosen because it allows substantive reinterpretation of the concept of caliphate so that it does not stop at mere historical institutional forms but is understood as an ethical and normative paradigm. Fourth, comparative epistemological dialogue with modern state theory was conducted to identify points of convergence and divergence between the caliphate paradigm and modern governance. This dialogue is important to position Islamic political theory in contemporary governance discourse in a more academic and contextual manner.

Research validity is maintained through conceptual triangulation, namely comparing text interpretation with various classical and contemporary intellectual traditions. Triangulation is conducted by bringing together the perspectives of *fuqahā'*, *maqāṣid* thinkers, modern political philosophers, and contemporary governance theories to avoid interpretive reductionism. Additionally, research validity is also maintained through logical consistency of argumentation, depth of hermeneutic interpretation, and epistemological coherence between the concepts analyzed. In normative-interpretative research, validity is not measured through statistical verification but through the strength of theoretical argumentation, accuracy of interpretation, and the ability to explain conceptual relationships systematically (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The Caliphate as Normative-Legal Authority

The results of the analysis show that the concept of caliphate in the Islamic political tradition is constructed as a normative-legal authority tasked with maintaining legal unity, social order, and

the continuity of the religious life of society. In the classical Islamic political perspective, *imāmah* is understood not merely as an administrative institution but as a collective obligation (*farḍ kifāyah*) to preserve religion and manage worldly affairs based on sharia. This concept demonstrates that governance in Islam has a strong normative foundation because the legitimacy of power derives not from political domination alone but from its ability to maintain the moral and legal order of society.

Al-Māwardī in *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah* explains that the main function of *imāmah* is *ḥirāsah al-dīn wa siyāsah al-dunyā*, namely preserving religion and managing worldly affairs based on sharia (Al-Māwardī, 1996). This formulation shows that stability in the caliphate paradigm is rooted in legal unity and normative legitimacy. Without legitimate authority, law loses its coercive power and society is potentially faced with normative fragmentation and social conflict. Therefore, the existence of political power is understood as an ontological necessity in human social life. Ibn Taymiyyah asserts that humans cannot live without leadership because religion and social life require authority that maintains justice and prevents corruption (*fasād*) (Ibn Taymiyyah, 2005).

In the caliphate paradigm, political authority is not absolute because power is under the supremacy of sharia. The ruler is not positioned as the highest source of law as in the positivist modern state, but as the executor of a trust who must submit to divine norms. Thus, law has both religious and social dimensions simultaneously. Legal certainty not only guarantees administrative order but also enables society to carry out religious obligations safely and orderly. This finding shows that stability is born from the subordination of power to transcendent norms, not from centralization of power alone.

The results of this research also show that the concept of normative authority in the caliphate has a close relationship with the principles of justice (*‘adālah*) and public welfare (*maṣlahah*). Classical Islamic politics does not legitimize tyrannical or repressive power because political legitimacy is always measured based on conformity with the objectives of sharia. In this context, the ruler is viewed as a guardian of public trust who must ensure the protection of society's rights, distribution of justice, and social stability. This finding aligns with Wael B. Hallaq's thought that the classical Islamic political system has a moral structure different from the modern state because law and ethics are above state power (Hallaq, 2013).

Multidimensional Stability in the Caliphate Perspective

The research found that stability in the caliphate paradigm is multidimensional and is not limited to political stability alone. Stability is understood as normative order encompassing spiritual, social, economic, legal, and political dimensions. In the Islamic perspective, stability is not merely the absence of conflict but a harmonious condition that enables society to carry out its religious, social, and economic functions in a balanced manner. This finding shows that the caliphate paradigm has a substantive orientation toward societal welfare and public well-being.

Spiritual Stability

The research results show that spiritual stability is the main foundation in the caliphate paradigm. The caliphate is positioned as an institution that preserves the continuity of religious practice,

religious symbols, and the moral identity of society. In the perspective of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, the protection of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*) is a primary objective of sharia that must be safeguarded by political authority (Al-Shāṭibī, 1997).

Spiritual stability is not only related to freedom to perform worship but also to the formation of the moral order of society. In classical Islamic politics, the state has the responsibility to maintain the public sphere so that it does not experience moral decadence and ethical disintegration. Therefore, spiritual stability becomes the foundation for other dimensions of stability. Al-Ghazālī explains that religion and power have an integral relationship; religion becomes the moral foundation of power, while power preserves the continuity of religion in social life (Al-Ghazālī, 1993).

The findings of this research show that the caliphate paradigm understands spiritual stability as part of the moral order of society. When religious values are delegitimized, social order will also be disrupted. Thus, the caliphate is tasked not only with managing public administration but also with collectively maintaining the moral integrity of society.

Social Stability

The research found that the caliphate has an important function in maintaining social solidarity and preventing social conflict. Ibn Khaldūn explains that humans have a tendency toward conflict due to the drive for interests and social competition, thus requiring political authority to maintain collective solidarity (*'aṣabiyyah*) and social order (Ibn Khaldūn, 1967). In this context, the caliphate functions as a mechanism for conflict mediation and a guardian of social cohesion.

The research findings show that social stability in the caliphate paradigm is not built through coercive state domination alone but through moral legitimacy and social justice. When society views the ruler as a representation of trust and justice, social loyalty is more easily established. Conversely, injustice and abuse of power will give rise to political delegitimization and social disintegration.

Social stability is also related to the protection of life (*ḥifẓ al-naḥs*) in *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. The state is obliged to maintain public security, protect citizens' rights, and create a legal system capable of resolving conflicts fairly. Therefore, social stability in the caliphate paradigm is not merely repressive but also distributive and protective.

Economic Stability

The research results show that the caliphate has a very strong economic dimension through fiscal management, wealth distribution, protection of property rights, and strengthening social welfare. In the perspective of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, the protection of property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*) is an important part of maintaining societal stability. Therefore, economic governance in the caliphate paradigm is directed to prevent social inequality and economic exploitation.

The concepts of zakat, *bait al-māl*, prohibition of riba (usury), and wealth distribution show that classical Islamic politics has an orientation toward distributive justice and protection of vulnerable

groups. This finding shows that economic stability is understood not merely as material growth but also as balanced distribution of social welfare. Chapra explains that Islamic economics has a moral orientation because its main goal is not merely market efficiency but the realization of social justice and collective welfare (Chapra, 2000).

In this context, the caliphate has a strategic function in managing public resources in a trustworthy and just manner. Economic stability becomes an important foundation for socio-political stability because economic inequality has the potential to trigger social conflict and political delegitimization.

Political Stability

The research shows that political stability in the caliphate paradigm is built through moral legitimacy, trusteeship, and normative acceptance by society of the authority structure. Obedience to the leader is not based on fear or coercive domination alone but on the belief that political authority is implementing sharia and safeguarding public welfare. Thus, political legitimacy is substantive and moral.

This finding shows that political stability in Islam is closely related to the moral integrity of the ruler. A ruler who loses moral legitimacy will lose social legitimacy. Therefore, trusteeship becomes the main principle in Islamic governance. Power is not understood as an absolute right but as a transcendent responsibility that must be accounted for before Allah SWT and society.

The research findings also show that political stability in the caliphate paradigm has a close relationship with the principles of consultation (*shūrā*) and justice. Classical Islamic politics does not legitimize absolute authoritarianism because the ruler remains bound by sharia and public interest. Therefore, political legitimacy is not measured only through formal procedures but through the realization of substantive justice in society.

Integration of Religion and Public Administration

One of the main findings of the research is that the caliphate paradigm rejects the dichotomy between religion and public administration. Governance in Islam is understood as a trust that must be carried out based on divine values and the orientation toward public welfare. Therefore, public policy is measured not only based on administrative effectiveness but also based on its conformity with *maqāsid al-sharī'ah*.

The concept of trusteeship creates an ethical structure in public governance. Leadership is not understood as an instrument of power domination but as a moral responsibility that has social and transcendent dimensions. In this context, public administration has a spiritual dimension that distinguishes it from the modern secular bureaucratic paradigm that tends to emphasize administrative efficiency and legal-formal rationality (Weber, 1978).

The research findings show that the caliphate paradigm integrates administrative professionalism with moral accountability. The ruler is required not only to be effective in managing the state but also to be just, trustworthy, and ethically responsible. Thus, the integration of religion and public

administration in Islam is more accurately understood as the integration of ethical values in governance, not the domination of religious institutions over the state.

4. DISCUSSION

The Caliphate as a Moral Governance Paradigm

The research findings show that the caliphate cannot be reduced to a mere historical political institution but must be understood as a moral governance paradigm that integrates law, morality, spirituality, and social governance simultaneously. In this perspective, power in Islam is not merely an administrative instrument for regulating society but a normative trust aimed at maintaining moral order and public welfare. These findings show that the classical Islamic political structure is built upon an ethical-transcendent foundation that is fundamentally different from the modern political paradigm that tends to rely on legal-formal rationality and social contract. Contemporary scholarship on Islamic governance reinforces this distinction, as Moten (2020) argues that the concept of caliphate remains highly relevant to contemporary Muslim politics precisely because it embodies a moral-legal synthesis rather than a purely administrative framework. Similarly, Powell et al. (2020) demonstrate that Islam-based legal language significantly influences state governance structures, with stronger sharia-informed legal frameworks correlating with distinct patterns of democracy and judicial strength, further confirming that Islamic political authority operates through a normative-ethical logic that transcends mere procedural legality.

Al-Māwardī explains that *imāmah* aims to preserve religion (*ḥirāsāt al-dīn*) and manage worldly affairs (*siyāsāt al-dunyā*) based on sharia (Al-Māwardī, 1996). This formulation shows that Islamic politics cannot be separated from moral orientation and the objectives of sharia. The state in the caliphate paradigm functions not only to maintain administrative stability but also to preserve the moral integrity of society. Therefore, social stability in Islam is not understood merely as bureaucratic order but as normative order that enables society to live religious, social, and economic life harmoniously. Sulayman et al. (2020) elaborate on this point by examining Imam al-Juwayni's perspective, revealing that the objectives and principles of Islamic governance are fundamentally rooted in the preservation of moral order and public welfare, which aligns precisely with the caliphate's function as a guardian of both religious and worldly affairs.

The findings of this research show that the concept of trusteeship becomes the main foundation of moral governance in Islam. Trusteeship means not only administrative responsibility but also ethical and spiritual obligations that must be accounted for before Allah SWT and society. Thus, power in Islam has a very strong moral-transcendent dimension. This differs from several modern political theories that understand state sovereignty as the highest political authority relatively autonomous from moral and religious values. In the caliphate paradigm, power is never absolute because it is always under the supremacy of sharia and the orientation toward public welfare. Ghafran and Yasmin (2020) provide empirical insight into this ethical governance structure, demonstrating that Islamic perspectives on governance generate distinct accountability mechanisms that integrate both horizontal (social) and vertical (divine) dimensions of responsibility. Their findings confirm that ethical governance in Islamic contexts is not merely

symbolic but produces tangible governance outcomes that differ substantially from secular administrative models.

These findings strengthen Wael B. Hallaq's argument that the classical Islamic political system has a moral structure different from the modern state. Hallaq explains that the modern state is built through legal-formal bureaucracy and legal positivism, whereas classical Islamic politics is based on the integration of law, ethics, and moral authority (Hallaq, 2013). Therefore, political legitimacy in Islam is not determined solely by procedural legality but by the ability of political authority to realize substantive justice and social welfare. Islam and Eryigit (2022) further substantiate this by offering a translation and analysis of Ibn Taymiyya's political thought, demonstrating that his conception of the state is inextricably linked to moral governance and the enforcement of sharia as the supreme normative framework, rather than as a mere set of legal procedures.

Furthermore, the moral governance paradigm in Islam also shows that public governance cannot be separated from the formation of the moral character of leaders. Al-Ghazālī explains that the moral corruption of leaders will directly impact the social corruption of society because power has a great influence on the structure of social behavior (Al-Ghazālī, 1993). Therefore, classical Islamic politics pays great attention to the moral integrity of the ruler as the main condition for legitimacy of power. Smolarski and Murphy (2020) support this view by proposing an Islamic "political" model of corporate governance, arguing that religiously informed leadership ethics produce more comprehensive accountability structures than purely secular CSR frameworks, precisely because they embed moral character requirements into governance systems themselves.

In the contemporary context, these findings become important because various modern political systems often experience crises of legitimacy due to corruption, oligarchy, political pragmatism, and public ethical degradation. The caliphate paradigm offers an alternative perspective that stable governance requires integration between formal legality and moral legitimacy. Thus, moral governance in Islam can be understood as a governance paradigm that integrates administrative professionalism with ethical and spiritual responsibility. Mandaville (2020) speaks directly to this by exploring the inward dimensions of Islam, particularly the concept of *Ihsan*, and its potential for political praxis, suggesting that the ethical-spiritual resources within Islamic tradition offer viable pathways for addressing contemporary governance failures.

Stability and *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*

The research findings show that stability in the caliphate paradigm has a close relationship with *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* as the main objective of Islamic governance. Stability in the Islamic perspective is not understood merely as the absence of conflict or the continuity of a political regime but as a harmonious condition that enables the protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property of society in a balanced manner. Thus, stability is understood as a consequence of substantive justice and normative order in society. Abdullah et al. (2022) operationalize this framework in the context of Islamic financial governance, providing a systematic review that demonstrates how *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* serves not merely as a theoretical ideal but as a practical governance tool that ensures stability across multiple institutional dimensions. The objectives of Shariah governance framework, as articulated in recent scholarship (*The objectives of Shariah*

governance, 2022), reinforces this point by positioning *maqāṣid* as the essential benchmark against which all governance policies must be evaluated to maintain societal equilibrium.

In the *maqāṣid* perspective, spiritual stability relates to the protection of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*). The state has the responsibility to preserve the continuity of religious life and the moral identity of society. Social stability relates to the protection of life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*) through social security and fair conflict resolution. Intellectual stability relates to the protection of intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*) through the development of knowledge and protection of responsible freedom of thought. Meanwhile, economic stability relates to the protection of property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*) through fair economic distribution and protection of property rights. Mukhlisin et al. (2021) contribute to this discussion by constituting Islamic corporate governance theory through the lens of Islamic moral economy, demonstrating that the protection of property and economic justice cannot be separated from the broader *maqāṣid* framework, and that stability in one dimension necessarily reinforces stability across all others.

The findings of this research strengthen Al-Shāṭibī's thought that the entire structure of Islamic law and governance is essentially directed toward preserving human welfare (Al-Shāṭibī, 1997). Thus, Islamic politics cannot be reduced to mere power struggles but must be understood as an instrument for realizing the objectives of sharia. Ibn 'Āshūr also asserts that *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* has a humanistic orientation because it aims to create social order, justice, and societal welfare (Ibn 'Āshūr, 2006). Contemporary scholarship on governance in the Islamic context confirms that the *maqāṣid* framework provides a comprehensive and flexible basis for evaluating governance effectiveness, precisely because it prioritizes human welfare and social justice over mere procedural compliance.

The *maqāṣid* approach also shows that governance in Islam has contextual flexibility. Jasser Auda explains that *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* must be understood through a systems approach that emphasizes multidimensionality, openness, and orientation toward public welfare (Auda, 2008). Therefore, the caliphate does not have to be understood literally as a particular form of political institution but as a governance paradigm oriented toward the protection of public welfare and social justice. Hidayati and Hidayatullah (2021) develop this further by reconfiguring religious authority and ethical governance in Islamic political thought, showing through comparative literature that *maqāṣid*-oriented governance allows for contextual reinterpretation without losing its normative grounding, thus bridging classical principles and contemporary governance challenges.

The findings of this research also show that stability in Islam has a very strong ethical dimension. Stability is not a tool for legitimizing power but a consequence of the creation of substantive justice in society. When the state fails to maintain justice and public welfare, the moral legitimacy of power will experience a crisis. Therefore, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* becomes an important instrument for assessing the legitimacy of governance in the perspective of Islamic politics. Balaram (2022), in reviewing M. A. Muqtedar Khan's work on Islam and good governance, emphasizes that the political philosophy of Ihsan—which is deeply intertwined with *maqāṣid* objectives—provides a robust ethical benchmark for evaluating state legitimacy, precisely because it roots governance in the pursuit of human flourishing rather than mere power retention.

Epistemological Dialogue with the Modern State

The research shows that there are fundamental epistemological differences between the caliphate paradigm and the modern state. The modern state is based on the concepts of popular sovereignty, social contract, and public rationality as explained by John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas. In this paradigm, political legitimacy is obtained through democratic procedures, public consensus, and constitutional legality (Rawls, 1993; Habermas, 1996). In contrast, the caliphate paradigm is based on sharia, divine trusteeship, and moral-transcendent orientation. Liew (2025) provides a critical historical and political analysis of the prophetic hadith regarding the caliphate's thirty-year duration, demonstrating that the epistemological frameworks underpinning caliphal legitimacy have been subject to intense polemic and reinterpretation, reflecting the inherent tension between historical contingency and normative political ideals in Islamic thought.

Nevertheless, the research finds that both paradigms have relatively similar substantive orientations, namely creating social order, justice, and political stability. The difference lies in the source of legitimacy and the ontological structure of power. The modern state obtains legitimacy through procedural rationality and the will of the people, whereas the caliphate paradigm obtains legitimacy through conformity with sharia and public welfare. Swinhoe (2021), in an extensive doctoral analysis of the Islamic State's strategic narratives, shows that contemporary contestations over caliphal sovereignty reveal precisely this epistemological divergence: modern actors often attempt to reconcile or oppose these frameworks, but the underlying structures of legitimacy—procedural versus normative-transcendent—remain deeply incompatible in their foundational assumptions. Tanjung (2023) further illustrates this by examining the khilafah political controversy in Indonesia, revealing that the epistemological clash between the caliphal paradigm and the modern nation-state continues to generate vibrant political discourse in contemporary Muslim-majority societies.

This finding supports Andrew March's argument that modern Islamic political theory is not always contradictory to modern governance but has a different structure of legitimacy (March, 2019). Therefore, the epistemological dialogue between Islamic politics and the modern state needs to be understood as a space for conceptual exchange, not merely ideological opposition. Islamic politics can make an ethical contribution to modern governance, while modern systems can provide more participatory and accountable institutional mechanisms. Zatari (2022) contributes to this dialogue by rethinking ethics in international affairs, arguing that reshaping civilizational discourse requires genuine engagement with Islamic ethical frameworks, including the caliphal governance model, rather than dismissing them as pre-modern relics, thus opening pathways for reciprocal conceptual enrichment rather than unilateral imposition of either paradigm.

However, the research also shows that there are ontological differences that cannot be fully synthesized. Wael Hallaq explains that the modern state is built upon legal positivism and state power centralization, whereas the classical Islamic political system is based on the moral supremacy of sharia that is above the state (Hallaq, 2013). Thus, epistemological dialogue between the two is not aimed at eliminating differences but at building a critical understanding of the moral foundation and legitimacy of public governance. Kibtiah and Putri (2021) offer a case study of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia, demonstrating how contemporary movements navigate this ontological divide by strategically engaging with modern political processes while maintaining the caliphal

paradigm as a normative ideal, illustrating that the dialogue is neither purely theoretical nor purely historical, but actively shapes contemporary political realities.

Relevance of Moral Governance for Contemporary Governance

The research shows that the moral governance paradigm has important relevance in the context of the moral crisis of modern governance. Various issues such as structural corruption, abuse of power, political oligarchy, bureaucratic pragmatism, and social inequality show that modern governance based solely on administrative procedures does not necessarily produce substantive justice.

In this context, the caliphate paradigm offers an alternative perspective in the form of integration between administrative accountability and transcendent accountability. Power is accountable not only to the public horizontally but also to Allah SWT vertically. The concept of trusteeship creates an ethical dimension in public governance that can strengthen bureaucratic integrity and leadership. Ghafran and Yasmin (2020) empirically validate this by demonstrating that organizations operating with an Islamic ethical framework exhibit significantly stronger internal accountability mechanisms and reduced governance failures compared to those relying purely on legal-formal compliance, precisely because the transcendent dimension adds a layer of moral constraint that purely procedural systems lack.

The research findings also show that moral governance does not sufficiently depend on the individual morality of leaders. The principle of trusteeship must be integrated with supervisory systems, transparency, public participation, and structural accountability so that it does not become mere symbolic morality. Therefore, the caliphate paradigm needs to be reconstructed contextually so that it can engage in dialogue with modern good governance principles such as transparency, rule of law, public participation, and accountability. Smolarski and Murphy (2020) reinforce this by showing that an Islamic "political" model of corporate governance is most effective when it combines strong ethical leadership with institutionalized checks and balances, preventing moral governance from degenerating into either authoritarian moralism or empty symbolic rhetoric.

In the modern global context experiencing crises of political legitimacy and public moral degradation, the Islamic moral governance paradigm can become a conceptual alternative that enriches contemporary governance theory. Politics is understood not merely as a technique of power administration but as an ethical instrument for maintaining social justice and societal welfare. Moten (2020) and Powell et al. (2020) both affirm this potential, demonstrating through different methodological lenses—historical-political analysis and comparative constitutional studies—that Islamic governance frameworks offer substantive, empirically observable alternatives to purely secular models, with distinct advantages in contexts where moral legitimacy and social trust are in deep crisis.

Implications for Islamic Education Management

The research results have important implications for the development of Islamic Education Management. Educational leadership cannot be sufficiently understood as a technocratic-

administrative function but must be positioned as a normative trust responsible for character formation, integrity, and the moral culture of educational institutions.

The *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* paradigm can be applied in developing a quality culture of education through the integration of professionalism, spirituality, and ethics. Educational supervision is directed not only at achieving administrative targets but also at building a culture of trust, integrity, and social responsibility. Thus, Islamic education governance is oriented not only toward managerial efficiency but also toward the formation of individuals with character and civility. Brooks et al. (2020) provide compelling empirical evidence from a study of principals in Islamic schools, showing that effective leaders in these contexts function as "socio-religious curators" who balance progressive educational reform with conservative community values. Their research demonstrates that the most effective Islamic educational leaders are those who integrate administrative professionalism with deep moral and spiritual awareness, precisely aligning with the moral governance paradigm outlined in this study.

The findings of this research also show that the moral governance paradigm can become an alternative conceptual framework in developing Islamic educational leadership. The head of an educational institution functions not only as an administrator but also as a guardian of values, a builder of organizational culture, and a moral role model. Therefore, Islamic educational leadership must integrate: administrative professionalism, spiritual intelligence, moral accountability, and orientation toward public welfare. Abdullah et al. (2022) and Mukhlisin et al. (2021), though focused on financial governance, offer transferable insights into how *maqāṣid*-based frameworks can structure institutional leadership, accountability, and quality assurance in ways that are directly applicable to educational management contexts.

In the context of contemporary Islamic education facing challenges of educational commercialization, ethical degradation, and institutional integrity crises, the caliphate paradigm based on trusteeship and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* has strategic relevance for building educational governance that is more ethical, humanistic, and oriented toward civilizational development. Hidayati and Hidayatullah (2021), alongside Brooks et al. (2020), collectively affirm that the integration of normative Islamic values with modern management practices is not only possible but increasingly necessary, as educational institutions in Muslim contexts navigate the dual pressures of globalization and cultural authenticity. The moral governance paradigm, rooted in the caliphal tradition and reinterpreted through *maqāṣid* objectives, offers precisely this integrative framework—one that preserves ethical depth while embracing administrative rigor, ultimately contributing to the formation of educational environments that cultivate both competence and character, professionalism and piety, efficiency and justice.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the caliphate in Islamic political tradition cannot be understood merely as a historical political institution, but as a *normative governance paradigm* aimed at maintaining the multidimensional stability of society. Stability within the caliphate paradigm encompasses spiritual, social, economic, legal, and political dimensions, all rooted in the integration of law, morality, and authority. Thus, stability in Islam is not understood

simply as the absence of conflict or the continuity of state power, but as *normative order* that enables society to carry out religious, social, and economic life harmoniously based on the principles of justice and public welfare. The research also finds that the caliphate is positioned as a model of *moral governance* that views power as a trust (*amanah*), not as absolute sovereignty. Political authority in Islam is bound by *sharia* as the highest source of legitimacy and is directed toward realizing *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*—the protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property. Therefore, political legitimacy in the caliphate paradigm is determined not only by formal legality or the dominance of power, but by the ability of political authority to uphold substantive justice, public welfare, and the moral integrity of society.

This research provides important theoretical implications for the development of contemporary Islamic political studies, particularly through the reconstruction of the caliphate concept as a paradigm of *moral governance* based on *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*. It affirms that Islamic politics cannot be understood only as a historical and legalistic discourse, but as a *normative governance paradigm* oriented toward justice, public welfare, and the integration of law, morality, and spirituality. Furthermore, the study opens space for epistemological dialogue between the caliphate paradigm and modern state theory, revealing that despite their ontological differences and distinct sources of political legitimacy, both share substantive orientations—namely, creating social order, justice, and public stability. Practically, this paradigm offers strategic relevance for the development of Islamic education management, where educational leadership is positioned not merely as a technocratic-administrative function but as a *normative trust* responsible for fostering moral culture, organizational integrity, and the well-being of educational institutions. By integrating professionalism, spirituality, and institutional ethics, the *moral governance* framework based on *amanah* and *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah* offers a conceptual alternative for building more humane, just, and civilizational-oriented Islamic educational leadership.

6. REFERENCES

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