

LEADERSHIP ILLUMINATED: PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S (PBUH) MASTERY IN TRANSFORMATIONAL, ETHICAL, SERVANT, AUTHENTIC, AND SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP*

¹DR. NASEER AHMAD AKHTAR, ²DR. SAIMA, ³DR. HM AZHAR USAMA*

¹Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, the University of Lahore, Lahore, Pakistan
hod@ais.uol.edu.pk

²Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, the University of Lahore, Lahore, Pakistan
saima@ais.uol.edu.pk

³Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, the University of Lahore, Lahore, Pakistan
Corresponding Author: muhammad.azhar@ais.uol.edu.pk

Abstract

This study delves into the multifaceted leadership qualities exhibited by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through an examination of transformational, ethical, servant, and authentic, and spiritual leadership theories. The objective is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Prophet's leadership style and its relevance to contemporary leadership theories. The transformational leadership theory emphasizes the Prophet's ability to inspire and motivate his followers through a vision that transcends individual interests. His capacity to bring about positive change, foster innovation, and cultivate a sense of shared purpose serves as a paradigm for leaders seeking to make a lasting impact. Ethical leadership, a crucial aspect of the Prophet's governance, is explored in terms of his unwavering commitment to justice, honesty, and compassion. Examining his ethical decision-making process provides insights into the applicability of these principles in modern leadership scenarios. The servant leadership paradigm is examined through the Prophet's selfless dedication to the well-being of his community. His emphasis on humility, empathy, and a genuine concern for the welfare of others serves as a model for leaders aspiring to serve their followers with sincerity. Authentic leadership, characterized by genuine and transparent communication, is analyzed in the context of the Prophet's life. The study explores how his authenticity contributed to building trust and credibility, essential elements in effective leadership. Finally, the spiritual leadership theory is explored through the Prophet's profound connection with the divine and his ability to inspire spirituality in his followers. The study assesses how his spiritual leadership contributed to the development of a cohesive and resilient community.

Keywords: Leadership Theories, Community Building, Conflict resolution, Prophet Muhammad.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership effectiveness is paramount for organizational success. While there is an extensive variety of literature available on leadership theory and practice, lack of analysis of these theories from a theocratic or religious perspective is still there. Although leadership styles like ethical and spiritual are sometimes discussed alongside religion, there is still scarcity of papers that aim to describe how these contemporary theories and religious teaching coincide from time to time. Keeping this gap in mind, this paper aims to understand the modern view of leadership in context of Islamic teachings. Islamic history is full of leadership tales and examples. Whether it be self leadership practices of emotional intelligence and self-awareness or the daunting challenges of political and military leadership, Islam provides us with several instances of effective leadership behavior. The major aim of this paper is to highlight the commonalities between modern leadership theories and leadership behavior adopted by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The research would not only lessen the gap between the old and the new but would also emphasize that the most noble and effective leadership practices discussed today had already been adopted and exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad fourteen hundred years ago.

For the said purpose, the paper draws from five contemporary leadership theories, namely transformational leadership, ethical leadership, servant leadership, authentic leadership and spiritual



leadership. All the above-mentioned leadership styles are discussed in detail along with their respective dimensions. Each of these dimensions are further described in context of Prophet's (PBUH) leadership practices. The presence of these leadership dimensions in Prophet's (PBUH) character has been shown by the assistance of Quranic verses, Hadith, Sunnah and miscellaneous literature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

❖ LEADERSHIP

Leadership affects almost every sphere of organizational life. From establishing vision and mission to motivating and influencing the followers, effective leadership is the most challenging yet the most indispensable ingredient of success. There have been several theories examining and explaining the various leadership styles, all of which exist and are effective in particular set of circumstances. Henceforth, there is no precise definition of leadership. DuBrin (1998) defines leadership as "*The principal dynamic force that motivates and coordinates the organization in the accomplishment of its objectives.*" (DuBrin, 1998, p. 2).

Literary contributions to leadership started in early 1900s when the "Great-man" theories emerged. According to these theories, a leader is born with the ability to influence others. Leadership qualities are inbuilt in the leader, giving him a divine superiority and dominance over all. After great man theories, group theories (1930s) took into account how leadership roles formed and evolved in small groups.

Trait theories are the most significant contribution towards understanding leaders' behavior. The most well-known trait theories include French and Raven (1959) Stodgill (1974), McCall and Lombardo (1983), and Yukl (1989). All the trait theories maintained that leaders have particular personality characteristics or traits that distinguish them from their followers and enable them to exercise power and influence. Most common traits in all the theories are leader's impressive appearance, charisma, influence, intellectual and emotional intelligence, confidence, communication skills, risk taking, fairness and assertiveness. Trait theories were followed by contingency and situational leadership approaches that proposed that leadership styles vary according to situation at hand (Fiedler, 1976).

- Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership "*occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group.*" (Bass, 1990-p.21). It refers to "*leader behaviors that transform and inspire followers to perform beyond expectations while transcending self-interest for the good of the organization*" (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009). Transformational leadership enables the leaders to put aside their own interests and to envision a future for both themselves and their followers (Bass, 1999). It enables the leaders to put aside their own interests and to envision a future for both themselves and their followers. From small work teams to the whole organizations, transformational leadership can change the course of action through a strong and compelling vision. It even transcends the borders and plays its role in international relations (Bass, 1999). Transformational leadership is crucial for organizations going through change processes. It enables the development of a vision that motivates both the leaders and followers. Transformational leadership primarily focuses on leader follower relationship. It aims to bring well-being and achievement to followers and organization as a whole (Lievens, Geit & Coetsier, 1997). Transformational leadership has four components, as identified by Bass (1985).

- Idealized influence

Also referred to as Charisma or charismatic leadership by Bass and Avolio (1990), idealized influence enables the leader to set himself as a role model for the followers. A leader with idealized influence tends to influence the ideals, inner values and inspire them to move in leader's desired direction (Bass, 1999). Idealized influence enables the followers not only to identify with the leader but also creates trust and respect for the leader (Bass, 1990). A leader with idealized influence strongly disseminates vision and gains followers' confidence immediately. Overall idealized influence allows both the leader and followers to create a sense of purpose and work towards it (Gill, Levine & Pitt, 1998).

- **Inspirational motivation**

Inspirational motivation of a transformational leadership entails development of a vision which is influential and communicative among the followers. The leader assigns the followers with challenging tasks and communicates high expectations (Bass, 1985). Inspirational motivation enables the followers to align individual and organizational values (Gill, Levine & Pitt, 1998). Appropriate emotional content is essential to inspire and motivate the followers. A leader extends emotional support towards the followers by disseminating and effectively communicating the vision among them (DuBrin, 1998).

- **Intellectual stimulation**

Intellectual stimulation of the transformational leader appeals to the followers' intellect through which they uncover their potential to accomplish higher goals. It further incites creativity among the followers (Bass, 1999). It enables the followers to learn newest and novel things. Intellectual stimulation empowers the followers to transcend beyond conventional notions and triggers their thirst for knowledge (Bass, 1990; Gill, Levine & Pitt, 1998). It allows them to question the existing pattern or behavior of systems and to broaden their horizon of imagination (Popper, Mayseless & Castlenovo, 2000).

- **Individualized consideration**

Individually attending to the problems and concerns of the followers and redressing their grievances through specialized personal attention is called as individualized consideration (Bass, 1985). A transformational leader mentors his followers individually and addresses their concerns (Bass, 1990; Bass, 1999; Stewart, 2006). Effective and timely communication coupled with listening are the ways to individually satisfy the followers and helps the leader in gaining their respect. Similarly, advising the followers regarding their career and personal development is also a part of individualized consideration (DuBrin, 1998; Bass, 1999).

❖ **ETHICAL LEADERSHIP**

The concept of ethical leadership was coined by Trevino, Hartman and Brown (2000). It is defined as "*the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and inter-personal relationships and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision-making*" (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005).

p.120). An ethical leader is essential to foster an ethical climate in the organization. Only by employing ethics in various walks of life can mankind get rid of social ills like injustice and corruption and achieve moral growth (Nyukorong, 2014).

The ethical leadership model that this paper has selected has been developed by Lee and Cheng (2011). According to their study, ethics is a prerequisite for leadership. Organizations abide by ethical code of conduct when their leaders are ready to demonstrate that code through their own behavior. Following are the three ethical leadership dimensions as proposed by them. a. Personal Ethics

Principles of ethics that are usually considered paramount in a leader's personality are universally defined and accepted. Here, Lee and Cheng (2011) states that the most common facets that are associated with ethical leadership figures are integrity, trustworthiness, truthfulness, courage and empathy. Integrity is simply defined as "*adherence to a disciplined moral code of behavior.*" (Lee & Cheng, 2011. p. 59). Trustworthiness entails winning the trust of followers and to be perceived as credible by them. Truthfulness is keeping one's word and maintain credibility. Courage refers to fearless behavior on the part of leader. This applies where leader has some tough or unconventional choices to make. At last is empathy which is understanding and acknowledging the viewpoints of others (Lee & Cheng, 2011).

- **Interpersonal behavior**

The way a leader interacts with his followers is also a key factor in portraying his ethical credos. An ethical leader is supposed to be relationship oriented, compassionate, respectful and sensitive in his social dealings. Moreover, he must be exercise interactional justice and should be able to deal with others' failures (Lee & Cheng, 2011).

- Articulation of ethical standards

Third and final dimension of ethical leadership is the clear articulation of ethical standards. An ethical leader does not only exhibit ethical standards through his behavior, but also communicate them clearly and unambiguously to the followers. The leader must be able to provide explicit directions to the followers regarding the desirable ethical values. Such guidelines must be perceived in all their seriousness so that compliance is ensured (Lee & Cheng, 2011).

❖ SERVANT LEADERSHIP

The concept of servant leadership stems out of the leader's need to serve the followers (Greenleaf, 1977). Servant leadership is one of the emerging leadership styles that has not got enough attention since its very conceptualization seems conflicting with the traditional idea of leadership. However, with contemporary organization replacing the conventional one, leadership styles are also shifting from formerly autocratic to today's participative, consultative and decentralized. Servant leaders are also said to practice leadership through shared decision making, consideration for followers and pursuing the idea of working to improve both followers' and organizational state (Spears, 2010). Following are the ten facets of servant leadership as identified by Spears (2010).

- Listening

Listening facet of servant leadership implies that a leader along with effective speaking skills, should also be an excellent listener. Being a good listener enables the leader to understand followers' problems. Moreover, listening helps the leader comprehend diverse viewpoints and reflect upon them. Thus, listening is a fruitful exercise for both followers and the leader himself (Spears, 2010).

- Empathy

Closely related to listening is the concept of empathy. It refers to how the leader understands and feels the followers' standpoint. It is like being in others' shoes. Only by exercising empathy, can a leader truly reach out to the followers and gain their trust (Spears, 2010).

c. Healing
One of the vital roles of servant leaders is to appeal to followers' affect and make them feel whole again. Healing is the way to do that. A servant leader believes in serving others by virtue of healing both their mental and emotional wounds and cultivating strong bonds that entail reciprocity (Spears, 2010).

- Awareness

Awareness or self-awareness are both indispensable in a servant leader. This trait ensures that the leader is able to see and comprehend the complete picture and analyzes information in all its detail. Awareness also assists leaders in dealing with ethical and power dilemmas (Spears, 2010).

Persuasion

This particular trait refers to a servant leader's ability to convince others, not on the basis of coercion, rather reason. Persuasive leaders seek participation of all groups and promote a culture of reason and dialogue (Spears, 2010).

- Conceptualization

Servant leaders also possesses conceptual skills. These skills help the leader to see what others can't. As opposed to operational approach where people stick to conventional ways of doing work, conceptualization transcends beyond daily hassles and uplifts and push the boundaries for creative thinking. This trait is particularly helpful in instigating creativity, problem solving and idea generation (Spears, 2010).

- Foresight

Foresight is simply intuition. The ability to learn from the past, amend the present and build the future is foresight. Leaders who have this trait have the extraordinary ability to witness a phenomenon and predict how it would unfold in the future. Such a tremendous quality can help in taking preemptive measures against the unknown (Spears, 2010).

Stewardship

Stewardship is the servant leader's commitment to putting his followers needs first. The virtue of stewardship is what drives a leader to compromise his personal interests in the favor of followers' cause. Stewardship promotes harmony and discourages the culture of control (Spears, 2010).

- Commitment to the Growth of People



A servant leader recognizes his responsibility towards the development of his followers. Whether, it is personal or professional, follower growth and well-being is considered paramount by a servant leader. Besides extrinsic and explicit rewards, servant leaders acknowledge the followers' need of intrinsic rewards as well (Spears, 2010).

- **Building Community**

Lastly, community building is the idea of catering to the needs of a particular social group by attending to their unique problems (Spears, 2010). Such kind of initiatives do not have to be mass social movements rather, can be limited to the small institutional level (Greenleaf, 1977).

- ❖ **AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP**

Authenticity is a tricky word. Though having a positive connotation, authenticity can be devastating if a person is a jerk inside out. Luckily, literature clarifies that an authentic leader is said to be authentic when he is truly connected to his inner self. The more he goes inside, the lesser is the temptation to give in to world's demand of becoming artificial, tactical or simply put hypocritical. Thus, authentic leaders are highly self-aware, sensitive and considerate and uphold high ethical standards in their conduct. Such individuals are genuine in their social interactions and are translucent in their affairs (Walumbva et al, 2008). Based on previous authentic leadership models proposed by Gardner et al (2005), May et al (2003), Luthans & Avolio (2003), a four-dimensional model of authentic leadership was proposed by Walumbva et al (2008).

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is the first and one of the most vital qualities of an authentic leader. It refers to leader's awareness and understanding of his own strengths and weaknesses, the contextual variables including his own view of the world as well as his followers (Walumbva et al, 2008). A leader with high self-awareness tends to reflect on his own actions and make informed decisions since his lenses are free of those biases that might go unnoticed with someone who has low self-awareness. Thus, authentic leaders are also able to think more objectively too (Walumbva et al, 2008).

- **Relational Transparency**

Apart from being self-aware, authentic leaders also possess relational transparency which entails being genuine in one's social dealings and interactions. This facet ensures that the leader is not fake or artificial nor is he hiding or suppressing any significant information. A relationally transparent leader is his authentic self, thus his word is credible and can be trusted (Walumbva et al, 2008).

- **Balanced Processing**

Thirdly, balanced processing entails the objectivity and unbiased decisiveness of the leader. Keeping in mind the biases a person is bombarded with daily, his/her decision making can get tainted. Authentic leaders view and analyze information in an impartial way that allows them to transcend beyond their own preconceived notions and make unbiased decisions (Walumbva et al, 2008).

- **Internalized Moral Perspective**

Internalized moral perspective refers to how authentic leaders view their own behavior as well as how they regulate their actions based on values that might be conflicting with those of others. An internalized moral perspective allows leaders to uphold high moral standards and ensure that their behavior is aligned with the highest of ethical credos (Walumbva et al, 2008).

- ❖ **SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP**

Spirituality has long been discussed in the context of religion and man's need for truth. Noble values like integrity, honesty, love and true north have been associated or are knit in the very fabric of spirituality. When we talk about organizations and corporate workplaces, the spiritual ingredient does look appealing as well as vital to ensure individual as well as organizational well-being (Reave, 2005). Especially, spiritual leadership has been given a lot of attention in the past few years, keeping in mind the concept's congruence with the notion of perfectly moral and functional organizational setup. A spiritual leader is the one who operates through love, respect, reciprocity and a shared vision (Fry, 2003). Furthermore, a spiritual leader creates both intra-self and inter-self awareness for creating meaning of his/her own life as well as that of others around (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). For the purpose of understanding more about spiritual leadership, let us break it down into its dimensions based on Fry, Latham, Cinebell and Krahne's (2016) model.

- Vision

The first and foremost attribute of a spiritual leader is the ability to cultivate a compelling vision for the followers. A vision is paramount to provide the followers with a clear sense of direction as to why and how they will pursue leader's goals. According to Fry and Cohen (2009), an effective vision must outline a specific direction, clarify relevant decisions and ensure coordination in executing the desired actions.

- Hope/Faith

Faith in something does not have to be validated or proven, rather it thrives based on sheer expectation and hope that something will happen, even if there is no hard evidence for it.

Followers who have faith work for the leader's cause in mere hope of reward. This hope not only invigorates them to pursue their goals but also increases their resilience to battle the obstacles that might await them in reaching the goals (McArthur, 1998). Faith follows a good vision. Only by communicating a compelling vision, can a leader motivate his followers to have faith and stay hopeful (Fry et al, 2016).

- Altruistic Love

Lastly, altruistic love refers to care, consideration and mutual harmony. Positive emotions like love, respect, patience and kindness have the power to destroy the negative affect. Other values attributed to altruistic love are gratitude, forgiveness, acceptance, compassion, trust, loyalty and courage (Fry et al, 2016; Qureshi & Hassan, 2018).

Examining the Leadership Dimensions in the Context Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) Life

Having discussed the five contemporary theories of leadership, let us now examine how these leadership styles and their respective dimensions are portrayed by Prophet's (PBUH) life. Since there is quite an overlap between various dimensions of the aforementioned theories, therefore, for the sake of simplicity, the paper has merged the common themes and aims to examine each theme separately in the light of Prophet Muhammad's life.

Idealized Influence/ Vision/ Conceptualization/ Foresight

Idealized influence, charisma and vision are the qualities we can easily spot in the life Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). As a leader, he possessed the traits of honesty, integrity, trustworthiness and farsightedness. Due to these traits, followers not only identified with the Prophet's (PBUH), but also accepted his vision. The Quran says,

"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often." (Quran, 33: 21)

Prophet (PBUH) communicated a clear and compelling vision to his followers. His migration to Medina, battle of the trench and the treaty of Huddaibya are some of the instances that speak of his wisdom, judgment and farsightedness. His extraordinary quality was that being a transformational leader, he changed the people around him inside out by practicing honesty, truthfulness, kindness and trust, thereby winning over more and more followers over time.

Inspirational Motivation/ Hope/ Faith

Being the essential ingredient of leadership, motivation is something that drove Muhammad's (PBUH) followers beyond the expected. The Prophet's (PBUH) very conduct was an inspiration to his followers. Whether in his personal and familial affairs, or affairs of the state, business, war and the hereafter, his words used to move the followers towards excellence.

"Indeed, greater reward comes with greater trial. And indeed, when Allah loves a people He subjects them to trials, so whoever is content, then for him is pleasure, and whoever is discontent, then for him is wrath." (Tirmidhi, Book 36, Hadith 94).

It was Muhammad's (PBUH) inspirational motivation that drove a small number of companions to join the Prophet (PBUH) in the migration to Medina and it was the result of high morale that enabled 313 Muslims to stand up against the tyrannies and injustices of Quraish in the battle of badr. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had such a profound impact on his followers that they would want to serve him whenever and wherever needed. And the reason behind this elevated morale was Prophet's character and integrity.

"It was not sword that won a place for Islam. It was the rigid simplicity, the utter selfeffacement of the Prophet, the scrupulous regard for pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and followers, his intrepidity, his fearlessness, his absolute trust in God and his own mission." (Mahatma Gandhi)

❖ INTELLECTUAL STIMULATION

When it comes to utilizing the intellectual abilities of followers, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was very astute as to how to delegate roles. For instance, he assigned the task of adhan to Bilal (RA) who had a beautiful voice. Additionally, the Prophet would always admire others for their commendable deeds i.e. Abu-Bakar (RA) for charity, Khalid (RA) for bravery, Ali (RA) for his unwavering support and Omar (RA) for his fierce resolve and commitment towards Islam. Furthermore, the Prophet (PBUH) consult and seek advice from his companions. Whether it be miniature affairs or strategic decisions related to warfare, Muhammad's (PBUH) leadership style was always more people centric. Abu Hurairah (RA) once said, *"I never saw anyone consult his companions more often than the Messenger of Allah."* (Musnad Ahmed, 18449).

"If one of you consults his brother, then let him advise him." (Sunan Ibn Majah, Book 33, Hadith 92)

- Individualized Consideration

Looking at Prophet's (PBUH) leadership, he was certainly considerate towards his followers' needs. He had many close acquaintances including Abu Bakar (RA), Ali (RA), Umar (RA), Uthman (RA) and countless others who always seemed ready to serve him. However, he treated his followers alike without any discrimination. Amr ibnul 'Aas (RA) reports:

"Rasulullah Sallallahu 'Alayhi Wasallam gave attention, spoke and showed love to the worst person of a nation. So that, the person may feel he is being given special attention). He used to give attention, and spoke to me also in a manner, that I began to feel that I was the best among the community."

(Shama'il Muhammadiyah, Chapter 47, Noble Character and Habits of Sayyadina Rasoolullah).

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was always welcoming towards the followers, showed empathy towards their problems and even let them stay and eat at his place. Being a modest leader, he was always approachable and did not seek any privileges for himself. He would encourage the followers to treat him normally saying he is one of them (Adair, 2010; Aziz & Hassan, 2018).

"There has certainly come to you a Messenger from among yourselves. Grievous to him is what you suffer; [he is] concerned over you and to the believers is kind and merciful." (Quran, 9: 128)

Muhammad (PBUH) love and kindness for others can be witnessed in instances when Omar (RA) pronounced his anti-Islam sentiments, only to be transformed completely later. He believed in justice and fairness and did not discriminate among his followers. On one occasion, the Prophet said, *"Be aware of the curse of an oppressed person for there is no screen between his invocation and Allah"* (Bukhari, Book 46, Hadith 9).

- Personal Ethics/ Internalized Moral Perspective/ Balanced Processing

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was undoubtedly a man of high ethical and moral credos. Since Islam is a complete code of life, ethical and moral principles laid down by Islam were preached and practiced by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) throughout his life. For instance, he was a trader by profession, so he advised people to be fair and honest in their business dealings. When it comes to warfare, the ethical standards put forward by Islam puts the modern warfare to shame. In the battlefield, the Prophet (PBUH) prohibited attacking women, children and the elderly and he also strictly prohibited destruction of property. Moreover, he discouraged attacking the enemy from behind. Trees were to be protected and not to be cut during the fight.

"Do not cut down fruit-bearing trees. Do not destroy an inhabited place." (Muwatta, Book 21, Hadith 971)

Apart from above, the Prophet (PBUH) communicated high moral expectations to the followers in every field of life, including showing love and affection for spouse and children, kindness towards parents, visiting the sick, truthfulness in social dealings, kindness towards animals, kindness towards passengers, kindness towards non-Muslims and dislike of force and coercion preaching Islam.

"Free the captives, feed the hungry and pay a visit to the sick." (Bukhari, Book 56, Hadith 252)

"Do not burn bees and do not scatter them." (Muwatta, Book 21, Hadith 971)



The significance of ethics in Islam can be shown by the following Quranic verse, “*Not equal are good and evil. Repel [evil] with what is best; you will unexpectedly see one with whom you had enmity become an intimate friend.*” (Al-Qur'an 41:34)

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was also known for his impartiality and justice. In fact, he was so unbiased in settling matters of conflicts and disputes that even Jews, despite their differences with the Prophet (PBUH), used to consult him in their legal matters (Sunan Abu Dawud). Thus, it is evident that the Prophet (PBUH) was able to comprehend and analyze information from a neutral standpoint. This rare trait of processing and analyzing information impartially made him more dependable as a decision maker.

Apart from above, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also taught his followers to stay away from backbiting, jealousy and other such ills. Such teachings portray him a leadership figure who succumbs to an internalized moral code and gives significant weightage to followers' moral development as well.

“*Keep yourself far from envy, because it eats up and takes away good actions, like a fire eats up and burns wood.*” (Sunan Abi Dawud, Book 43, Hadith 131).

“*O those who have accepted Islam with their tongues while Iman has not entered their hearts! Do not backbite the Muslims and do not search for their faults, for verily the one who searches for their faults, Allah Ta'ala will take him to task for his faults and the one who Allah takes to task, Allah will disgrace him in his home*” (Sunan Abi Dawud, Book 43, Hadith 108).

3.6. Interpersonal Behavior/ Listening/ Empathy/ Persuasion/ Relational Transparency

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was also an exemplary figure as a communicator. He was known to be a soft-spoken person, an eloquent speaker and a patient listener. He used to speak in soft but clearly audible voice with careful choice of words. His conversations with his companions were free of sarcasm or verbosity. His simplicity yet precision as a speaker is what gave him persuasion skills as well. His audience was always receptive to his message, be it the people who moved in lower social circles or the elites of that time. Apart from that, his character and conduct promoted modesty and down to earth behavior and discouraged boastful and rude behavior.

“*The most perfect man in his faith among the believers is the one whose behavior is most excellent.*” (Tirmidhi, Book 1, Hadith 628).

“*None shall enter Paradise who has in his heart the weight of a mustard seed of pride.*” (Muslim, Book 1, Hadith 172).

Several instances of his life also indicate that Prophet (PBUH) was an empathetic listener. From the early days of Islam till later, the Prophet (PBUH) demonstrated commendable patience in listening to the questions and concerns of the then Muslims. The Prophet (PBUH) always showed patience in addressing their queries. Additionally, those who had not embraced Islam experienced the same conduct from Prophet (PBUH). For instance, on one occasion, a non-believer woman immediately embraced Islam after she witnessed how patient and calm the Prophet (PBUH) was when reprimanded him (unknowably that he is preacher of Islam) for preaching a new religion.

The authenticity of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) conduct cannot be questioned. He was unpretentious, genuine and kind in social settings. Besides, he was known to be *Sadiq*, meaning “The Truthful”. By virtue of that, he was perceived as a truthful and authentic person. Furthermore, he did not use to lie, not even to the extent of exaggeration during humorous talk. Henceforth, as a communicator, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was a reliable, credible and dependable person.

“*Allah loves the pious rich maxim who is inconspicuous (free from showing off or hypocrisy)*” (Bulugh al-Maram, Book 16, Hadith 1474).

“*I guarantee a house in the surroundings of Paradise for a man who avoids quarrelling even if he were in the right, a house in the middle of Paradise for a man who avoids lying even if he were joking, and a house in the upper part of Paradise for a man who made his character good.*”

(Sunan Abi Dawood, Book 43, Hadith 28)

- Articulation of Ethical Standards

As explained previously, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) upheld exceptional ethical standards. Based on divine knowledge coupled with his fine sense of judgment allowed him to articulate a comprehensive



code of ethics for his followers. He not only preached those ethical standards through his words but also took initiative in demonstrating them as well.

"O you who believe! Why say you that which you do not? (Quran, 61:2).

"O Allah You have made my creation perfect, so make my moral characteristics also be the best." (Bulugh al-Maram, Book 16, Hadith 1537).

"There are two characteristics which are not combined in a believer; miserliness and bad morals." (Bulugh al-Maram, Book 16, Hadith 1499).

There is no doubt that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had a glorious character. His life events prove time and again his commitment and obligation towards the ethical and moral credos. On the occasion when a woman from Quraish was found guilty of theft and people were inclined to grant her pardon, the Prophet (PBUH) remarked,

"Many communities ruined themselves in the past as they only punished the poor and ignored the offenses of the Exalted. By Allah, if Muhammad's daughter Fatimah would have committed theft, her hand would have been severed." (Muslim, Book 1, Hadith 651)

Whether, it was the time of peace or war, the Prophet (PBUH) would always explicate specific guidelines. For instance, as a family man, he was devoted to his wives, children, friends and relatives and instructed the followers to follow his example.

"The best of you are those who are best to their wives." (Tirmidhi, Book 1, Hadith 278)

"Treat your children fairly, treat your children fairly." (Sunan An-Nasa, Book 31, Hadith 16)

"The person who cuts off relations with his relatives will not enter paradise" (Sunan Abi Dawud, Book 9, Hadith 141)

As a merchant, he exemplified honesty and truthfulness in his business dealings as well.

"Taking oaths may help you to make a sale but it takes (blessing) away from the earnings" (Sunan an Nasa, Book 44, Hadith 13).

"In a transaction, two parties depart only by mutual consent" (Sunan Abi Dawud, Book 24, Hadith 43). *"When people cheat in weight and measures, their provision is cut off from them"* (Al-Muwatta, Book 21, Hadith 987).

"Whoever hoards is a sinner" (Muslim, Book 22, Hadith 161).

As a warrior, he did not encourage the followers to take undue advantage of the enemy, even after overpowering them. After the battle of Badr and Muslims' first gigantic victory over the Quraish, the Prophet (PBUH) was kind towards those caught and offered them freedom if they would teach 10 Muslims children how to read and write. Even at the time of conquering Makkah, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said,

"Allah, not the people, made Makkah a sanctuary, so anybody who has belief in Allah and the Last Day should neither shed blood in it, nor should he cut down its trees." (Bukhari, Chapter 29, Hadith 58)

- Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is the first step towards understanding one's own self. By doing so, one can realize and unleash one's strengths and get hold of weaknesses. Furthermore, knowledge about self also enhances our ability to refrain from indulging in acts of evil and differentiate between hedonic and eudaimonic pleasure.

"Give up what is doubtful to you for that which is not doubtful; for truth is peace of mind and falsehood is doubt." (Tirmidhi, Book 1, Hadith 55)

Examining the Prophet's (PBUH) life, it is evident that the character he possessed comes from practicing high self-awareness. Only individuals who are conscious of their acts, are able to possess traits like integrity, compassion, empathy and truthfulness. Since self-awareness is something that drives us towards understanding ourselves, it certainly assists us dialing down those habits that are detrimental for us.

"The strong man is not the good wrestler; the strong man is only the one who controls himself when he is angry." (Bulugh al-Maram, Book 16, Hadith 1481)

Self-awareness also helps in understanding the implications of various actions and decisions.



For instance, high self-awareness, one can judge one's own decisions and choices as well as reflect upon them. For there is no better judge of a person's act than his own conscience.

"The reward of actions depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended." (Bukhari, Book 1, Hadith 1)

- Altruistic Love/ Stewardship/ Healing

Apparent from the examples and instances from his life, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was a joyful, kind hearted and loving person. Besides possessing the typical traits of leadership, he was an excellent servant leader as well. Firstly, he had an immense amount of love and concern for his nation.

"The disease of the nations before you is creeping towards you: Envy and hatred, it is the Haliqah. I do not speak of what cuts the hair, but what severs the religion. By the One in Whose Hand is my soul! You will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you love each other. Shall I tell you about what will strengthen that for you? Spread the Salam (greet) among each other." (Tirmidhi, Book 37, Hadith 2699)

The degree of his consideration and compassion for his people can be seen in the following instance cited in the Muslim, where the Prophet started crying over what will be his ummah (nation) fate. At this point, the angel Jibreel visited the Prophet (PBUH) and inquired why he was crying. The Prophet (PBUH) replied, "*I am crying thinking for my Ummah, thinking of what will be their fate.*" Jibreel conveyed his message to the Almighty. So he replied, "*O Jibreel, go back to Muhammad and tell him, we are going to please you for your Ummah. And we are not going to cause you any irritation.*" (Sahih Muslim, Book 1, Hadith 407).

Such was the love and kindness of our Prophet (PBUH) for his followers. The Holy Quran says, "*There has come to you a messenger from amongst you, he finds it difficult to bear your hardships. He is ever eager for you and to the believers he is kind and merciful.*" Quran (9:128)

As explained earlier, stewardship entails the need to serve others. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was always readily available for his followers and to answer their queries or redress their grievances. Moreover, he also communicated the significance of mutual service and reciprocity among the Muslims themselves.

"Everyone of you is a guardian and is responsible for his charges. The ruler who has authority over people is a guardian and is responsible for them" (Bukhari, Book 49, Hadith 41)

The idea of leadership in Islam is also more of steward or "Khalifah" who is supposed to look after his own people and ensure their well-being. In fact, a person would not be considered suitable to become a leader if he does not possess the desire to serve and help and assist others in their affairs.

"Altruistic leadership, servant leadership or Stewardship - each appellation is interchangeable - is a reference to anyone who assumes the task of, first and foremost, sincerely serving the needs of others more than for one's own self. To regard ourselves as stewards, to put the needs of others first - these are some of the critical elements of creating a fresh approach to leadership that is in consonance with the one demonstrated by Prophet of Islam." (Noor, 2015)

Lastly, the element of healing is also present in Prophet's leadership. Through both words as well as actions, the Prophet (PBUH) had a healing effect on the followers. He played the role of a therapist by practicing empathy, listening, compassion and kindness towards the followers and through his miracles, he literally healed others' ills and diseases. His motivating language and inspiring words raised the morale of his followers even in the worst of times.

CONCLUSION

Contingency theory suggested that there is no one perfect leadership style, rather leadership is a process that needs to evolve and adapt to the changing circumstances. In this regard, Fiedler stated that leadership effectiveness depends on leader-follower relations, leader's command and task structure (Fiedler, Chemers & Maher, 1976). Similarly, Hersey and Blanchard (1988) proposed follower's readiness level and House (1996) suggested both internal and external organizational factors to be important components in determining the right leadership style. Keeping in mind the evolution of leadership theory from great man to contemporary theories, it is evident that being a subjective concept, it is hard to specifically define a perfectly desirable leadership conduct. On one



hand, earlier literature favors leaders who are assertive, dominant, task oriented and autocratic. Whereas, latter theories are much more flexible as to the conduct of leader, favoring leaders who are follower centered, ethical, stewards, consultative and participative. Henceforth, leadership figures who are not tilted towards any one of these extremes and possess all of these seemingly conflicting traits in a balanced way at the same time, provided the context, can be stated as effective leaders.

This paper was aimed to highlight the personality of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a holistic leadership figure who possessed a rich variety of leadership traits and facets as discussed by various leadership theories. Given the vastness of leadership theory, only contemporary leadership styles were taken into account for this research: transformational, ethical, spiritual, servant and authentic leadership styles. For further explication of how Prophet (PBUH) practiced these styles, the paper explains each dimension of these theories as well as examples and instances from Prophet's (PBUH) life that show that he (PBUH) indeed was a transformational, authentic, ethical, servant as well as a spiritual leader.

The paper draws attention to the phenomenal leadership practices of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Also, it provides ample literature on the current leadership research and bridges the gap in time by comparing the modern leadership theory with the conduct of a man who lived almost one and a half millennium ago. The paper also facilitates in dumping certain stereotypes about leadership concept in Islam and presents valid and reliable examples from Quran, Hadith and Islamic history that the essence of leadership is not just command, assertiveness and domination; it is also consideration, sense of service, compassion and concern for the followers' well-being.

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