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***Research paper***

# A Qur'an-Informed Leadership Manual for Large Organizations: Sequential Guidance from Surah Al-Kahf Integrated with Contemporary Leadership Theory

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**Abstract**

This study develops a comprehensive leadership manual grounded in guidance from the Qur'an, specifically Surah Al-Kahf (Chapter 18), and systematically integrates it with contemporary leadership and organizational theories. Addressing persistent organizational challenges such as misinformation, ethical erosion, demotivation of honest employees, and short-term opportunism, the study proposes an evidence-based and morally grounded leadership framework that emphasizes purposeful communication, accountability, ethical differentiation, and long-term strategic orientation. Employing a structured qualitative content analysis complemented by semantic network analysis, the research extracts leadership principles from relevant Qur'anic verses and aligns them with established theoretical perspectives, including Strategic Leadership, Ethical Leadership, Transformational Leadership, sense-making, and Evidence-Based Management. The findings reveal eleven interrelated leadership principles that collectively function as a coherent governance mechanism and must be mentioned in the organizational Leadership manual, enhancing trust, psychological safety, motivation, work–life balance, and organizational resilience. By translating Qur'anic ethical guidance into theoretically grounded and testable leadership constructs, this study contributes to leadership scholarship through a novel integrative framework that bridges classical moral wisdom with contemporary management science. Furthermore, the study outlines clear directions for future quantitative validation, enabling empirical testing and theoretical extension across diverse organizational contexts.

***Keywords***: *Ethical Leadership; Strategic Leadership; Organizational Governance; Qur'anic Leadership Principles; Surah Al-Kahf; Evidence-Based Management; Employee Motivation; Accountability and Verification.*

## 1. Introduction

Modern organizations operate in increasingly complex, uncertain, and ethically demanding environments (Ughulu, 2024; Tayossyingyong et al., 2025). Globalization, rapid technological change, and evolving stakeholder expectations have intensified the need for leadership frameworks that not only ensure operational efficiency but also sustain ethical integrity, trust, and long-term organizational resilience (Onsori, Gyurian Nagy, & Szabó-Szentgróti, 2025; Zhu, 2025). While contemporary leadership scholarship has generated numerous theoretical models—including transformational leadership, strategic leadership, ethical leadership, and participative leadership—many organizations continue to struggle with persistent governance challenges such as misinformation, opportunistic behavior, ethical erosion, and declining employee trust. These issues highlight the need for leadership frameworks that combine strategic competence with strong moral foundations capable of guiding organizational behavior during both stable and turbulent conditions.

Leadership plays a central role in shaping organizational culture, decision-making processes, and employee behavior (Alateeg & Alhammadi, 2024; Scholl, Mederer, & Scholl, 2023). Research consistently demonstrates that leaders influence not only performance outcomes but also the ethical climate and psychological environment of organizations (Mehra & Narwal, 2025; Laloo, Coman, Hanley, & Bakand, 2023). Leaders who communicate clearly defined values, maintain transparent decision-making processes, and establish consistent accountability mechanisms tend to foster higher levels of employee motivation, trust, and organizational commitment (Nabella et al., 2022; Apriyanih & Putri, 2025; Barajas-Gamboa, 2024; Ramos-Maçães & Román-Portas, 2022). Conversely, ambiguous leadership communication, weak governance mechanisms, and inconsistent ethical standards can generate confusion, demotivation, and internal conflict among

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employees. In such contexts, organizations often experience misinformation, short-term opportunism, and declining collective morale (Fowler, 2023; Lopez, 2025; Schilling, Schyns, & May, 2023; Almeida, Hartog, De Hoogh, Franco, & Porto, 2022).

Within contemporary leadership research, increasing attention has been directed toward values-based leadership models, which emphasize the importance of moral principles and ethical accountability in leadership practice. Ethical leadership theory, for example, argues that leaders function as moral role models whose actions and communication shape the ethical behavior of employees. Similarly, transformational leadership emphasizes the role of leaders in inspiring shared values and collective purpose, while strategic leadership highlights the importance of clarity and long-term orientation in organizational decision-making. These perspectives collectively suggest that effective leadership is not solely defined by authority or technical competence but by the ability to create meaningful, ethically grounded governance structures that align individual behavior with organizational objectives.

Despite the growing recognition of ethical and value-based leadership, many organizations continue to face challenges related to misinformation, unverified reporting, lack of accountability, and the demotivation of principled employees. Scholars in organizational ethics have observed that environments characterized by weak verification mechanisms or inconsistent ethical enforcement often encourage opportunistic conduct and erode trust within teams. In such environments, employees who maintain integrity and professionalism may become discouraged when unethical practices appear to go unchallenged or even rewarded. Over time, these dynamics can weaken organizational cohesion and undermine long-term performance.

These challenges have motivated scholars to explore alternative leadership frameworks that integrate ethical, spiritual, and value-oriented perspectives. One emerging stream of research examines the role of spiritual leadership and faith-based management, which emphasize moral purpose, integrity, humility, and service as central leadership principles. Spiritual leadership theory suggests that leaders who cultivate meaning and moral commitment within organizations can enhance intrinsic motivation, employee well-being, and organizational resilience. Similarly, research on faith-based leadership highlights how ethical systems derived from religious traditions provide normative guidance for responsible leadership and governance.

Within this broader domain, Islamic leadership and organizational ethics represent an important area of scholarly inquiry. Islamic ethical frameworks emphasize principles such as justice, accountability, consultation, truthfulness, and responsible stewardship of authority. Leadership within Islamic ethical thought is commonly viewed as a form of trust that requires integrity, fairness, and commitment to collective welfare. Scholars studying Islamic organizational ethics have highlighted the importance of consultation (shura), ethical accountability, and transparent communication as mechanisms for maintaining trust and organizational cohesion.

Although Islamic leadership literature has expanded considerably in recent decades, much of the existing research focuses primarily on normative ethical principles rather than structured leadership frameworks that can be systematically applied within contemporary organizational contexts. Many studies discuss moral values such as justice, honesty, and consultation, yet relatively few provide a clear sequential model that translates these principles into practical governance mechanisms aligned with modern leadership theory. Consequently, there remains an important opportunity to develop integrative frameworks that bridge classical Islamic ethical guidance with contemporary organizational leadership scholarship.

The Qur'an, as the primary source of Islamic ethical guidance, contains numerous narratives and principles relevant to leadership, governance, and decision-making. These principles emphasize moral responsibility, verification of information, patience in the face of adversity, and the importance of ethical accountability. Among the Qur'anic chapters that contain particularly rich guidance related to ethical reasoning and leadership behavior is Surah Al-Kahf (Chapter 18). This chapter addresses themes such as truthfulness, responsible authority, resistance to misinformation, and long-term moral accountability. Through narrative and guidance, it highlights the consequences of integrity and deception while emphasizing the importance of clarity, patience, and principled leadership.

Despite the conceptual relevance of these themes to organizational leadership, limited research has attempted to systematically extract leadership principles from Surah Al-Kahf and integrate them with contemporary leadership theory. Existing Islamic leadership studies frequently focus on prophetic leadership models or general ethical teachings, but seldom explore how specific Qur'anic chapters may offer structured guidance applicable to modern governance challenges. Consequently, there remains a significant research gap in translating Qur'anic ethical insights into theoretically grounded leadership constructs that can be analyzed within the language of contemporary management science.

Addressing this gap is particularly important in the context of modern organizations, where leaders are expected to balance ethical accountability, strategic decision-making, and employee motivation. Organizations require leadership frameworks capable of guiding communication practices, establishing verification mechanisms for information, reinforcing ethical behavior, and maintaining long-term trust among employees. Without such frameworks, organizations risk developing cultures where misinformation, opportunism, and ethical ambiguity undermine collective performance.

The present study seeks to address this gap by developing a Qur'an-informed leadership manual derived from Surah Al-Kahf and systematically integrating it with contemporary leadership and organizational theories. Rather than approaching the text from a purely theological perspective, the study employs a structured qualitative content analysis to identify leadership-relevant governance mechanisms embedded within the verses. These principles are then aligned with established theoretical frameworks such as Strategic Leadership, Ethical Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Social Learning Theory, Participative Leadership, and Expectancy Theory.

Through this analytical process, the study identifies eleven interrelated leadership principles that collectively form a sequential leadership framework applicable to large organizational contexts. These principles emphasize purposeful communication, verification of information, ethical differentiation between honest and dishonest actors, consultation with authority, patience in ethically challenging situations, and the reinforcement of ethical behavior through appropriate reward and accountability mechanisms. When implemented collectively, these principles function as a strategic governance structure that strengthens trust, reduces misinformation, enhances employee motivation, and promotes sustainable organizational performance.

The contribution of this study is threefold. First, it advances leadership scholarship by demonstrating how Qur'anic ethical guidance can be translated into analytically structured leadership constructs that align with contemporary management theory. Second, it contributes to the growing literature on faith-based and values-oriented leadership by providing a systematic model that bridges classical moral wisdom with modern organizational governance frameworks. Third, the study offers practical implications for leaders and organizations seeking to establish clear communication practices, ethical accountability systems, and motivational structures capable of sustaining long-term employee engagement and organizational resilience.

In doing so, this research contributes to ongoing scholarly efforts to integrate ethical legitimacy with strategic leadership practice. By situating Qur'anic guidance within the broader context of organizational leadership and governance theory, the study provides a novel perspective on how classical ethical traditions can inform contemporary leadership challenges. Ultimately, the findings suggest that integrating moral clarity, accountability, and principled communication into leadership frameworks can strengthen organizational trust, enhance employee well-being, and promote sustainable success in increasingly complex organizational environments.

## 2. Literature Review and Theoretical Foundations

Leadership scholarship increasingly recognizes that ethical and value-based frameworks are essential for sustaining trust, motivation, and long-term organizational performance. While traditional leadership theories often emphasize behavioral effectiveness or strategic capabilities, recent research highlights the importance of moral foundations, ethical governance, and values-based decision-making in complex organizational environments. This shift has encouraged scholars to explore leadership models grounded in ethical traditions, religious values, and spiritual frameworks, which offer normative guidance for responsible organizational conduct.

### 2.1. Values-based and ethical leadership

Values-based leadership theory emphasizes that effective leaders shape organizational behavior through clearly articulated moral principles and ethical standards. Ethical leadership, defined as the demonstration and promotion of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and communication, has been widely linked to improved organizational trust, psychological safety, and employee commitment. Empirical studies suggest that when leaders consistently communicate ethical expectations and enforce accountability mechanisms, organizations experience lower levels of misconduct, misinformation, and opportunistic behavior (Abay, Gomes, & Mengistu, 2023; Tolstoy, Melén Hånell, & Ghauri, 2025; Lumpkin, 2023; Tadesse, Bekele, & Arega, 2024).

However, the literature also recognizes limitations within purely instrumental approaches to ethics. Governance mechanisms based solely on compliance and monitoring may reduce deviant behavior but often fail to cultivate deeper internalized commitment to ethical values. As a result, scholars increasingly argue that ethical leadership must be embedded within broader value systems that provide meaning, moral purpose, and long-term orientation. This perspective aligns closely with research on organizational ethics and moral governance, which highlights the importance of reinforcing ethical norms through communication clarity, accountability structures, and consistent reward and punishment mechanisms.

### 2.2. Spiritual leadership theory

Another important stream of literature is spiritual leadership theory, which examines how leaders inspire meaning, hope, and purpose within organizational contexts. Spiritual leadership emphasizes values such as integrity, humility, altruism, and service, suggesting that employees are more motivated when they perceive their work as part of a meaningful and ethically grounded mission. Scholars argue that leadership grounded in spiritual values enhances intrinsic motivation, strengthens organizational commitment, and promotes collective resilience during periods of uncertainty or adversity.

Spiritual leadership theory also highlights the role of vision, moral integrity, and community building in fostering sustainable organizational cultures. Leaders who consistently reinforce shared values and long-term ethical commitments help create environments where employees internalize organizational goals and align their behavior with collective objectives. These insights have important implications for governance, particularly in contexts where organizations face challenges related to misinformation, short-term opportunism, and ethical erosion (Samul, 2024; Piwowar-Sulej & Iqbal, 2024; Fry & Vu, 2024).

### 2.3. Faith-based leadership and management

Closely related to spiritual leadership is the broader literature on faith-based leadership and management. This research explores how religious traditions provide normative guidance for leadership behavior, decision-making, and organizational governance. Faith-based frameworks often emphasize ethical responsibility, justice, humility, and accountability, which are considered essential elements of sustainable leadership (Khan, Ullah, & Sarwar, 2025; Banerjee, Fechter, & Mutambasere, 2025; Amin, 2024).

Studies on faith-informed leadership have shown that religious ethical systems can serve as powerful sources of moral legitimacy and behavioral guidance within organizations. Unlike purely secular ethical codes, religious traditions typically integrate ethical principles with narrative structures, moral exemplars, and long-term accountability frameworks, which can reinforce ethical behavior and strengthen institutional trust.

However, existing research also notes that many faith-based leadership studies remain descriptive rather than integrative, often discussing ethical values without systematically linking them to contemporary organizational theories. As a result, there is a growing call for research that bridges classical moral traditions with modern leadership frameworks, allowing insights derived from religious texts to be analyzed within the language of contemporary management scholarship.

### 2.4. Islamic leadership and organizational ethics

Within the broader field of faith-based leadership, a significant body of research has emerged on Islamic leadership and governance. Islamic leadership scholarship emphasizes ethical conduct, justice, consultation (shura), accountability, and service to the community as core principles guiding leadership behavior. These principles are often derived from the Qur'an and the prophetic tradition, which collectively provide a normative framework for ethical decision-making and social responsibility.

Islamic organizational ethics literature highlights several foundational leadership characteristics, including integrity, transparency, fairness, humility, and responsibility toward stakeholders. Leaders are expected to act as moral stewards who safeguard organizational resources, ensure justice, and promote collective well-being. In this perspective, leadership authority is not merely a positional power but a moral trust that requires ethical accountability and responsible governance.

Another important element emphasized in Islamic leadership research is the role of consultation and collective decision-making, which promotes inclusiveness and relational trust within organizations. Similarly, Islamic ethical frameworks stress the importance of truthfulness in communication and verification of information, recognizing that misinformation and false claims can undermine social and organizational stability.

Despite these contributions, much of the existing Islamic leadership literature focuses on normative ethical principles rather than structured leadership models applicable to modern organizational environments. Consequently, scholars have increasingly emphasized the need to translate Islamic ethical guidance into conceptual frameworks that can be integrated with contemporary leadership theories.

### 2.5. Integrating ethical, spiritual, and Islamic leadership perspectives

Taken together, the literature on ethical leadership, spiritual leadership, faith-based management, and Islamic organizational ethics converges around several common themes. These include the importance of purposeful communication, ethical accountability, moral differentiation, consultation, and reinforcement of ethical behavior through reward and punishment mechanisms. Such principles are widely recognized as essential for building trust, reducing opportunistic behavior, and sustaining long-term organizational performance.

Nevertheless, existing research often examines these themes in isolation, focusing either on secular leadership theory or on religious ethical guidance without fully integrating the two perspectives. This fragmentation limits the ability of scholars to develop comprehensive leadership frameworks that combine normative moral guidance with empirically grounded organizational theory.

The present study addresses this gap by developing a Qur'an-informed leadership framework derived from Surah Al-Kahf and systematically aligning it with contemporary leadership theories. By extracting leadership-relevant governance mechanisms from the text and mapping them onto established theoretical constructs—including Strategic Leadership, Ethical Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Social Learning Theory, and Expectancy Theory—this research provides a structured bridge between classical ethical wisdom and modern management scholarship.

In doing so, the study contributes to leadership literature in two important ways. First, it demonstrates how faith-based ethical principles can be translated into theoretically grounded leadership constructs that are applicable within modern organizational contexts. Second, it proposes a sequential leadership manual consisting of eleven interconnected principles, offering a systematic framework that integrates ethical clarity, accountability, consultation, and behavioral reinforcement as mechanisms for sustainable organizational governance.

By situating Qur'anic guidance within the broader landscape of ethical and values-based leadership research, this study advances ongoing efforts to develop integrative leadership models that combine moral legitimacy with practical organizational relevance.

## 3. Methodology

This study adopts a mixed methodological approach that integrates qualitative interpretive content analysis with quantitative semantic network analysis to systematically derive leadership constructs from the Qur'an, specifically Surah Al-Kahf (18:1–31). The research follows an inductive theory-building design in which leadership principles are not imposed a priori but emerge from the textual data and are subsequently interpreted considering contemporary leadership and management theories. The analytical process is structured to combine textual interpretation, relational mapping of concepts, and theoretical alignment, thereby enhancing the rigor, validity, and interdisciplinary relevance of the study. The primary data source consists of the selected verses of Surah Al-Kahf, chosen due to their thematic coherence and rich emphasis on guidance, accountability, communication, and ethical conduct. The unit of analysis is defined at two levels: first, at the level of lexical items, including keywords and meaningful phrases extracted from each verse, and second, at the level of conceptual nodes representing leadership-relevant meanings. Each verse was systematically decomposed into discrete semantic elements, ensuring that the extraction process preserved contextual integrity while enabling analytical granularity.

The data extraction and coding process was conducted in three iterative stages. In the first stage, open coding was applied to identify salient words and phrases that reflect leadership-related actions, attributes, and outcomes. In the second stage, axial coding was employed to group these elements into higher-order categories based on semantic similarity and functional relationships. For instance, terms reflecting clarity, straightness, and absence of deviation were grouped under constructs related to purposeful and coherent leadership, whereas terms indicating falsehood, lack of knowledge, and misrepresentation were categorized under misinformation and ethical deviation. In the final stage, selective coding was used to synthesize these categories into eleven overarching leadership constructs, forming a coherent and structured leadership framework derived directly from the text.

To complement and validate the qualitative findings, semantic network analysis was employed to examine the structural relationships among the extracted concepts. In this process, each coded keyword or phrase was represented as a node, while co-occurrence relationships within verses were modeled as edges, resulting in graph-based network structures constructed both for individual verse clusters and cumulatively across the selected passage. The networks were analyzed using established centrality measures, including closeness centrality, harmonic closeness centrality, Betweenness centrality, and eccentricity. These measures enabled the identification of structurally significant nodes, such as those that are centrally positioned within the network or that act as bridges connecting different conceptual clusters. For example, nodes with high closeness centrality indicate concepts that are more accessible and influential within the overall structure, while nodes with high Betweenness centrality highlight elements that play a critical role in the transmission and control of meaning across the network.

The integration of qualitative coding with quantitative network metrics provides a robust triangulation mechanism, allowing the study to move beyond purely interpretive insights toward empirically grounded structural validation. The derived leadership constructs were further mapped onto established theoretical frameworks in leadership and management literature, including ethical leadership, transformational leadership, evidence-based management, and social learning theory. This theoretical alignment ensures that the findings are not only contextually grounded in the primary text but also generalizable and relevant to contemporary organizational settings. Overall, the methodological approach ensures analytical depth, replicability, and theoretical integration, meeting the standards expected in high-impact academic research.

# 4. Contents of The Leadership Manual

## 4.1. Purposeful, straight-forward and confident leadership

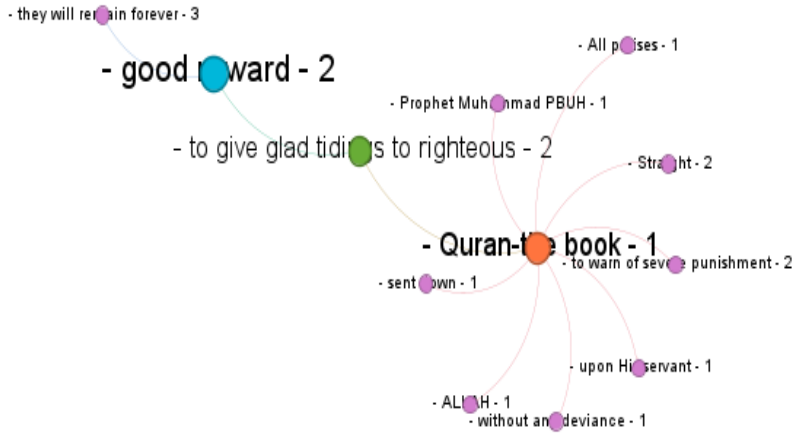



**Fig. 1:** Network Structure of Purposeful, Straight-Forward and Confident Leadership (PSCL) Derived from Surah Al-Kahf (18:1–3).

**Table 1:** Network Centrality Measures for the Construct "Purposeful, Straight-Forward and Confident Leadership (PSCL)" from Surah Al-Kahf (18:1–3)

| ID | Points | Verse | Content of Manual | Eccentricity | Closeness Centrality | Harmonic Closeness Centrality | Betweenness Centrality |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | All praises | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | ALLAH | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | sent down | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | Quran-the book | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0.785714286 | 0.89393939 | 0 |
| 5 | upon His servant | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | Prophet Muhammad PBUH | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | without any deviance | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | Straight | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 | to warn of severe punishment | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | to give glad tidings to the righteous | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0.666666667 | 0.75 | 2 |
| 11 | good reward | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 12 | They will remain forever | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The opening verses of Surah Al-Kahf (18:1–3) establish a foundational leadership construct characterized by purposeful, straightforward, and confident guidance. The passage begins with the affirmation that the divine message was revealed "without any deviation" and presented as a "straight" path, emphasizing clarity, coherence, and intentional communication (The Qur'an 18:1). The network analysis of these verses reinforces this structure: "Qur'an—the Book" appears as the most central node with the highest closeness centrality (0.7857) and harmonic closeness (0.8939), indicating that clear and authentic guidance forms the structural core of the leadership message (See Figure 1 and Table 1). Surrounding this core are complementary functions, including warning of severe consequences, delivering glad tidings to the righteous, and promising enduring reward. Together, these elements create a balanced governance framework that integrates accountability with motivation (The Qur'an 18:2-3).

In organizational contexts, purposeful and straightforward leadership reflects a leader's capacity to communicate goals, expectations, and ethical boundaries with precision and confidence. Such clarity reduces ambiguity, lowers interpretive uncertainty among employees, and strengthens organizational trust. Leadership literature similarly emphasizes that transparent communication, consistent performance evaluation criteria, and credible reward structures significantly enhance intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, employee satisfaction, and work–life balance. When leaders convey only relevant, verifiable, and strategically aligned information, they demonstrate decisional integrity and cognitive confidence, which cascades across organizational levels. Consequently, purposeful and straightforward leadership operates not merely as a behavioral characteristic but as a strategic governance mechanism that stabilizes organizational direction while sustaining employee engagement and performance.

### 4.2. Highlighting the consequences of false reporting

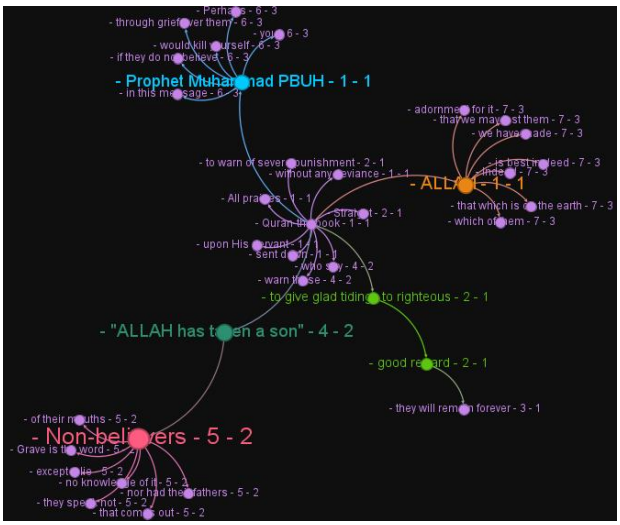



**Fig. 2:** Gephi Diagram of Leadership Constructs Derived from Surah Al-Kahf (18:1–7).

**Table 2:** Network Centrality Measures for Leadership Constructs Derived from Surah Al-Kahf (18:1–7).

| ID | Points | Verse | Content of Manual | Eccentricity | Closeness Centrality | Harmonic Closeness Centrality | Betweenness Centrality |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | All praises | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | ALLAH | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| 3 | sent down | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | Quran-the book | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0.53030303 | 0.63333333 | 0 |
| 5 | upon His servant | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | Prophet Muhammad PBUH | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| 7 | without any deviance | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | Straight | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 | to warn of severe punishment | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | to give glad tidings to the righteous | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0.66666667 | 0.75 | 2 |
| 11 | good reward | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 12 | They will remain forever | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 13 | warn those | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 14 | who say | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 15 | "ALLAH has taken a son." | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0.53333333 | 0.5625 | 8 |
| 16 | Non-believers | 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 14 |
| 17 | no knowledge of it | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 18 | Nor had their fathers | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 19 | Grave is the word | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 20 | that comes out | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 21 | of their mouths | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 22 | they speak not | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 23 | except a lie | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 24 | Perhaps | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 25 | you | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 26 | would kill yourself | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 27 | through grief over them | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 28 | If they do not believe | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 29 | In this message | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 30 | Indeed | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 31 | We have made | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 32 | that which is on the earth | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 33 | adornment for it | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Verses 18:4–5 emphasize a leadership responsibility to actively expose and discourage false claims that lack knowledge, verification, or intellectual rigor. The passage warns against statements made without evidence and criticizes the uncritical repetition of inherited narratives (The Qur'an 18:4-5). The network analysis supports this interpretive structure: the node representing the false claim ("Allah has taken a son") demonstrates relatively high closeness centrality (0.533) and Betweenness (8), while the actor category "non-believers" exhibits the highest Betweenness centrality (14) (See Figure 2 and Table 2). This positioning indicates that misinformation and its carriers act as critical connectors through which misleading narratives spread within a discourse system.

From a leadership perspective, such dynamics mirror organizational misinformation flows where unverified claims distort decision-making and weaken governance structures. Ethical leadership theory stresses that leaders must actively institutionalize verification norms and accountability mechanisms to prevent such distortions. Evidence-based management similarly emphasizes that strategic decisions should rely on systematic investigation rather than authority, tradition, or speculation. By continuously highlighting the consequences of false reporting, leaders strengthen epistemic discipline, safeguard organizational credibility, and cultivate a culture where truthfulness and intellectual responsibility guide collective decision processes.

### 4.3. Guiding in challenging situations with clear and justifiable reasoning

Verses 18:6–7 introduce a leadership principle concerned with guiding followers during emotionally and ethically challenging situations. The network structure presented in Table 2 provides structural support for the construct Guiding in Challenging Situations with Clear and Justifiable Reasoning derived from Surah Al-Kahf (The Qur'an 18:6-7). The nodes associated with this construct—such as grief over them, if they do not believe, and that which is on the earth as adornment—collectively represent the emotional and contextual pressures faced by leaders when followers resist guidance or pursue short-term attractions. Although these nodes display low centrality values individually, their clustering within the same verse group reflects a coherent thematic structure emphasizing emotional restraint and rational explanation. In network terms, this pattern suggests that the leadership message operates less through a single dominant concept and more through a contextual narrative sequence. From a leadership perspective, this structure reinforces the idea that effective leaders must provide calm, reasoned guidance when confronted with resistance, disappointment, or ethical tension. By framing worldly attractions as temporary tests, the passage offers leaders a framework for sustaining follower motivation, patience, and long-term ethical commitment during organizational adversity.

The text acknowledges the leader's deep concern for those who resist guidance while simultaneously reminding them that worldly attractions serve as a test of character and commitment. This framing encourages patience, emotional balance, and rational perspective when confronting resistance or unethical behavior. In organizational environments, similar tensions arise when honest employees observe opportunistic actors gaining short-term advantages through unethical practices or false reporting.

Effective leaders address such circumstances by offering clear and justifiable reasoning that reinforces long-term ethical orientation rather than reactive frustration. Ethical leadership theories emphasize that leaders must maintain followers' moral focus by distinguishing principled commitment from opportunistic misconduct. By clarifying that short-term rewards and material attractions are temporary tests rather than indicators of success, leaders help employees maintain motivation, integrity, and professional discipline. Consequently, this leadership approach preserves psychological stability among ethical employees while reinforcing a long-term performance culture grounded in patience, fairness, and principled organizational conduct.

### 4.4. Reporting, repeating, and highlighting the concrete and coherent examples with generalizable and testable information

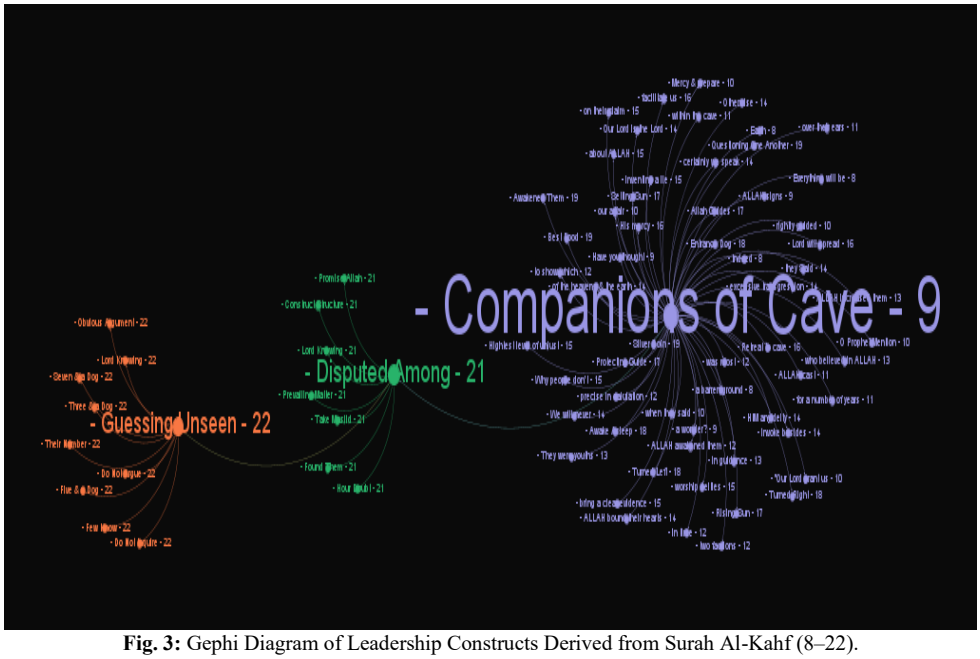



**Fig. 3:** Gephi Diagram of Leadership Constructs Derived from Surah Al-Kahf (8–22).

**Table 3:** Network Centrality Measures for Leadership Constructs Derived from Surah Al-Kahf (8:–22)

| ID | Points | Verse | Content of Manual | Eccentricity | Closeness Centrality | Harmonic Closeness Centrality | Betweenness Centrality |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Indeed | 8 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | Everything will be | 8 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | Earth | 8 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | a barren ground | 8 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | Companions of Cave | 9 | 4 | 3 | 0.75 | 0.87179487 | 0 |
| 6 | ALLAH signs | 9 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | Have you thought | 9 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | a wonder? | 9 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 | O Prophet Mention | 10 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | when they said | 10 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 | "Our Lord grant us | 10 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 | Mercy & prepare | 10 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 13 | our affair | 10 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 14 | rightly guided | 10 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 15 | ALLAH cast | 11 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 16 | over their ears | 11 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 17 | within the cave | 11 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 18 | for several years | 11 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19 | ALLAH awakened them | 12 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 20 | to show which | 12 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 21 | two factions | 12 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 22 | was most | 12 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 23 | precise in calculation | 12 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 24 | in time | 12 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 25 | They were youths | 13 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 26 | who believed in ALLAH | 13 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 27 | ALLAH increased them | 13 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 28 | in guidance | 13 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 29 | ALLAH bound their hearts | 14 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 30 | they Said | 14 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 31 | Our Lord is the Lord | 14 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 32 | of the heavens & the earth | 14 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 33 | We will never | 14 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 34 | invoke besides | 14 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 35 | HIM any deity | 14 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 36 | Otherwise | 14 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 37 | certainly we speak | 14 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 38 | excessive transgression | 14 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 39 | Why don’t people | 15 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 40 | bring clear evidence | 15 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 41 | on their claim | 15 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 42 | worship deities | 15 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 43 | The highest level of injustice | 15 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 44 | inventing a lie | 15 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 45 | about ALLAH | 15 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 46 | Retreat to the cave | 16 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 47 | The Lord will spread | 16 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 48 | His mercy | 16 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 49 | facilitate us | 16 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 50 | Rising Sun | 17 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 51 | Setting Sun | 17 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 52 | Allah Guides | 17 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 53 | Protecting Guide | 17 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 54 | Awake Asleep | 18 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 55 | Turned Right | 18 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 56 | Turned Left | 18 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 57 | Entrance Dog | 18 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 58 | Awakened Them | 19 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 59 | Questioning One Another | 19 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 60 | Silver Coin | 19 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 61 | Best Food | 19 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 62 | Promise Allah | 21 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 63 | Hour Doubt | 21 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 64 | Disputed Among | 21 | 5 | 2 | 0.65384615 | 0.73529412 | 17 |
| 65 | Construct Structure | 21 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 66 | Lord Knowing | 21 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 67 | Prevailing Matter | 21 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 68 | Take Masjid | 21 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 69 | Found Them | 21 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 70 | Three & a Dog | 22 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 71 | Five & a Dog | 22 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 72 | Seven & a Dog | 22 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 73 | Guessing Unseen | 22 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 18 |

The verses of Qur'an (18:9–20) advance a leadership principle centered on the systematic reporting, repetition, and reinforcement of concrete and coherent examples that are both generalizable and empirically verifiable. The semantic network structure derived from these verses provides strong analytical support for this construct by revealing a highly centralized narrative configuration. Specifically, the node “Companions of Cave” emerges as the most structurally influential element, exhibiting a high closeness centrality (0.75) and harmonic closeness centrality (0.8718), which indicates its dominant role in connecting and integrating the surrounding conceptual nodes (See Figure 3 and Table 3). This centrality pattern demonstrates that the leadership message is anchored around a single, coherent exemplar, while the remaining nodes—despite their thematic richness—display relatively low centrality values, suggesting that their significance is realized through their association with this central narrative rather than through independent prominence.

This network configuration reflects a leadership mechanism in which repeated and contextually rich examples serve as the primary vehicle for knowledge transmission and behavioral standardization. The prominence of the “Companions of Cave” node indicates that the narrative operates as a continuously reinforced case, embedding principles of resilience, ethical commitment, and trust in guidance within a structured and memorable framework (The Qur'an 18:9-20). From a governance perspective, such repetition transforms historical accounts into a repository of organizational evidence that is both testable and generalizable. Employees, in turn, interpret these repeated narratives as credible signals of expected behavior, allowing them to distinguish clearly between principled conduct and opportunistic actions.

### 4.5. Distinguishing the honest and dishonest employees

The guidance derived from verse 18:21 of the Qur'an advances a leadership principle centered on the explicit differentiation between honest and dishonest employees, emphasizing behavioral clarity and consequence awareness as essential governance mechanisms. The semantic network structure provides strong empirical support for this construct by highlighting the node "Disputed Among" as a structurally significant element, with a closeness centrality of 0.6538, harmonic closeness centrality of 0.7353, and a notably high Betweenness centrality of 17 (See Figure 3 and Table 3). This configuration indicates that moments of dispute and divergence occupy a central bridging position within the network, connecting otherwise loosely related conceptual clusters and facilitating the emergence of truth, accountability, and behavioral distinction.

The elevated Betweenness centrality of "Disputed Among" suggests that disagreement is not merely incidental but functions as a critical mechanism through which differences in integrity, knowledge, and intent become visible (The Qur'an 18:21). In this context, the narrative structure reflects a process in which competing interpretations and claims create conditions for distinguishing between principled and opportunistic actors. The relatively low centrality of surrounding nodes further reinforces that the leadership message is not anchored in isolated concepts but in the relational dynamics of contestation, where clarity emerges through interaction and evaluation rather than through static assertions.

This interpretation aligns with ethical leadership and behavioral ethics frameworks, where the clear signaling of integrity-based distinctions enhances organizational learning and discourages misconduct. By making the consequences of honesty and dishonesty visible through structured evaluation and response, leaders create a system in which individual behavior is consistently aligned with long-term organizational performance and ethical stability. Consequently, the differentiation between honest and dishonest employees emerges not only as a normative leadership responsibility but also as a structurally observable and analytically validated governance mechanism within the networked discourse.

### 4.6. Guiding the employees with the right communication strategies

The guidance derived from verse 18:22 of the Qur'an advances a leadership principle centered on structuring and regulating communication through authoritative and verified channels. The semantic network structure provides strong analytical support for this construct by identifying the node "Guessing Unseen" as the most structurally dominant element within this segment, exhibiting the highest closeness centrality (1), harmonic closeness centrality (1), and Betweenness centrality (18) (See Figure 3 and Table 3). This configuration indicates that speculative and unverified information occupies a central and highly influential position within the communication network, acting as a key conduit through which ambiguity and misinformation can propagate across interconnected concepts.

The prominence of "Guessing Unseen" suggests that the core leadership challenge addressed in this verse is not merely the presence of differing opinions but the systemic risk posed by conjecture and unverifiable claims (The Qur'an 18:22). The surrounding nodes—such as numerical estimations ("three," "five," "seven")—display minimal centrality, indicating that individual claims themselves are less influential than the underlying process of speculation. In network terms, this reflects a structure where the act of engaging in unverified discourse serves as the primary bridge connecting disparate informational elements, thereby amplifying uncertainty and potential misalignment.

From a leadership and organizational perspective, this network configuration underscores the necessity of establishing centralized, authoritative communication mechanisms that limit reliance on unauthenticated sources and ensure the integrity of information flows. By positioning leadership as the primary source of validated knowledge, organizations can reduce interpretive ambiguity, prevent the escalation of unnecessary conflicts, and maintain coherence in decision-making processes. This aligns closely with principles of Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) and organizational communication theory, where clarity, credibility, and source legitimacy are critical for effective coordination and performance.

### 4.7. Teaching the employees how to communicate with their leaders by acknowledging their leadership that is required to enhance their performance

The employees must learn the norms of effective communication with the leaders. The employees must never say regarding any matter that they can do by themselves, but they should always say that they can do under the leadership of the leaders. They should always acknowledge the contributions and the superiority of their existing leaders who have been working in the existing environment for a span of decades. The employees must acknowledge the kind guidance, training, and contributions of their senior leaders. Yes! It happens sometimes that an employee can forget acknowledging their superior leaders. If they do so, then they should immediately show their acknowledgement and excuse to their senior leaders, and through this approach, they are expected to get more appreciation from their leaders (The Qur'an 18:23-24). When the employees observe and follow the above-mentioned practices and always remain humble, precise, and confident, then they will definitely notice that they will start getting very rare, valuable, and highly confidential information from the senior leaders, and this knowledge will make them superior and a top performer in their circle (The Qur'an 18:25). Always mention that I receive this rare and valuable information from my senior leaders, as they have been practicing loyalty and integrity during the extremely challenging and dynamic internal and external situations, and they have been the top performers in the organization (The Qur'an 18:26).

### 4.8. Advising the employees for continuous consultations with the leaders

The leaders need to train their employees to observe and practice the punctual and regular implementation of continuous consultations. This series of continuous consultations allows the employees to perform better and to maintain a better relationship with the leaders and the senior managers (The Qur'an 18:27).

### 4.9. Advising the employees to be patient and join those who are loyal to the organization

The leaders who have been practicing top performance and who have successfully led their organization over the period of years need to train the employees that the employees should remain in continuous consultations with the leaders and always observe patience and join and support those employees who are working with leaders through closed consultations, acknowledgements, and observing patience. The leaders must also highlight and train the employees not to join and support those who are dishonest and not loyal to the organization. Finally, leaders need to train the employees not to listen to those who have gone beyond the organizational and ethical limits because they are going to face severe consequences (The Qur'an 18:28).

### 4.10. Train and encourage the employees to warn those who are dishonest and not paying attention to details with quantitative and qualitative penalties

The leaders also need to train their loyal and higher-level employees to keep advising and warning those employees who are not paying attention to details, and they are intentionally or unintentionally focused on wasting the valuable financial and non-financial resources of the organization in a useless direction. Keep them warned with severe consequences if they keep moving in the wrong direction. Warn them that the leaders have made their communication and their style of leadership very clear; therefore, if they remain ignorant and dishonest, then they will be penalized, and they will become history and useful examples for those who will still waste resources in the wrong direction in the future (The Qur'an 18:29).

### 4.11. Train and encourage the employees to motivate those who are honest and pay attention to details with quantitative and qualitative rewards

The leaders need to train and encourage their co-workers to keep advising and motivating employees who pay attention to details and are focused on investing the organization's valuable financial and non-financial resources in a purposeful, relevant direction. Keep them motivated and encouraged with exceptionally quantitative and qualitative consequences if they keep on moving in the right direction. Motivate them that the leaders have made their communication and their style of leadership very clear; therefore, if they keep performing well, then they will be exceptionally rewarded with excellent results (The Qur'an 18:30-31).

## 5. Conclusion

This study develops a Qur'an-informed leadership framework derived from Surah Al-Kahf (18:1–31) and integrates it with contemporary leadership and organizational theories. Through systematic qualitative content analysis, eleven interrelated leadership principles were identified and structured into a sequential leadership manual designed to guide communication, governance, ethical accountability, and employee motivation within large organizations.

The findings demonstrate that the leadership guidance embedded in Surah Al-Kahf aligns closely with several influential streams of leadership scholarship, including Strategic Leadership, Ethical Leadership, Value-based Leadership, Spiritual Leadership, and Faith-based Leadership. However, the study does not merely confirm existing theories; rather, it extends them by introducing a normatively grounded leadership sequence that integrates ethical accountability, communication clarity, and behavioral reinforcement within a coherent governance framework.

One important theoretical contribution lies in the concept of purpose-driven leadership communication, which emphasizes clarity, coherence, and relevance in leader messaging. While contemporary leadership literature frequently acknowledges the importance of transparent communication, the Qur'anic framework positions clarity not only as a managerial skill but as a moral governance mechanism necessary for organizational stability and employee trust. Similarly, the emphasis on verifying information and the consequences of false reporting expands existing ethical leadership models by highlighting the systemic risks posed by misinformation and unverified claims in organizational environments.

Another significant contribution concerns the moral differentiation between guided and misguided behaviors, which reflects principles consistent with behavioral ethics and social learning theory. By distinguishing between ethical perseverance and opportunistic conduct, the framework highlights the importance of reinforcing integrity through clear reward and accountability structures. This insight complements contemporary organizational research demonstrating that employees are strongly influenced by observable leader responses to ethical and unethical behavior.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes consultation, patience, and long-term accountability as foundational governance mechanisms. These principles reinforce relational leadership perspectives that emphasize dialogue, trust-building, and collaborative decision-making. Within the Qur'anic framework, consultation functions not merely as a participative leadership tool but as a mechanism for sustaining ethical alignment and collective responsibility within organizational systems.

Taken together, the eleven identified principles form an integrated leadership architecture that links ethical clarity, communication discipline, behavioral reinforcement, and relational governance. This sequential structure contributes to leadership scholarship by demonstrating how classical ethical traditions can inform modern organizational governance models. Rather than viewing faith-based ethical guidance as purely normative or philosophical, the study illustrates its potential to generate testable leadership constructs applicable within contemporary management research.

## 6. Practical Recommendations

The findings of this study offer several practical implications for organizational leaders, policy makers, and human resource practitioners seeking to strengthen ethical governance and employee engagement.

### 6.1. Institutionalizing purposeful leadership communication

Organizations should encourage leaders to adopt purposeful and transparent communication practices that clearly explain policies, expectations, and performance criteria. When employees understand the rationale behind decisions and organizational goals, they are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of trust, motivation, and role clarity.

Leadership training programs should therefore emphasize communication clarity, consistency, and relevance, ensuring that managerial messaging reduces ambiguity and strengthens collective understanding.

### 6.2. Strengthening verification and reporting mechanisms

Modern organizations increasingly face challenges related to misinformation, inaccurate reporting, and unverified claims. The findings suggest that leaders should institutionalize evidence-based reporting systems and verification procedures to ensure the reliability of organizational information.

Such mechanisms may include structured reporting channels, transparent documentation processes, and regular auditing procedures designed to maintain accountability and protect decision quality.

### 6.3. Reinforcing ethical behavior through reward and accountability systems

The study highlights the importance of consistent reward and penalty structures that reinforce ethical conduct and discourage opportunistic behavior. Leaders should ensure that performance appraisal systems recognize not only technical performance but also ethical responsibility, integrity, and collaboration.
Clear consequences for misinformation or unethical conduct help maintain fairness perceptions and reinforce organizational trust.

### 6.4. Encouraging consultation and relational leadership

Organizations should promote continuous consultation between leaders and employees, enabling regular feedback, dialogue, and collaborative problem-solving. Consultation mechanisms strengthen relational trust and help employees remain aligned with organizational objectives during challenging circumstances.
Leadership development initiatives should therefore integrate participative leadership practices that encourage constructive communication and shared responsibility.

## 7. Limitations

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged.
First, the research adopts a qualitative theory-building approach, focusing on conceptual development rather than empirical testing. While qualitative content analysis is appropriate for extracting leadership principles from textual sources, the findings require empirical validation to assess their generalizability across different organizational contexts.
Second, the study concentrates specifically on Surah Al-Kahf (18:1–31) as the primary textual source. Although this chapter contains rich leadership-related guidance, other Qur'anic chapters and Islamic ethical traditions may offer additional insights relevant to leadership and governance. Future research could therefore expand the analytical scope to include broader Islamic ethical literature.
Third, while expert consultation and practitioner feedback were used to enhance analytical credibility, the study did not employ formal inter-coder reliability procedures, which are sometimes used in qualitative content analysis to further strengthen methodological rigor.
Finally, the conceptual alignment with contemporary leadership theories was conducted through theoretical mapping rather than empirical comparison. Consequently, future studies are needed to evaluate whether the proposed framework predicts measurable organizational outcomes such as employee motivation, ethical climate, or organizational performance.

## 8. Future Research Agenda

The present study provides a conceptual foundation for future empirical research aimed at testing and refining the proposed Qur'an-informed leadership framework.
Potential Research Hypotheses
Future studies could test relationships between the identified leadership principles and organizational outcomes. For example:
H1: Purposeful leadership communication positively influences employee trust and role clarity.
H2: Verification-oriented leadership practices reduce organizational misinformation and reporting errors.
H3: Ethical differentiation between honest and dishonest behavior positively influences perceptions of organizational justice.
H4: Consultation-based leadership practices positively influence employee engagement and organizational commitment.
H5: Reward and accountability mechanisms moderate the relationship between ethical leadership and employee performance.
To empirically test these hypotheses, future research could operationalize the identified principles using survey-based measurement constructs such as:

- Leadership communication clarity
- Information verification practices
- Perceived ethical accountability
- Consultation frequency and quality
- Reward fairness and penalty enforcement
- Employee trust and psychological safety
- Employee engagement and performance outcomes

Validated scales from ethical leadership, transformational leadership, and organizational trust literature could be adapted to measure these constructs.
Quantitative studies may employ Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine relationships between leadership practices and organizational outcomes. A potential model could position Qur'an-informed leadership principles as independent variables, organizational trust and ethical climate as mediating variables, and employee performance or engagement as outcome variables.
Researchers may also consider multi-level models examining how leadership practices influence both individual employee attitudes and broader organizational culture. Longitudinal studies could further explore how ethical leadership frameworks influence organizational resilience and sustainability over time.
Additionally, cross-cultural research comparing faith-based leadership frameworks with secular leadership models could provide valuable insights into how ethical traditions influence leadership effectiveness across different institutional environments.

## 9. AI Disclaimer

This manuscript was developed with the assistance of artificial intelligence (AI) tools to enhance clarity, coherence, and academic expression. All intellectual content, conceptual framework, Qur'anic interpretations, and theoretical linkages were generated, analyzed, and critically reviewed by the authors. The authors take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the research and its findings.

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