

Assiyasah Ash-Shari'yah, A Model For Administrative and Economic Reforms and Transformations: A Case Study of Umar Bin Abdulaziz Caliphate 717-720

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Abstract

There is no hesitation that leadership has been given a remarkable domicile and a crucial positioning in Islam, *Assiyasah ash-shari'yah* is reflected as superlative routine towards a good Governance as well as an ideal model for both political and Economic transformation and reform. This study therefore pursues to search the methods of Umar bin Abdulaziz (R.A) MODE FOR Administrative and economic Reforms and Transformations. The methodology of the study relies on critical and comprehensive analysis of the existing published literature related to the topic. Hence, Data collection is effected through the qualitative method. The findings of this study exposed that there are heaps of mode and wisdoms could be obtaining from the history of caliphate Umar such as his reformations and innovations in governing the state as reflected in his *as - siyasa shar'iyyah* which can be key to political reform in our modern society. Grounded on the findings, it was suggested that fear of Allah, is the best preference towards the political and Economic reform.

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INTRODUCTION

The Islamic political principles are used as benchmark for gauging good governance; these are sovereignty, justice equality before the law and most importantly accountability which formed the focus of this study. *Shariah* Policy which known as *As-siyasah Ash-Shariyah* has a vital roles towards the Administrative Economic and Financial Reforms and Transformations. The political Administrations of Umar has all of the requirements for good governance such as promoting the rule of law, accepting of minority and opposition groups, transparent political processes, a neutral judiciary, an unbiased police force, a military that is strictly subject to civilian control, a free press and vibrant civil society institutions and admiration of human rights which enabled him to transformed and reformed the Islamic State in all forms of the Leadership which among them are administrative and Economic sector. From the *siyasahshar'iyah* perspective the foundation of Islamic state as the main values such as justice (*adl*), trust (*amanah*), Consultation (*shura*) and promoting benefit and prevent harm (*amrubilma'ruf wan nahyuanilmunkar*) implemented well by Umar.

Straight away chosen as *khalifah*, he reshuffles and reforms the whole system of administration and all kind related to it also changed positively. There are three broad categories of reconstruction and reformation, during two years and half, namely religious sector administration sector and Economic sector. As a result, the people gained economic, social, and political benefits and prosperity with the faith to God.

Needless to say, Umar implement Islamic values in his administration. This is evidence that the value of Islam is merely not a theory but the values that can be implemented in daily life. The leadership style exemplified by Umar gave al-Ghazali (1427: 78) insight into formulating ten principles as requirements to achieve the prosperity and the welfare of the country.

There are lots of lessons and wisdoms that the government could acquire from the history of caliphate Umar such his reformations and innovations in governing the state.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of as-siyasah ash-shar'iyah

As-siyasah ash-shar'iyah known as Leadership in Islam or *Shariah* Policy. Several words in Arabic are used to denote a leader. An *Amir* is translated as a prince, but it is derived from the verb *amara* which means commanded or ordered. A commander or a leader is called an *Amir*. Several prophetic traditions command that whenever a group of Muslims is on a mission, they should elect an *Amir* to lead the group. IbnTaymiyyah, (1300 AH :30) described the word is used to describe a wide range of leaders. These include leaders of teams, groups, associations, societies, provinces, or countries. It includes appointed leaders as well as elected leaders.

The second term used to denote a leader is the word *Khalifa* which is derived from the verb *khalafa* which means succeeded but it also means a proxy. Thus, the word *Khalifa* can be used to denote either a successor or a vicegerent. The word *Khalifa* has been used twice in the Quran to denote a vicegerent. Once during the dialogue Lord said to the Angels: I will establish a vicegerent (*Khalifa*) on earth (Q2:30).

The second time to describe appointing Prophet David to rule over the Children of Israel; O' Dawud (David). We have appointed you a vicegerent (*Khalifa*) on earth. So, rule over the people with justice and do not follow your whims lest they lead you away from the path of God. (Q38:26).

He also says:

Allah has promised to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds that He will of a surety grant them in the land inheritance (of power) as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their religion the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state) after the fear in which they (lived) to one of security and peace: 'They will worship Me (alone) and not associate aught with Me.' If any do reject faith after this they are rebellious and wicked. (Q 24:55).

Allah again says:

And We made them leaders, guiding by Our command; and We inspired them to do good works, and to observe the prayer, and to give out charity. They were devoted servants to Us (Q 21:73)

AbdurRahman *Ibn* Samurah reported: The Prophet (SAW) said:

O AbdurRahman, do not ask for authority. If it is given to you at your request, you will be held fully responsible for it. If it is given to you without your request, you will be helped by Allah in it. If you swear an oath by your right hand and you see something better than it, then expiate your oath and do that which is better (Bukhari 1422: 6727).

The word *Khilafa* denotes the reign of a *khalifa*. The word *Khalifah* has been used exclusively in the Islamic literature to denote an Islamic head of state Al-Madudi (1982:13).

The third word which is used to denote a leader in Islam is the word *Imam*. It derives from the verb *amma* which literally means faced towards. It is usually used to denote leading people in prayers, however, its use has also been extended to denote a leader in general. The word *Imam* has religious connotations, while a *Khalifa* or an *Amir* need not necessarily be religious leaders. The word *Imam* implies providing guidance to people, while *Amir* and *Khalifa* imply command and governance Al-Madudi (1982:14).

Although reference in the prophetic traditions was made to a wide spectrum of leadership practices, most of the Islamic literature deals with political leadership. The books that deal with the subject use the title *As-Siyasah ash-Shariyyah* or one of its variants. The word *As-Siyasah* literally means herding and tending the herd. In classic usage it came to refer to all the processes of administration, organization, and development of a people that is the function of a governor. In modern times the term has been appropriated to refer to politics in general. The second term *ash-Shariyyah*, means that it emanates from Islamic law Al-Madudi (1982:15).

Bases of *As-siyasah Ash-shar'iyah*

In Islam, leadership is entrusted with the task of preserving trusts and judging justly as is clearly stated in the Qur'an. Allah says:

Verily! Allah commands that you should render back the trust to those to whom they are due: and that when you judge between men, judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching which He (Allah) gives you! Truly, Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seer (Q.4:58-59).

Al-Madudi (1982: 9-10) comment that Leadership in Islam, therefore, is a public trust in which leaders act as representatives of Allah on earth. The actions of the leaders are limited to the power delegated to them by Allah and within the

limits prescribed to them. Any form of leadership established based on this principle will be only a representative under the sovereignty of Allah. As a representative, a ruler is just an active executive to people according to the law of Allah. In this regard, he must ensure justice and fairness in all his dealings with the public trust under his custody. The establishment of an economically and financially corrupt-free society is the main focal point of Islam.

Islamic Model of Leadership

According Al-Madudi (1982: 9) leadership in Islam is based on the Principles of *Tauhid* (Oneness of Allah), *Risala* (Prophethood) and *Khilafa* (Representation). This system is based on the belief that sovereignty belongs to Allah Alone not ruler or people. The rulers only exercises and enforces law as a trust from the Creator, Allah. Therefore, it is only he who gains the confidence of the people based on the stipulated values established by their Creator that will be termed a leader, and when he loses this confidence he must step down.

According to Falaki (2007: 21-22) s a ruler is just a representative that derives his authority due to his obedience to the law of the Creator that binds him (ruler) and the ruled alike by a solemn contract over which Allah is the supervisor. It is obvious to state that, the administration is considered morally valid and binding as long as it fulfills its obligations to the Divine.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a qualitative method of research through consultation of primary and secondary sources, Journals, commentaries on Qur'an, Hadith, textbooks, theses and research projects in the library.

Methods of Umar's Leadership

Sulaiman (1987: 29) observed that the rulers or leaders, who have different kind of abilities, such as intellectuality, religiosity, and good political activities, are rarely found combined in one individual. But, it is different when it talking about Umar Ibn Aziz, he was capable of combining all these abilities due to his daily task as caliph.

Nadwi (2009: 143) clarified that Umar's style to govern the administration of state is different with style of his ancestors. The differences actually can be found in every detail of government. He observed there are three special features of his government style.

First, essentially, the foundation of Islamic

caliphate rest only on the Qur'an, the Sunnah and the precedents of the companions. Miserably, during his time these foundations had become unsteady. So, as already mentioned above, he renovated and strengthened them and maintained them until his death. In every occasion he always addressed and reminded his official to turn back to these foundations.

Second, the most salient feature of his government is reviving the spirit of democracy amongst society. As mentioned early, one of his first acts is consulting to people regarding to the khilafah. As his habit to consult, prominent among those who came were Urwah b. Zubair, Ubaid Allah b. Utbah, Abu Bakar b. Abd al-Rahman b. Harith etc.

Another special feature of Umar is the influence of the *Ulama* highly increased. It due to his style, in daily life, always tried to discuss with them and connected with them and kept them close to himself (Hakam 1967: 15).

Among the *Ulama* that advised Umar often as observed by Al-Talib (1991: 31) are Salim b. Abdillah b. Umar b. Khattab, Hasan Basri, Muhammad b. Ka'ab, Ibin al-Ahtam, etc.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Reformations Achieved in Umar's Leadership Style

Nadwi (2009 :8) mention that During his time the societies thrived under the Umayyad was a different society from the one visualized by the Qur'an, founded by the Prophet and maintained by the first four caliphs. As soon as appointed as caliphate, he restructures and reformates the whole system and all kind related to it also changed.

Umar rules is different from the previous caliphs and the rulers, which is only concerned with its own interests, prestige, material possessions, and a mere earthly position, regardless of spiritual and religious values.

Administrative Reform

According to Nadwi (2009 :12) Umar knows that the environment of the government is unfriendly. The spirit of justice and truth has gone, where truth and just determined by who have the power. So, he made-up his mind to eliminate all the evil were entrenching themselves in the body politic ever since they had plague it in Mu'awiyah's time. To do these all kind of actions, he needed of course, the right tools namely officers

who would runs the machinery of government with trust and just. So the first thing to do is discharging who are incapable and appointing the right people who are competent on his duty.

Nadwi (2009 :13) pointed that there are seven rules that Umar used in appointment and discharge of high officials. They are as follows;

1. He never appointed his relation. None of his sons was ever given any government position.
2. He never chose any person who requested a position.
3. He never selected cruel and tyrannous men to any post.
4. One essential qualification he thought-out for appointment to any government post was knowledge of Qur'an and Hadith.
5. If he found in man anything commendable from the religious or moral point of view, he wants to employ him in the machinery of government.
6. Even though he was so ascetical person, two *dirham* a day sufficed him, yet he determined his governors' salaries on munificent scale.
7. Omar always issue directives and order to his governors in every matter and constantly urges them to work properly. This habit, in nature, had encouraging moral effect upon them.

The next action is protecting the right of *dhimmis* (non-Muslims) by all means. This action actually fulfills one of eight elements to be good in governance, that the former of secretary general of UN stated, that is accepting of minority and opposition groups (UNDP, N.A). As Nadwi (2009 :15) summed up, there are four rules that Umar used to do to protect right of *dhimmis*;

- a) Their lives and property might be protected in the same way as those of Muslims.
- b) Their religious building might be protected and no interference might be made with their religion.
- c) No repression might be practiced, but rather dispensation might allow, in the charging of *jizyah* on them.

They might enjoy equal rights with the Muslims in every matter. One of the policies related to this matter is he giving back the right of the church to the Christians. It showed that Islam also take care the minority.

Economic and Financial Reform

In economic, he planned it carefully. He always

takes into deep every step to be taken and ensure that what has been planned is all going well. As known that one of objective of the higher objective is to make human beings may lead happy and secure lives. May be this achievement of this objective, the reign Omar II has never been surpassed in all history (Nadwi 2009 :14). So, what Umar has been done, in economic side, to achieve these glories?

The first thing that Omar did is to redistribute the national income and wealth fairly. He tries to correct the way of the unfair distribution during the previous caliph. This distribution aims to uphold truth and justice, as well as avoiding and removing the tyranny. He realized that social inequality in society is the result of an unfairly distribution of property. Therefore, Umar create new strategies to reduce poverty and tyranny. The steps are as identified by Sallaby (2006 :15);

- a) Prohibit the officials and the authorities to take advantage of the wealth of society. Relating to this, Umar ever take back property acquired by way of a tyrannical officials and returned to the owner if it is known who the owner or returned to the treasury if it is unknowns.
- b) Umar gave more priority to the poor and marginalized society and ensure their adequacy of live either taken from zakat funds or other channels.

Next is promoting the economic growth and social welfare for the society (Sallaby, 2006 : 10).

In addition to improve the moral and government administration, Umar also do not forget to think about the macro economy. Umar did various things such as maintaining security, reduce defamation, and restore the rights of others, etc Sallaby (2006 : 14).

Analyzing of this achievement of economic growth and social welfare, naturally the question will rise up is what, after all, were the Umar's steps to achieve this level of prosperity? To answer it, essentially, there are two general plans on his economic plans;

First is establishing the appropriate growth by returning wealth to the right owner and create free-economy as classified by Sallaby (2006 :18), Free means here is free as long as in line with *shariah* principles. It can be seen on his letter to his official....!Actually a form of obedience to God that commanded in scripture is to invite others to adopt Islam comprehensively and let others cultivate their property, whether on the land or in the sea, without any disturbance and without

prevention....Hakam (1967 :29).

Umar also emphasize his officer to do not intervene the market price even the price is high that time. As narrated by Abdurahman b. Sauban, he said; I asked Omar: —Ye emir of the faithful!! Why the price of stuffs under your government is very expensive, while the stuffs during caliphates committed before you are cheap? Omar answered: In truth, during caliphates before me, they always charged upon Ahl-*Dimmis* (non-Muslims) high tax that out of their capability, until they cannot trade their goods or lower the price as low as possible. While, I do not charge the people except what they are capable of, I'm freeing people to sell their own goods as desired. Then I ask again: why do not you just set the price?? Omar replied: we do not have the right to interfere in determining the price the gods will decide. Sallaby (2006 :18).

In line with the barriers was eliminated from the market, the result is the economic activity growth rapidly. Automatically, the rich people and the zakat payer increases due to the economy growth. Then the national income grows and redistribution of income also rises up. Furthermore, it will lead the purchasing power of the poorer increase due to the increasing their income through zakat. If the purchasing power rises, then the demand of goods and service also will raise up and soon.

Second is creating new strategy for agriculture sector. According to Sallaby (2006 :27), to increase the agriculture production, Umar did several strategies. They are;

- a) Prohibition of trading of *kharaj* land. One of Umar's reason is *kharaj* land is *fa'i* land, and it is public ownership not individual ownership. Automatically, it will keep the public income resources from agriculture.
- b) Umar also pays attention to the farmer welfare and gives them tax relief where the caliph before him always charges the farmer by high taxation and cost. It not surprisingly if they leave the agriculture field without planting anything on it. Then, it will decrease the production itself. Hence the national income wills decrease. His decision to reduce the injustice tax on *kharaj* land, a glance will reduce on national income, but just the opposite, reducing taxes increased the economic development.
- c) To raise the capacity of production, Umar encourage the society to open new land and to fertilize the existing one. The official ordered to treat the farmer differently and justly based on

the fertility of the land. Related to the opening new farmland he instructs his official to give arrangement facilities. Regarding to the sawafil land, he opined that it is belong to public ownership should not to sell, yet but should not let it an idle, it must be managed in order to generate income. Therefore, it should be given to farmers to utilize it then the result divided by both government and the farmer. The other way to increase production, he also gives so-called soft non- interest loan to the farmer to manage their farmland.

- d) He also decided that all the him a land is belong to public ownership and it is not for private ownership with the exception of the naqi3 land. So everyone can take benefit from it.
- e) And to facilitate the travelers, farmers, traders and others, he built public facilities to facilitate and accelerate their activities.

Looking at his accomplishment as mentioned above, it seems most appropriate to briefly reveal and attach —ten principles which is formulated by al-Ghazali on *Kitab Nasihat al-Muluk* or Book of Counsel for Kings. They are as follows;

- a) The ruler should first understand the importance, and the danger, of the authority entrusted to him. In authority, there is great blessing, since he who exercises it righteously obtains unsurpassed happiness; but if any (ruler) fails to do so, he incurs torment surpassed only by the torment of unbelief.
- b) The ruler should be always thirsting to meet devout *Ulama* and ask them for advice; and that he should beware of meeting *Ulama* with worldly ambitions who might inveigle, flatter and seek to please him in order to gain control over his terrestrial body by stealth and deceit.
- c) The king should understand that he must not be content with personally refraining from injustice, but must discipline his slave-troops, servants, and officers and never tolerate unjust conduct by them; for he will be interrogated not only about his own unjust deeds but also about those of his staff.
- d) The holder of authority should not be dominated by pride; for pride, gives rise to the dominance of anger, and will impel him to revenge. Anger is the evil genius and blight of the intellect.
- e) In every situation which arises, the ruler should figure that he is the subject and that the other

person is the holder of authority; and that (he should not sanction of others) anything that he would not sanction for himself.

- f) The ruler should not disregard the attendance of petitioners at his court and should beware of the danger of so doing. As long as the Muslims have grievances, he need not occupy his time with supererogatory religious observances, for redressing the grievances is more meritorious.
- g) The ruler should not form a habit of indulging the passions. For example, even though he might dress more finely or eat more sumptuously, he should be content with all (that he has); for without contentment, just conduct will not be possible.
- h) The ruler should make the utmost effort to behave gently and avoid governing harshly; only then, the rulers themselves will be treated gently in the Hereafter.
- i) The ruler should endeavor to keep all the subjects pleased with him; there is the Prophet's (SAW) saying, The best of my community are those who love you and whom (you love), and the worst of my community are those who hate you and whom you curse. Even through espionage, the ruler should check and find out if all the subjects are genuinely pleased with him.
- j) The ruler should not give satisfaction to any person if a contravention of God's law would be required to please him; for no harm will come from such a person's displeasure.

CONCLUSION

The Islamic political principles are used as benchmark for gauging good governance; these are sovereignty, justice equality before the law and most importantly accountability which formed the focus for Economic and financial reform.

Umar made within a short period of his reign a reforms in the whole system of administration and all kind related to it also changed. The majors as this study are: administration sector and Economic sector. As a result, the people gained economic, social, and political benefits and prosperity with the faith to God.

Needless to say, Umar implement Islamic values in his administration. This is evidence that the value of Islam is merely not a theory but the values that can be implemented in daily life.

There are lots of lessons and wisdoms that the government could acquire from the history of caliphate Umar such his reformations and

innovations in governing the state. Therefore, it is good to introduce the concept of *siyasahshar'iyah* widely which is it can be solution for practicing good governance as well as a model for Economic and financial reforms and transformations.

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