

## **The Impact of the Leadership Style of the Four Caliphates on the Politics of Islam in Contemporary Time**

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### ***Abstract***

*This article is about “The Impact of the Leadership Style of the Four Caliphates on the Politics of Islam in Contemporary Time”. The article investigates the historical development of the four Caliphs and caliphates in the early Muslim community, during their reign of Caliphates. The study explores into the different leadership styles of the four caliphs, in managing the community safely and peacefully. Highlighting the impact of the leadership styles of the four Caliphs on the politics of Islam and their effects on the leadership in Muslim communities, whose resonances still resounds in the contemporary times. These effects remain patterned in the leadership styles of some Muslim leaders in Africa today. Adaptation and synthesis, conservative and fundamentalism are the leadership styles of the Caliphs during their reign. In their leadership, they promoted democracy, good governance, and centralization of the power and standardization of the Qur'an, consultations, fairness, justice, accountability, transparency and established the administrative structures in Muslim empire. Their leadership styles have a connection with autocratic, democratic and delegating as the conventional leadership styles. The impact of leadership styles of four Caliphs resonate in the contemporary politics of Islam. These influences are in different African Islamic countries. The article aims to bridge the academic gap by examining the effects that influence the current politics of Islam including the African context. The article adopts a literature-based approach, relies completely on library sources in collecting the data, conducting an inclusive review of academic works, books and journals or articles. This approach aims to collect insights from historical development of Caliphs, and their leadership styles. It also aims to amass comparative perceptions and contribute to a systematic exploration and analysis of the subject issue.*

***Keywords:*** Caliph, Caliphate, Leadership, Politics

## **Introduction**

The Caliphate is derived from the word *khalf*, which means to be behind or to succeed or to replace. The word Caliph is defined as a person who replaces one and maintains his office. The word is used principally in two domains namely, politics and Sufism. In political terminology, Caliph signifies the person who succeeds Prophet in order to maintain administrative affairs of Muslim society. Thus, Caliphate means replacing Muhammad (Pay, 2015:107). In the early Muslim community, the believers held that Muhammad could not have a successor who can be qualified as a Prophet but he can be a temporal head of the community. The first documentary references called the leader of the Muslim community (Commander of the Believers), was later replaced by the term Caliph which had the advantage of being found in the Qur'an (Esposito, 1999: 14-15). The Qur'an mentions Caliphate in sura 2 verse 30, where by God tells the Angels that He intends to replace on the earth one that shall rule as His deputy; this is Adam in particular or a man in general. In *Sura* 38, verse 26 David is appointed a Caliph in the sence of a ruler. After the death of the Prophet Muhammad there were historical development and expansion of Islamic Empire during the reign of the Caliphs. The first four Caliphs' leadership styles have impacts in the current religious, political and administrative functions of the Islamic community, especially, in leadership, justice, and conflict management within Muslim society. However, there is a need to see how their examples in leadership styles can be used to inspire good governance and leadership in the current Muslim circles, especially, in African Muslim countries. This article aims to fulfill the following three objectives: To examine the historical development of the four Caliphs; evaluate the leadership styles of the first four Caliphs; and to analyze the impact of the leadership style of the four Caliphates on the politics of Islam in the contemporary time .

### **1. Examine the historical Development of the four Caliphs**

According to Choueiri (1997) historically, after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, his successor had to be someone who had been with him in both *Makkah* and *Madinah*, qualified in correct hadiths , and whose life was so similar to the Prophet Muhammad. Maqsood adds that the Caliph would be able to make decisions like Muhammad and accept to live in simple life, saintliness and humility (Maqsood, 2010).

Quraishy says that in the selection, **Abu Bakr** was selected as the first caliph. He was born in 573 and died in August 23, 634. He reigned 2years form 632 to 634 C.E. He was the closest companion

and adviser of the Prophet Muhammad. He ensured political and administrative functions in the office of the Caliph. He was in clan of merchant tribe of Quraysh at Mecca. He was the first male converted to Islam after the Prophet Muhammad, even though it was doubted by the majority of Muslim historians. He is the first man who accepted Islam without any hesitation on his part and he had been one of the strongest supporters of the Holy Prophet and he often sacrificed his wealth and possessions to support Islam (Quraishy, 1987:86).

In addition, Maqsood (2010: 24) explains that Abu Bakr married his young daughter Aishah to the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, Abu Bakr was chosen by Muhammad as his companion to walk together on the journey to Medina (the Hijrah, 622). When they arrived at Medina he was a chief of advisers of Muhammad from 622 to 632. He was also a conductor of the Pilgrimage to Mecca in 631 and the leader of the public prayers while Muhammad was very ill in his last time.

Moreover, Machatschke adds that Abu Bakr introduced the great revolutions at the end of which the Mediterranean area was to look quite different. In 634 Arab troops were in Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine. Only Jerusalem still offered resistance (Machatschke, 1995: 28). Furthermore, Maqsood affirms that in the last days of his life, the caliphate was consolidated and integrated by Abu Bakr. He developed an empire in wealth, power, morals, and religion within the Muslim society. Before his death, Abu Bakr appointed Umar to be his successor and convinced the Muslim believers to accept him (Maqsood, 2010:25-26)

Maqsood also elucidates that the second Caliph **Umar** was born in 586 C.E. in Mecca, Arabia now in Saudi Arabia to a merchant family. He was assassinated on November 3, 644 at Medina, Arabia by a Firoz, a Persian Christian slave (Maqsood, 2010:25-26).

Reynolds mentions that Umar reigned from 634 to 644. He had used the Arab armies and conquered Mesopotamia and Syria and began the conquest of Iran and Egypt. His father was in the Banu Adi clan, while his mother was in the Banu Makhzum tribe. At the first time Umar was opponent of Muhammad but in 615, he became a Muslim. In 622, he went to Medina with Muhammad and the other Meccan Muslims. In that time he had become one of the chief advisers of Muhammad. He was a close friend of Abu Bakr. In 625 he was married with Muhammad's daughter Hafsa. In 632 Umar took responsibility to reconcile the Medinan and Meccan Muslims to accept each others. Umar was the first Caliph who was called the Commander of the faithful (*amir al- mu' minin*).

Therefore, in his reign, there was a transformation of an Islamic state, which enabled an Arabian territory to be powerful in the world (Reynolds, 2012:70,120).

This was emphasized by Humphreys (1991:19 ) by saying that during the reign of Umar, there was the rapid spread of Islam in the caliphate through the war in surrounding territories of his caliphate. However, many populations were happy to accept Muslim rulers instead of remaining their previous cruel and corrupt rulers. During the war, the main cities were taken successively, Damascus was taken in 635 and Jerusalem in 638. The city of Damascus had two gets and the Muslims decided to attach through both of them. The Christian Sophonius declared that he accepted and surrender Umar. Although the Muslim armies had conquered Christian territories successfully, they did not force the Christians to be converted to Islam by force or sword as it was often suggested.

Bennett affirms that in 661 Damascus became the Umayyad's capital (Bennett, 2008). While Humphreys adds that the most important thing happened in the reign of Umar that can not be forgetable is establishemenet of the official Hijri calender, the Muslim calender (Humphreys, 1991:19).

Quraishy expounds that in 23 A.H./644 C.E. Caliph Umar made his last pilgrimage to Mecca and returned to Medina to attend to his state duties. There was peace all over the country and little did any one know that he will pass away through a tragic ending (Quraishy, 1987: 103-104).

For Reynolds (2012:70) Uthman was the third Muslim caliph after the death of Umar. He was born in 576 CE, in Taif, a resort Arabian town in the Hejaz region. His reigned from 644 to 656 C.E. His death marked the beginning of religious and political conflicts in the Islamic community.

In his writing, Maqsood says that Uthman was born in the rich and powerful Umayyad clan in Mecca and this helped him to become a wealthy merchant. When Muhammad started preaching in 615 CE at Mecca, Uthman accepted his teachings and after 5 years he became the first convert from the high social and economic standing. Therefore, Muhammad accepted and valued Uthman and allow him to marry with his two daughters namely Ruqaiyyah and Umm Kulthum. In his reign, the Muslim empire was extended from west, North Africa and East to the boundary of China and Indus Valley (Maqsood, 2010:24,26).

Machatschke confirms that Islamic history shows that in the first years of his reign, Uthman was passive. However, his achievements in the last years were to centralize the administration of the Caliphate and establish an official version of the Qur'an. The conquest of Persia was also the work of the third caliph. Under Uthman, the attempt was first made to invade southwards up the Nile from Egypt. The Arab Army operated with greater success on its campaign from Egypt westwards. After bloody battles with the Berbers, it finally reached the Atlantic (Machatschke,1995:29).

Maqsood explains that Uthman was succeeded by Ali who was born in 600 CE at Mecca. He reigned from 656 to 661 C.E. He was a cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad. Ali was married to the Prophet's youngest daughter Fatimah. Therefore, he got married to more women and had some 30 Children (Maqsood, 2010:25).

Momen stresses that Ali had been very close to the Prophet Muhammad because since Muhammad became an orphan he had been received in the house of his uncle Abu Talib who was the father of Ali. This means that they grew up in the same family or household. Indeed both Muhammad and Ali were regarded as brothers. When Muhammad started a prophetic mission Ali was only nine years old (Momen, 1985:11).

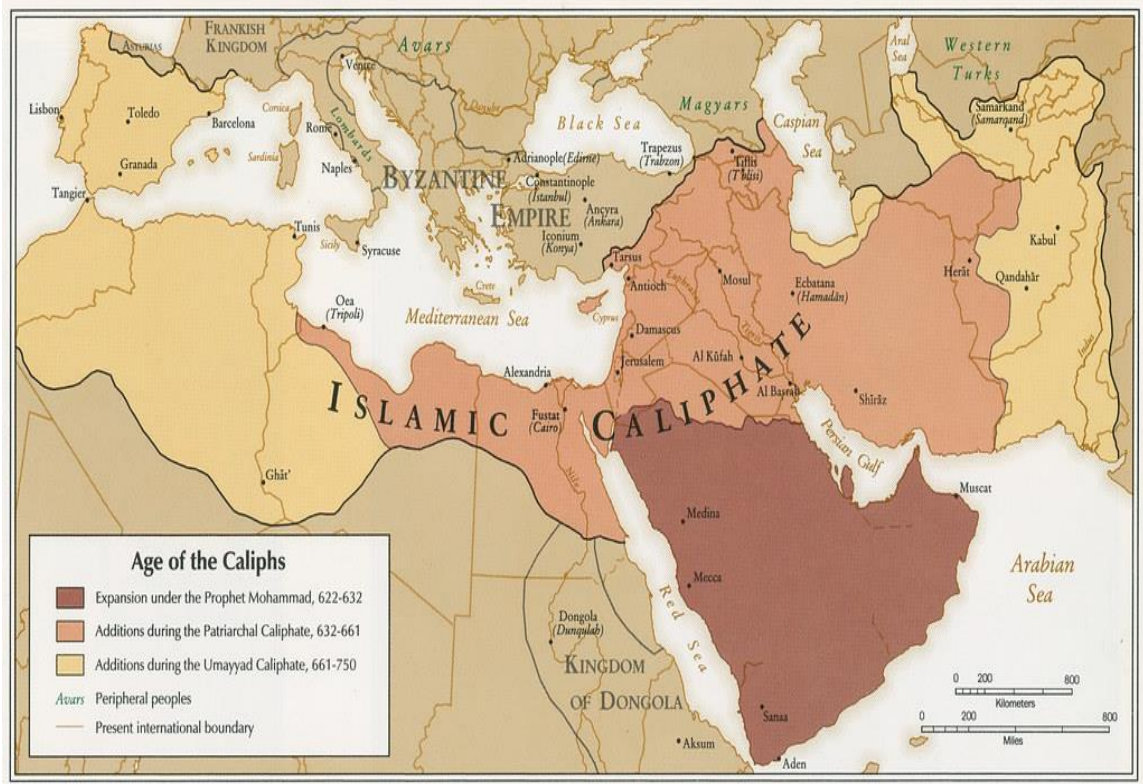
Halm analyzes that in the contradiction of Shia and Sunni Muslims, the Shiite tradition says that Ali was the second Muslim who followed the Prophet's message after Muhammad's wife, Khadijah. The Sunnis confirm that Ali was the third converted one in Islam, after Khadija and Abu Bakr. In addition, Ali followed the Prophet to Medina during the Hijra. Thus, he got married to Muhammad's daughter when they were in Medina (Halm, 1991:8).

Momen adds that at that time Ali was a great military leader and was able to defeat the Basran rebels at the Battle of Camel. In 656 Ali moved his headquarters from Medina to Kufa in Iraq after the battle of Camel. When Baghdad was built, Kufa continued to be the main center of Shi'ism in the Islamic world (Momen, 1985:24).

Halm also confirms that Ali was known as the person who fought against the pagan Meccans and played an important role in the conquest of the Arabian peninsula by Islam. On his return from his final pilgrimage to Mecca on 18<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Hijja 10/16<sup>th</sup> March 632 at Ghadir Khumm, which was between Mecca and Medina, the Prophet told Muslims to take Ali as a Supporter (Halm, 1991:8). Moreover, Esposito says that the death of Ali in 661 provoked the complicated series of events

known as the first civil war which was a struggle for leadership of the Islamic community (Esposito, 1999:15).

### Expansion map during the first four Caliphs



Source: [Expansion map during the first four Caliphs - Search Images \(bing.com\)](#)

In addition, although there was the growth in power and wealth in Islamic community but the commitment of many of the Prophet's companions to safeguard the integrity of the community began to wane. Furthermore, with growth in power and wealth, however, the commitment of many of the prophet's companions to safeguard the integrity of the community began to diminish.

Watt affirms that this above situation and weakness provoked the deepened crisis and tragedy within the community. However, Abu Bakr, Umar and Ali as the prophet's companions were aware of this danger and they tried to do all possible to avert and defused it. Generally, the Islamic history recognizes the immediately period following death of Muhammad, from 632 to 661 as the rightly guided Caliphs (Watt, 1985:1).

Generally speaking, the historical development of four first Caliphs including their commitment, quality, courage in good governance and the leadership of past Islamic community has impact on the current leadership styles in Muslim societies. Their democracy in selecting a Caliph is a good example and way that is still used in electing the leader of Muslim community in current time. Their consultations to their companions in decision making are the legacy to the Muslim leadership in the present politics of Islam nowadays. In addition, their spirit to develop the Islamic empire in power and in wealth and maintain the integrity of Islamic community are still impacting the good governance of Islamic community in the contemporary time. It is very important to recognize that during the reign of four first Caliphs there was a standardization and fixing the Qur'an in writing. From that time the Qur'an is preserved. This promotes its authority and validity to the generations. Therefore, the existing of Muslim calendar was also established in that time of first four Caliphs.

The next section is about the evaluation of leadership styles of the four first Caliphs.

## **2. Evaluate the leadership styles of the four first Caliphs**

According to Voll (1980) during the first four Caliphates, the Islamic leadership styles were adaptation and syntheses, conservative and fundamentalism. In the political arena, the early Muslim leaders utilized a wide range of techniques to create the structures of the early empires. Thus they adapted to socio-political realities and were willing to compromise when it was necessary for the maintenance of the state.

### **2.1 Leadership style of Abu Bakr**

The *International Journal of Management and Human Science* (2019) indicates that Abu Bakr's leadership style emphasized on unity and crisis management. He took decision during the war of apostasy and he consulted the community.

Moreover, Momen confirms that after being appointed as Caliph, Abu Bakr designed to continue the position of Muhammad as the head of the city of Medina and of a confederacy of tribes, which was the emerging Muhammad's state (Momen, 1985:11). Maqsood adds that his short reign considered largely of warfare (known as the riddah wars ) (Maqsood,2010: 24). Nisar affirms that as caliph, Abu Bakr was the political and military leader of the community (Nisar, 2017:4).

In their writing entitled: *Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives*, Donohue and Esposito explain that we do not hesitate for an instant to affirm categorically that the major part of what is called the war of apostasy in the first days of the Caliphate of Abu Bakr was not a war of religion but a purely political war. The masses believed it was a religious struggle its goals were not entirely religious (Donohue & Esposito, 1982: 35).

Ayoub clarifies that in the last days of his life, Abu Bakr's caliphate was a formative period of consolidation and integration. Abu Bakr is reported to have perceived the dangers inherent in these developments: wealth, and power and the possibility of vast conquests could threaten the moral and religious basis of Muslim society. He rebuked the men of the Quraysh for seeking to reduce the moral authority of the caliphate to one of political and economic power and tribal prestige. He convinced the Muslims that Umar was the best man to stop these dangers and keep and lead well the community (Ayoub, 2009:30-31).

Regarding this point, I see that it is a good legacy that Abu Bakr gave his successors. To recognize the achievements of a country and choose the right one to continue maintaining them. Choosing the best leader and good manager of the community is necessary.

In addition, Hussain says that Abu Bakr was known for his fairness and willingness to consult with advisors before making decisions. Upholding justice and equality was central to his leadership (Hussain, 2023). Therefore, Quraishy confirms that Abu Bakr ensured that religion remained at the heart of governmental policies, using verses from the Quran as a basis for law-making. He adds that as a Caliph, Abu Bakr always sought solutions to the problems based on the teachings given in the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet's Traditions (Quraishy, 1987: 92). It is in complete agreement with the article of Gulnoza Ibadullaeva by saying that leadership in Muslim cultures is a significant responsibility that involves guiding and serving the community with justice and integrity. Therefore, Islamic principles of leadership come from the teachings of the Qur'an, the central religious book of Islam (Ibadullaeva, 2024). This way of making decisions based on the Qur'an helped them to make the right decisions, which are respected by Muslims from generation to generation.



## **2.2. Leadership style of Umar**

According to Abbasi (2022) Umar's leadership, marked by justice, governance and expansion of Muslim empire. His administrative reforms and focus on justice helped him to balance religious principles with effective governance.

In addition, Bennett says that Umar's caliphate saw the rapid spread of Islam, and war with surrounding territories. However, most of the populaces felt liberated and were happy to accept Muslim rulers instead of the previous cruel and corrupt rulers (Bennett, 2008: 65). Machatschke adds that Umar's leadership was characterized by decisiveness and strong governance. He expanded the Islamic state significantly (Machatschke, 1995).

Furthermore, Momen explicates that in his reign Umar was considered as the best of judges and his judicial decisions are highly regarded both by Sunni and Shi'i experts in jurisprudence. For Shi'is the brief period of his Caliphate is looked upon as a Golden Age when the Muslim community was directed as it always should be directed, by the divinely chosen Imam (Momen, 1985: 26).

Moreover, Iqbal says that Umar set up an effective system of judicial administration. Justice was administered according to the principles of Islam. *Qadis* (judges) were appointed at all administrative levels. Umar was the first ruler in history to separate the judiciary from the executive (Iqbal, 2017). Ali Shabeeh adds that Umar's wisdom continues to resonate today with the quote that encapsulates his leadership philosophy (Shabeeh, 2023).

## **2.3 Leadership style of Uthman**

In his book titled: *The Basics: Islam (1995)* Machatschke confirms that Uthman's leadership was characterized by centralization of power and standardization of religious texts (the Quran). He adds that Uthman is known to us for his achievement in the history of the religion, namely fixing the Qur'an in writing (Machatschke, 1995:29).

However, Uthman's later reign, marked by accusations of nepotism and favoritism. This was confirmed by Esposito that Uthman was accused (whether rightly, it may never be known) of favoring his relatives when making the important and sometimes lucrative appointment, of diverting money from the treasury and of transgressions some fiscal and some moral (Esposito,

1999:1,15). It was also stressed by Maqsood saying that in setting up governors for the newly acquired territories, he promoted too many of his own relatives, and was accused of nepotism (Maqsood, 2010:26). This is bad quality and behavior, which must be avoided by each leader in his or her leadership.

Moreover, Hussain states that 'Uthman's willingness to serve the community and provide for their needs showcases the concept of servant leadership. Leaders should prioritize the welfare of their followers and be willing to make personal sacrifices for the greater good (Hussain, 2023).

In addition, Alim confirms that 'Uthman's reign saw economic growth and infrastructure development. At that time, the economic resources of the state were Zakat, Ushr, Khara, Jazya, Fay and Ghanimah. Through them, the income or revenues of the state were increased considerably (Alim, 2024). This period was marked by the rapid development of Islamic territory as a sign of good governance. The above economic resources are still recognized in Muslim circles.

## **2.4 Leadership style of Ali**

Raihan says that the leadership style of Ali was characterized by justice and resistance. He was known for his strong sense of justice and his commitment to upholding moral integrity. He adds that Ali recognized the importance of accountability and transparency in governance. Therefore Ali stressed that each leader has to ensure that all individuals under his authority are treated equitably. This helped him to avoid nepotism and favouritism in his leadership (Raihan, 2020: 19, 21).

Iqbal clarifies that during the reign of Ali judiciary and administration became more advanced. Ali gave the advice when they recruited and appointed the judges to promote justice. This was in this example when Malik Ashtar was appointed as the Governor of Egypt, Ali instructed him as follows: O Malik I know that you have been appointed to the governorship of Egypt. When appointing Judges, select holy and pious persons for the post. They should neither be greedy nor make errors in their judgments. In no way should they deviate from the truth deliberately. Give them good salaries so that they may not be beguiled into monetary temptations. Similar instructions were to every governor at the time of appointment (Iqbal, 2017). Raihan illustrates that the letter that Ali sent to Malik highlights the value of collaboration, justice and accountability and offers a road map for just leadership and governance (Raihan, 2020:19).

Hussain explains that Ali demonstrated immense courage, resistance and resilience during his leadership. He faced numerous challenges and crisis during his time as Caliph, including political conflicts and military battles but he did not give up (Hussain, 2023). This should be the lesson to the current leaders, to be strong in leadership struggles and seeking strategies to overcome political issues in the way of maintaining peace and leadership stability.

In their writing, Bhargavi and Yaseen affirm that there are three leadership styles, which are authoritarian, democratic or participative and delegating. They explain that autocratic leaders order their followers on what they have to do and how it should be done without receiving any feedback or advice. In democratic or participative, the leader takes in one or more employees when decision-making is necessary, but the leader normally takes all decisions and leaves himself with the last decision that is followed, and this makes the authority of this leader. Whereas in delegating employees are the ones who make decisions; however, the leader is still accountable and responsible for the decisions that are made (Bhargavi & Yaseen, 2016:90)

Based on these above leadership styles, there is a connection between them and the leadership styles of the four first Caliphs. In their leadership, the Caliphs sometimes decided the head of the empire without consulting others. For example, in the war of apostasy decided by Abu Bakr. In the decision of favoring his relatives, 'Uthman did not consult his people. These are the examples of autocratic leadership.

In addition, the Caliphs promoted democratic or participative leadership. For example, during the selection of a Caliph, they set up a team, which had to vote for the Caliph. The people got an opportunity to participate in an election. This is democracy. Umar is one of the Caliphs who promoted democracy.

Ammini et al, highlighted that leadership in Islam must be established based on the permission of individuals via free and fair election. In the time of selecting the Caliphs, three principles were respected the election of the leader depends entirely on the will of the general public with no one having the right to impose him forcibly as a leader, no clan or class shall have a monopoly of leadership and the election shall be free of all coercion (Ammini et al, 2014: 46).

Furthermore, the Caliphs also promoted delegating leadership by appointing the governors in different territories. ‘Uthman and Ali did this. They were accountable and responsible of the decisions taken by those Governors.

Next section evaluates the impacts of the leadership styles of the first four Caliphs on the governments of Islam in the present time.

### **3. To assess the impact of the leadership styles of the four Caliphates on the politics of Islam in the contemporary time**

According to Voll (1980) during the early Caliphates, different leadership styles were developed in response to the historical experience. Although the conditions and issues have changed but there is a remarkable continuity of impact in the Islamic leadership within the centuries. Voll (1980) adds that the leadership styles like adaptation and synthesis, conservative, and fundamentalism have an impact on the politics of Islam in the present time. Voll (1980) explains this by saying that the Sultans, the military commanders and political rulers utilized various governing techniques and adapted new military technologies. In social and religious terms, Islamic teachers were flexible in adapting Islamic teachings to special local conditions. Another thing that Voll (1980) adds is that the conservatism scholars heped to preserve the gains mde by Islam by making sure that the changes were not too rapid. In addition, Voll (1980) stresses that the fundamentalists were the strongest leaders who maintained the vision of the early ideal community and they frequently advocated programs of Islamic pulification and revival. Ibrahim says that today the simplistic division of Muslims into fundamentalists and moderates, be it in the mass media or in present day scholaship, is not only conceptually untenable but also echoes the anxiety of the war against terror (Ibrahim, 2012:279).

On the other hand, the leadership styles of the first four Caliphs namely **Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman,** and **Ali** continue to influence the politics of Islam in Africa in the contemporary times. These early Islamic leaders laid the foundations for Islamic governance, justice, unity, and leadership principles that are still referenced and emulated today by various political, religious and Islamist leaders and movements in Africa. This article shows their leadership styles’ impact on the modern Islamic politics in some Muslim countries within the African continent as follow:

Fistly, as noted above, the leadership style of Abu Bakr emphasized unity and crisis management. The *International Journal of Management and Human Science* (2019:1) shows that the administrative system in the Islamic State based on management of people. The important thing that Abu Bakr has done from the control of administrative and security matters inside and outside the city is only a success in the management of the crisis occurred in the early Muslim community. This resonates with Islamic political movements and leaders in Africa today who seek to unify fragmented Muslim communities. The Abu Bakr's decisive approach during the ridda wars (war of apostasy) provides a model for how to deal with internal divisions, especially when political or religious unity is threatened.

In the article of Gultekin entitled: *Abu Bakr: The Man & Wise Leader (Part 2)* he says that Abu Bakr had to struggle with apostates and false prophets. For the first time in the lives of both the Makkans and the Madinans, they were united around a single religion. After the death of the Prophet Muhammad some of them left the new religion and followed false prophets who appeared among them. Some tribes refused to give *zakah* (alms giving) and started a revolt against the new administration in Madinah. Abu Bakr succeeded in putting down the rebellions and re-instituted unity in Arabia through his good reputation among people, his character, and wise (Gultekin, 2024). This article of Gultekin is in complete agreement with the Arabian Tongue Newsletter (2023) indicates that despite the challenges, Abu Bakr was able to unify the Muslim community and establish the foundation for a strong and stable Islamic state.

Basing on this above point Warraq stresses that in Nigeria, Boko Haram has created divisions within the Muslim community. Thi is an Islamic sect that believes politics in northern Nigeria is under the control of a group of corrupt, false Muslims. It wants to wage a war against them, and the Federal Republic of Nigeria generally, to create a pure Islamic state ruled by sharia law. Thus, Muslim leaders often invoke the example of Abu Bakr to emphasize the importance of unity and fighting against groups seen as threats to Islamic cohesion and promote democracy (Warraq, 2017: 16-17).

In their article- *thinking Islamist Politics in North Africa, (2021)*, Cimini & Alonso expound that in Morocco the Party of justice and Development (PJD) has increasingly adapted an internationally

contemporary politics legitimized rhetoric based on the transparency and democratization of internal operating procedures to face accusations of connivance with radicals and of having a hidden agenda. While in Tunisia, the protest wave has given way to democratic transitions (Cimini & Alonso 2021: 125)

This is impacting on the modern leaders of Islamic political parties , especially in North African nations like Tunisia and Morocco, where Islamists have been integrated into democratic systems, may draw on Abu Bakr's model to maintain unity among political crisis or transitions. Abu Bakr's emphasis on community consultation is also reflected in these modern contexts, where Islamists engage in democratic processes.

Secondly, Umar's leadership, marked by justice, governance and expansion, profoundly influences modern Islamic political thought, particularly regarding state-building and governance.

Guraya says that the available historical material and the latest research findings show that Umar as a Caliph wrote about 425 letters to his provincial Governors, Judges, Army commanders, notables of big cities, leaders of different regions and some of them to the Roman Emperor. They discuss more important topics which are judicial, legal, administrative, moral and political and contain a variety of elaborate discussions. His administrative reforms and focus on justice serve as models for modern Islamic leaders who seek to balance religious principles with effective government in Africa (Guraya, 1972:150).

Khalid and Arif highlight that under the guidance of Caliph Umar, he transformed the administrative landscape successfully and efficiently. To govern both efficiently and professionally, it separates judicial and administrative tasks. The Caliphate appoints special judges (qadi) to perform judicial tasks separate and apart from those of provincial and territory governors. The qadi is supervised by the caliphate. The division of powers is beneficial to judicial administration and the proper functioning of the courts' administrative management. Umar's concept is one of the best, and the separation of powers enables rulers and citizens to use power and authority appropriately (Khalid & Arif, 2021).

Hassan explains that in countries like Sudan, after the ousting of authoritarian regimes, Islamic leaders reference Umar's administrative efficiency and emphasis on justice to rebuild governance

systems. His establishment of the bureaucratic register and legal reforms inspire modern Islamic governance models (Hassan, 2022).

The writing of Meddeb shows that for Ennahda leaders, the decision to distance the movement from its ideological principles was guided by pragmatism and transactional political calculations. Both secularists and Islamists had to make concessions to guarantee and consolidate their participation in Tunisian democracy (Meddeb, 2029:7). It is in complete agreement with the article of Carthy saying that the Ennahda Movement, responded to new political opportunities that opened up after the 2011 Arab rebellions. Thus, Ennahda chose to make a hard to reverse commitment to politicization in the pursuit of electoral legitimacy, as protection from repression, and for fear of marginalization (Carthy, 2018:365).

Thus, the Ennahda Party in Tunisia, which played a major role in the country's democratic transition, often invokes Umar's principles of justice and governance to justify its participation in democratic politics. Umar's idea of consultation aligns with Ennahda's embrace of pluralism and political compromise.

Abbasi confirms that Umar was the one who introduced Muslim *Ummah* with the concept of governance with justice and put forward the philosophy of a better welfare state of Islam. During his administration, there has never been a violation of the law. It was available to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. In other words, there was no distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims within the legal system. In his court, high and low, rich and poor, owner and slave, and friend and stranger were all treated equally. In Northern Nigeria, where *Sharia* law is implemented in some states, leaders often refer to Umar's principles of justice and public accountability. His focus on social justice resonates in these regions, particularly in the fair treatment of members of society under Islamic law (Abbasi, 2022).

Pay says that indeed, Umar added his son Abdullah as the seventh member of the council that elected 'Uthman, in order to prevent any block in case of equality of votes. Nevertheless, Abdullah solely had a right of vote in case of equality. Therefore, Umar did not grant his son the right to stand for election, even though he was capable for caliphate, so as not to become the person to pave for sultanate (Pay, 2015:110).

Thirdly, according to Islamiccenter (2014) Uthman's leadership was characterized by centralization of power and standardization of religious texts (the Quran) as noted above.

Najeebabadi explains that when Uthman was selected and installed as the Caliph of Islam, the governors who were appointed by Umar were looking after the affairs of the provinces and territories under the Muslim rule. He replaced some of the governors by others as the part of the administration. He held consultations with his companions. This continues to influence the role of Islamic leaders and governments today, especially regarding the centralization of religious authority and the preservation of the religious orthodoxy (Najeebabadi, 1922:384) .

Moreover, Al-Anani says that in Egypt, Al-Azhar and Dar Al-Ifta are the oldest important religious institutions, which have an impact on political life. The relationship between these institutions and the state has always been a subject of conflicts, tensions, and troubles. Thus, the state constantly attempts to maintain control over these institutions in order to legitimize its policies and to deprive its political adversaries, particularly Islamists, from using religion in the political arena (Al-Anani, 2021).

Regarding to this point, in Egypt and Algeria , where governments have sought to control religious institutions and Islamic leadership to maintain political stability, Uthman's legacy of centralizing religious and political authority is reflected. Therefore, modern states may attempt to standardize religious education and sermons to align with the state's political goals, much like Uthman's effort to standardize the Quran.

According to Najeebabadi (1922:388) in his reign Uthman sent his brother Abudullah bin Sa'd to Egypt as Governor and head of the public treasury. This was caused accusations as it was confirmed by Rifai et al (2023) and Maqsood (2010) that Uthman's later reign, marked by accusations of nepotism. This is also resonates with contemporary African politics, where corruption and favoritism are key issues.

Lastly, Iqbal says that Ali valued consultation and fairness. This helped him to set up well the courts and administrative during his sovereignty. The reason why Ali was known for his strong sense of justice and his commitment to upholding moral integrity. He resisted corruption and nepotism, even when faces with powerful opposition and often stood against individuals who sought to misuse political power for personal gain (Iqbal, 2017).

In addition, Raihan illustrates that the letter of Caliph Ali to Malik highlights the centrality of justice and fairness in governance. He reminds Malik that he is ruling over people who have the



same rights as him and that they are deserving of kindness and justice governance. The letter also warns against discrimination based on race, ethnicity and religion. It reminds leaders of their accountability for their actions and need to treat all individuals with respect and equality. Thus, in the contemporary governance justice and fairness are fundamental principles necessary for effective and legitimate leadership. He adds that the concept of consultation in the letter of Caliph Ali to Malik al- Ashtar highlights the importance of seeking advice and guidance from others in decision-making and governance and need to listen carefully to different perspectives and opinions in order to arrive at the best outcome. In contemporary leadership, consultation is seen as a way of ensuring that decisions are informed and based on the needs and interests of the people (Raihan, 2020:19-20).

Ali's emphasis on justice resonates with modern islamic reform movements in africa that seek to address issues of corruption and bad governance. In countries like Sudan, Nigeria and Senegal , islamic leaders and movements advocating for political reform often invoke ali's example when pushing for accountability, transparency and justice in governance.

Islamic political leaders who seek to reform corrupt regimes often see Ali as a model for how to balance religious authority with a commitment to ethical governance. Raihan confirms that a ruler who is fair and moral will gain respect and loyalty of the people (Raihan, 2020:23). This will help the ruler to form a better leadership team and create a stable and prosperous society. In the modern context, if leaders act unethically, it can lead to severe consequences such as loss of public trust, legal issues, and harm to the organization's reputation. But the Ali's leadership provides a moral framework for standing against corrupt practices, even when politically costly, as seen in some African states struggling with corruption and mismanagement.

During the leadership of Ali there was civil war in Muslim community as it was explained by Pay (2015: 109-110) that Ali's caliphate was marked by civil strife, particularly during the first fitna (Islamic civil war). While Urban adds that in that time the party of Ali (Shi'a) began to develop its own religious traditions, practices and leadership. However, Ali struggled to maintain unity in the Muslim community, facing opposition from factions that ultimately led to internal conflicts. Thus, his patience and commitment to mediation and justice became defining features of his leadership (Urban, 2013:63). Pay says that Ali had to defer to caliphate so as to prevent further chaos in society. He demonstrated self-control by interacting respectfully with his political opponents by

choosing dialogue with them. Thus, Ali's ethical leadership and self-control have inspired Islamic leaders globally and contributed to a more equitable and peaceful society in some Muslim countries (Pay, 2015).

In some countries of Africa such as Libya, Mali and Somalia experienced the internal conflict and divisions. Alcaro shows that the three major effects have originated from the Libyan and Malian crises. First, is the greater porosity of borders due to the collapse of state authorities due to rebellion, and civil war. The second effect is the greater availability of weapons left unsecured in storage facilities in Libya. In addition, the third is greater mobility of militants, most notably Islamist radical committed to a jihadist ideology. He adds that the civil war in Libya resulted in massive outflows of both people and weapons from the country. As happened in Libya when state authority collapsed Mali's rebellion has resulted in further waves of internally displaced persons and people seeking refuge in neighboring countries (Alcaro, 2014: 17, 20, 22).

With regard to this point, the Islamic leaders in those countries often look to Ali's example of conflict resolution to resolve the conflict happened in their respective countries and mediating those who are in conflict. Therefore, contemporary scholars and leaders use the leadership of Ali during the civil war as a model for mediating between conflicting Islamic movements and secular governments.

In addition, when tensions occur within the Muslim community, Ali's role as a key figure in Shi'a Islam provides both inspiration and point of contention. The Muslim leaders should learn from the leadership of Ali to manage and transform that conflict.

Nnamani et al expound that Iran has been at the head providing support to the family of the Islamic Movement of Nigeria (IMN) leader Sheik el Zakzaky and campaigning for his release from detention after several court injunctions to that effect. Recently, Iran's Attorney General Mohammad Jafar Montazeri transmitted a letter to the Nigerian judicial authorities criticizing Buhari's government for its draconian on el-Zakzaky's matter. The Iranian government's actions seem to have encouraged the IMN members to continue fighting for the release of their leader and freedom of their other members. However, there are fears that Nigeria's misguided and heavy-handed approach towards the Shia group could degenerate into large-scale insurgency and possibly trigger a proxy war (Nnamani et al, 2021:7).

Basing on the above views, in countries like Nigeria, where there is a history of tension between Sunni and Shi'a communities, Shi'a groups in Nigeria, such as the Islamic movement in Nigeria (IMN) led by Sheikh Ibrahim; Zakzaky, view Ali as a symbol of resistance to injustice and marginalization. This has shaped their political activism and demands fair treatment by the Nigerian state, which often oppresses them.

According to Iqbal (2017:11,13) the division of Sunni and Shia that happened after the death of the Prophet Muhammad in the Muslim world on the question of leadership has led to civil war and have the political implications. The two sides hated each other and the permanent division created forever since. Their hatred for centuries explain their violence of today, again on the same question-leadership of the Islamic World and influence over the Muslim population. Today's divide between Muslim Sunni and Shia is not on religion, rather, division by politics. Iqbal adds that Sunni and Shia division have had a deep impact on spread of violence in Libya and Sudan and in other places.

Nnamani et al state that the historical, ideology and theological differences between Sunni and Shia sects provided the basis for the initial fights, which existed among the Muslim community. As a country with a growing Muslim population, Nigeria has over the years, had its fair share of sectarian infighting between the Shia minority and Sunni majority. While it is believed that Sunni adherents control the key institutions of the state, there are institutions in public domain that the majority sect in Nigeria leverages its control of coercive apparatus on the state to repress or perpetrate acts of violence against the Shia followers (Nnamani et al, 2021:4).

Thus, in current time Ali's leadership is still relevant in areas where the Sunni and Shi'a divide has political implications. For example, as we have noted above in Nigeria, Sunni and Shi's groups occasionally clash, and the legacy of Ali as a symbol of Shi'a resistance continues to fuel political and religious activism within these communities.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this article has carried out the three main objectives: examining the historical development of the four Caliphs, evaluating the leadership styles of the four first Caliphs and assessing the impact of the leadership style of the four Caliphates on the politics of Islam in the contemporary time, especially, in the African context.

With regard to the historical development of the first four Caliphs, it is clear that they had shown courage and commitment to expand Islamic empire, establishing strong state in the region and promote social-economic, religious and political structures. These qualities, behaviours, and initiatives of four first Caliphs have impacted the leadership styles on the politics of Islam in the contemporary time. This was observed in the ways of Islamic communities continue to be developed in power, wealth and protection of their integrity. In addition, the way of electing the leader of Muslim community is another way showing that the current politics of Islam adopts the leadership styles of the four first Caliphs. Moreover, it is very necessary to note that the last version of the present Qur'an was produced during the time of four first Caliphs as well as the extant Muslim calendar.

Concerning the evaluation of the leadership styles of the four first Caliphs, the study stressed the adaptation and synthesis, conventional, and fundamental leadership styles. These leadership styles were promoted by the four first Caliphs to maintain the unity and development of Muslim community in their time. Therefore, they promoted democracy, especially during the elections of Caliphs. The article also shows a connection between the leadership styles of the first four Caliphs and the leadership styles such as autocratic or authoritarian, democratic or participative and delegating.

About the assessment of the impact of the leadership style of the four Caliphates on the politics of Islam in the contemporary time. In one hand, it is evident that the leadership styles of four first Caliphs are still influencing the politics of Islam in the current time. Some of Islamic leaders are conservative. They do not accept changes and the new things. Their spirit is to maintain what they had in traditional period. Some Islamic countries in Africa often want to impose and enforce *Sharia*. This often lead to the conflict between Muslims and Christians and handicap Christian Muslim relations. The present violent conflict in the Middle East and in some Islamic countries in Africa is linked to the historical legacy of the politics of the four first Caliphs. There is a need of researchers to bridge the gaps by showing the principles of good governance which promotes principles of conflict management within the people. On the other hand, the leadership styles of Caliphs influenced positive impact in political structures, religious and administrative aspects in African countries. This happened to the Middle East and African Muslim leaders who followed the qualities of Caliphs in their leadership and accept adaptation style in their leadership.

This article has recommendations for the future research. Violent conflict causes injustice and inequality within the Muslim communities, which are big problems and are continuing to be big problems to the society, here is a suggestion for further research:

Why the violent conflict, injustice and inequality among the Muslim community members continue to increase while there are punishments for guilty persons and the Qur'an prohibited them. How can good leadership be achieved?

In addition, scholars should continue to explore the positive impact on the current Islamic leadership taken from the Caliphate period. They should consider how the historical legacy of caliphs could continue to shape the modern attitudes of leaders. This methodology will contribute a lot in promoting good leadership and politics in contemporary Muslim communities.

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