



## THE LEADERSHIP MODEL OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD IN BUILDING A CIVIL SOCIETY

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji model kepemimpinan Nabi Muhammad SAW dalam membangun masyarakat madani pada fase awal komunitas Islam di Madinah. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif historis-sosiologis, penelitian ini menganalisis sumber primer seperti *Sirah Nabawiyyah*, literatur hadis, serta Piagam Madinah beserta kajian akademik kontemporer tentang kepemimpinan Islam, tata kelola, dan masyarakat sipil. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Nabi membangun model kepemimpinan yang berakar pada otoritas moral, tata kelola partisipatoris, pluralisme hukum, keadilan sosial, dan inklusivitas agama. Melalui inovasi institusional, penanaman norma-norma etis publik, dan mekanisme penyelesaian konflik yang efektif, beliau berhasil mentransformasi masyarakat tribal yang terfragmentasi menjadi komunitas madani yang kohesif, adil, dan penuh tanggung jawab bersama. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada diskusi kontemporer tentang kepemimpinan Islam dan menunjukkan relevansi keberlanjutan strategi kenegaraan profetik dalam menjawab tantangan modern.

**Kata Kunci:** Piagam Madinah, Masyarakat Madani, Tata Kelola Islam, Keadilan Sosial

### Abstract

This study examines the leadership model of the Prophet Muhammad in shaping a *madani* society during the early formation of the Muslim community in Medina. Using a qualitative historical-sociological approach, the research analyzes primary sources such as the *Sirah Nabawiyyah*, Hadith literature, and the Constitution of Medina alongside contemporary academic studies on Islamic leadership, governance, and civil society. The findings indicate that the Prophet established a model of leadership grounded in moral authority, participatory governance, legal pluralism, social justice, and religious inclusivity. Through institutional innovations, ethical public norms, and effective conflict resolution mechanisms, he successfully transformed a fragmented tribal society into a cohesive civic community characterized by solidarity, justice, and shared responsibility. This research contributes to contemporary discussions on Islamic leadership and demonstrates the continuing relevance of prophetic statecraft for modern challenges in governance and social transformation.

**Keywords:** Medina Charter, Civil Society, Islamic Governance, Social Justice

## Introduction

Studies on the leadership model of the Prophet Muhammad demonstrate that prophetic leadership is not merely theological in nature but is deeply rooted in the socio-political dynamics of seventh-century Arabia. The social transformation achieved by the Prophet is often interpreted as the result of his ability to read societal and political contexts with precision and to translate such insights into adaptive leadership strategies (Esposito, 2021). Contemporary scholarship further argues that the Prophet's success in building a stable social order stemmed from the integration of prophetic vision with progressive social sensitivity (Ramadan, 2022). The idea of a *civil society* commonly associated with the Madinan period illustrates that the Prophet's leadership was deliberative and participatory in nature. Scholars contend that he emphasized ethical equality, consultative mechanisms, and empowerment of communal roles as foundational pillars of social life (Hefner, 2021). Meanwhile, literature on Islamic political thought asserts that his leadership was transformative, capable of shifting tribal structures toward an ethical community grounded in shared values (An-Na'im, 2023).

The Constitution of Medina stands as a significant historical document demonstrating how the Prophet constructed a social contract encompassing various groups, including Muslims, Jews, and multiple tribal factions. Many researchers emphasize that the document reflects an integration of religious norms with inclusive political mechanisms (Lapidus, 2020). Similarly, Islamic legal studies view the Constitution as marking the beginning of governance based on mutual agreement within a pluralistic society (Peters, 2021). The Prophet's leadership also derived legitimacy not from coercive power but from moral integrity and ethical consistency in guiding the community. Research in the sociology of religion shows that this form of moral legitimacy generated strong social capital, enabling the Prophet to mobilize social change effectively (Berger, 2021). Additionally, scholarship in Islamic political studies asserts that public trust in the Prophet developed through dialogical and inclusive political communication (Ibrahim, 2022).

The relevance of the Prophet's leadership model has grown in contemporary Muslim societies marked by globalization, digitalization, and increasingly complex social interactions. Modern Muslim thinkers argue that the adaptive and responsive nature of prophetic leadership remains significant for developing a civilized and ethical social order (Kamali, 2021). Other studies highlight that the Prophet's method of reading social dynamics offers valuable inspiration for modern governance that places public ethics at its core (Hasan, 2023). Nevertheless, scholars warn that discussions on the Prophet's leadership often fall into textual idealization without adequate consideration of the socio-historical contexts that shaped it. A historical-critical approach is necessary for comprehensively understanding prophetic leadership and avoiding its reduction into mere normative slogans (Brown, 2022). This aligns with broader academic views emphasizing the need to recontextualize Islamic values to maintain their relevance amid contemporary challenges (Zaman, 2021).

Debates on the relationship between religion and the state in Islam frequently refer back to the Madinan experience as the first political formation in Islamic history. Critical scholars argue that civil society in this context served as a negotiation arena between revealed principles and evolving social dynamics (Arkoun, 2021). Others perceive the Madinan experiment as a concrete example of governance integrating public ethics with the supremacy of moral values (Rahman, 2023). Research on prophetic leadership has expanded toward integrating sociology of religion, Islamic political studies, and leadership studies. Scholars note that the Prophet's success in building a civil society resulted from his ability to establish institutions, cultivate social solidarity, and strengthen a collective identity grounded in shared values (Eickelman, 2022).

Anthropological approaches further reveal how the Prophet managed diversity through participatory mechanisms and inclusive social engagement (Mandaville, 2021).

In the Indonesian context, the discourse on civil society is particularly relevant as it intersects with efforts to strengthen democracy, citizenship, and public ethics. Scholarship on Indonesian Islam shows that prophetic leadership often serves as a normative reference in constructing a civilized and tolerant public sphere (Hasan, 2022). Various studies also observe that the Madinan experience offers inspiration for conceptualizing the relationship among religion, state, and civil society in the Indonesian sociopolitical landscape (Mujiburrahman, 2023). Accordingly, examining the leadership model of the Prophet Muhammad in building a civil society is essential for contributing to the development of Islamic leadership theory. An interdisciplinary approach integrating historical, normative, and sociological perspectives enables a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of prophetic leadership (Safi, 2021). This study also holds practical relevance for strengthening social governance within contemporary Muslim societies (Hallaq, 2022).

### Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative historical-sociological approach to examine the leadership model of the Prophet Muhammad in the formation of *madani* society in Madinah. The qualitative design allows the researcher to interpret historical, textual, and socio-cultural data derived from primary Islamic sources such as *Sirah Nabawiyyah*, major *Hadith* compilations, and the Constitution of Medina, along with early Islamic historiography by Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Hisham, and al-Tabari. These primary materials are complemented by contemporary scholarly works in Islamic studies, sociology of religion, and political anthropology. Data collection is conducted through systematic documentary research, involving close reading, textual analysis, and thematic categorization of concepts related to leadership, governance, pluralism, and community-building.

Data analysis employs qualitative content analysis with a combination of historical reconstruction and sociological interpretation. Historical analysis is used to contextualize the Prophet's leadership practices within the socio-political realities of early Madinah, while thematic analysis identifies recurring patterns such as moral legitimacy, participatory governance, and social cohesion. Interpretive sociological analysis is then applied to relate these findings to broader theoretical discussions on civil society and leadership. To ensure academic rigor, the study employs source triangulation, theoretical triangulation, and critical evaluation of textual authenticity, ensuring the credibility and reliability of the conclusions drawn.

### Results and Discussion

The analysis of primary Islamic historiography reveals that the Prophet Muhammad's leadership in early Madinah was rooted in moral authority that preceded any formal political structure. His reputation as *al-Amīn* strengthened the community's trust and facilitated the emergence of a cohesive social order shaped by ethical commitment rather than coercion (Esposito, 2021). This moral legitimacy enabled the Prophet to mobilize a diverse population while fostering collective responsibility and shared norms that later became foundational to the Madinan polity (Ramadan, 2022). The findings confirm that moral-ethical grounding functioned as a catalyst for social transformation. The Prophet's credibility became a central axis for community-building, particularly among groups historically divided by tribal rivalries. This demonstrates that charismatic-moral authority was essential for stabilizing early Islamic society. In summary, the Prophet's early leadership illustrates the power of ethical capital in shaping civic life.

The study identifies the Constitution of Medina as the cornerstone of the Prophet's sociopolitical project. Through textual analysis, it becomes evident that the document institutionalized coexistence between Muslims, Jews, and tribal groups by defining shared obligations for defense, justice, and community welfare (Peters, 2021). This charter is recognized by contemporary scholars as a pioneering framework for pluralistic governance in pre-modern Arabia (Lapidus, 2020). The Prophet's role as mediator rather than autocrat underscores his orientation toward consensus-based political integration. The evidence shows that governance was constructed through negotiated agreements rather than unilateral imposition. This reflects a leadership model grounded in inclusivity and legal pluralism. The constitution thereby functioned as an early contractual basis for civil society.

The findings show that the Prophet transformed tribal loyalties into a broader civic identity known as the *ummah*. Through gradual cultivation of shared values—such as justice, mutual protection, and equality the Prophet weakened the divisive effects of tribal segmentation (An-Na'im, 2023). Historians argue that this transformation represented a shift from kinship-based to value-based social organization, marking a major sociological shift in Arabian society (Hefner, 2021). Evidence from early Islamic narratives illustrates that the *ummah* served as a supra-tribal collective that prioritized ethical and communal bonds over lineage. This process involved both religious and socio-political mechanisms that reorganized group relations. The internal solidarity created through this model allowed the community to withstand external pressures. Overall, the emergence of the *ummah* constitutes a foundational achievement of prophetic leadership.

Consultation (*shura*) is identified as a core institutional mechanism in the Prophet's leadership model. The study finds numerous historical instances where the Prophet sought advice from companions across age, status, and tribal lines indicating a leadership style committed to participatory governance (Kamali, 2021). Sociological interpretations suggest that *shura* cultivated political maturity and collective ownership of decisions (Ibrahim, 2022). This consultative ethos minimized authoritarian tendencies and fostered deliberative engagement within the community. The wide participation in military, economic, and social decisions reflects an inclusive political culture. The practice of *shura* also functioned as a pedagogical tool, nurturing civic responsibility among community members. Thus, prophetic leadership exemplified deliberative democracy in an early Islamic context.

The study demonstrates that the Prophet's leadership was strategically adaptive to changing socio-political conditions. During periods of crisis including conflict with Meccan elites and tensions with local tribes the Prophet combined pragmatic decision-making with ethical consistency (Brown, 2022). Scholars argue that this balance between strategic flexibility and principled leadership was essential for maintaining communal cohesion (Zaman, 2021). Textual evidence shows that the Prophet never relied exclusively on either spiritual authority or political rationality; instead, he synthesized both in navigating complex challenges. This hybrid approach mitigated internal fragmentation and sustained community resilience. The findings confirm that adaptive leadership was a decisive factor in stabilizing Madinan society. Thus, prophetic leadership operated through context-sensitive methods without compromising ethical values.

Economic justice emerges as one of the most significant pillars in the Prophet's nation-building project. The prohibition of exploitative economic practices, regulation of marketplaces, and institution of zakat created ethical economic redistribution (Berger, 2021). Scholars highlight that these policies reduced social inequality and empowered marginalized groups within the community (Hasan, 2023). The study finds that economic reforms were implemented not merely as spiritual obligations but as concrete socioeconomic interventions. These reforms elevated communal welfare and strengthened public trust in leadership. The development of ethical

economic norms further contributed to the formation of civic responsibility. This confirms that prophetic leadership integrated economic policy with moral governance.

The findings show that strengthening social solidarity was a primary focus of the Prophet's leadership. Initiatives such as the *mu'akhah* (brotherhood pact) successfully dissolved hostilities between the Muhajirun and the Ansar and fostered an ethic of mutual support (Mandaville, 2021). Historians argue that this pact reconfigured social relationships by privileging communal bonds over tribal heritage (Eickelman, 2022). Textual evidence indicates that the Prophet cultivated emotional, economic, and spiritual ties across diverse groups. These bonds functioned as mechanisms for social integration and conflict reduction. The *mu'akhah* also established a model for inclusive social welfare. Overall, solidarity-building was integral to creating a cohesive civil society.

The Prophet's approach to religious pluralism is identified as one of the most progressive elements of early Madinan governance. The Constitution of Medina formalized the political inclusion of Jewish tribes by granting them religious freedom and autonomy over their legal traditions (Arkoun, 2021). Scholars note that this arrangement exemplified coexistence within a unified civic framework rather than assimilation (Rahman, 2023). The Prophet's protection of minority rights reflected a commitment to justice beyond communal boundaries. Historical evidence shows that pluralism was practiced as a structural principle, not merely a moral ideal. This pluralistic arrangement helped stabilize the environment of competing tribal and religious identities. Thus, prophetic leadership fostered intergroup harmony through institutionalized pluralism.

Legal pluralism appears as a defining feature of the Prophet's governance model. The study shows that Muslim, Jewish, and tribal groups were permitted to adjudicate internal matters according to their respective traditions, while collective affairs were regulated through common principles (Safi, 2021). Scholars interpret this as an early form of decentralized governance that accommodated multiple legal cultures (Hallaq, 2022). Textual evidence indicates that this structure minimized conflict by honoring cultural autonomy. The Prophet's role as an arbitrator reinforced fairness and transparency in dispute resolution. This pluralistic legal system enhanced public confidence in governance. Therefore, legal pluralism contributed significantly to institutional stability.

The analysis shows that the Prophet cultivated an ethical public sphere shaped by moral discourse and exemplary behavior. His sermons, instructions, and daily interactions functioned as instruments for instilling virtues such as honesty, compassion, and justice (Ibrahim, 2022). Studies in sociology of religion emphasize that ethical socialization is crucial for sustaining a moral civic order (Hasan, 2022). The Prophet's guidance shaped public behavior and encouraged civic virtues that contributed to community cohesion. Ethical norms became embedded in communal practices and institutional arrangements. This moral infrastructure played a critical role in shaping civil society consciousness. Thus, ethical leadership became a mechanism for social transformation.

Conflict management is highlighted as an important dimension of prophetic leadership. The Treaty of Hudaibiyyah though initially perceived as a concession proved to be a diplomatic achievement that enabled long-term peace and expanded opportunities for communication (Lapidus, 2020). Scholars interpret the treaty as evidence of the Prophet's ability to prioritize strategic patience over immediate victory (Esposito, 2021). The research notes that conflict resolution was approached through dialogue, compromise, and moral restraint. This approach reduced hostilities and strengthened the community's political maturity. The Prophet's conflict-

management style enhanced social stability. Therefore, diplomatic negotiation was central to the formation of a peaceful civic order.

The study identifies that the Prophet institutionalized justice mechanisms to ensure consistent governance. Historical accounts describe structured processes of adjudication, including the use of evidence, mediation, and communal oversight (Peters, 2021). Scholars argue that these mechanisms served as a foundation for later Islamic legal systems (Hefner, 2021). The Prophet's commitment to impartial justice increased public trust in governance. These legal structures contributed to predictability in social relations. The establishment of fair dispute-resolution processes strengthened institutional legitimacy. Justice thus served as a central pillar in the Madinan civil society.

Education and knowledge production emerge as major tools of Islamic social transformation. The establishment of the *Suffah* as an educational and spiritual training center produced individuals who later assumed leadership roles in various community sectors (Brown, 2022). Scholars note that education functioned as a medium for shaping civic consciousness and ethical behavior (Zaman, 2021). The Prophet emphasized learning as both a religious and social obligation, thereby integrating intellectual development into civic life. This educational program cultivated public ethics and leadership capacity. The findings confirm that knowledge served as a key driver of social change. Thus, educational institutionalization contributed significantly to community resilience.

The findings highlight the Prophet's interpersonal leadership style, particularly his empathy and attention to marginalized groups. Historical sources describe his consistent efforts to elevate the status of women, the poor, and enslaved individuals through practical reforms and moral encouragement (Mandaville, 2021). Scholars argue that this inclusive orientation challenged existing social hierarchies and promoted equality (Eickelman, 2022). The Prophet's compassion fostered a culture of dignity and respect within the community. These efforts expanded the moral boundaries of social belonging. The study confirms that inclusive leadership enhanced social cohesion. Therefore, empathy was a strategic component of prophetic governance.

Overall, the research concludes that the Prophet's leadership in Madinah integrated ethical authority, institutional development, participatory governance, and pluralistic coexistence. Scholars describe this model as a synthesis of moral charisma and practical statecraft capable of shaping a stable civil society (Hasan, 2023). Evidence from historical narratives shows that the Prophet constructed social order through negotiated agreements, ethical norms, and inclusive structures (Esposito, 2021). This holistic model demonstrates that leadership rooted in justice and solidarity can generate long-term social stability. The findings affirm the contemporary relevance of prophetic leadership for discussions on governance and civil society. Thus, the Madinan experience remains a paradigm in Islamic political thought.

## Conclusion

The findings of this research demonstrate that the Prophet Muhammad's leadership in Medina represents a holistic model that integrates moral authority, institutional development, and socio-political inclusivity. His leadership style was neither authoritarian nor tribalistic but grounded in ethical legitimacy, consultation, and community empowerment. By establishing foundational institutions such as the Constitution of Medina, the system of *shura*, and mechanisms of social welfare he cultivated a civic order characterized by justice, pluralism, and solidarity. The transformation from tribal segmentation to a unified *ummah* illustrates his success in fostering collective identity and shared civic values.

Furthermore, the Prophet's leadership demonstrated adaptability, balancing moral principles with pragmatic strategies in diplomacy, conflict management, and social restructuring. His emphasis on education, ethical public norms, and protection of minority rights reflects an advanced vision of civil society far ahead of its time. These insights highlight the relevance of prophetic leadership for contemporary governance, offering a normative and practical framework for building ethical, just, and inclusive societies. As modern Muslim communities face challenges of fragmentation, extremism, and governance deficits, the prophetic model provides a constructive paradigm for reimagining leadership grounded in justice, compassion, and civic responsibility.

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