

**Contextualisation and Conceptualisation in a multifarious context: Mixed models of leadership**

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## Abstract

*The purpose of this empirical research is to address the nature of leadership in multifarious and complicated multicultural context. The context is the Victorian entity within the Islamic setting in Australia. The researcher utilized qualitative analysis of mainly qualitative data. The qualitative analysis entails the combination of partially grounded theory and reflexive interpretation.*

*The analysis point out clearly to the complexity of this setting. The analysis as well point out clearly to enigmatic leadership and magnanimous leadership. Enigmatic leadership stems from the conceptualization of religion, conceptualization of self and Conceptualization of Intramural ethnic based identity. Magnanimous leadership stems from the broader contextualization of religion, contextualization of self and contextualization of Human values.*

### **1 Why studying leadership in Islamic organizations operating in a Western context?**

Parry (2001) explained leadership as a social process and indicated that the leadership phenomenon cannot be generalised between cultures or across societies. Parry (2001) went a head to say that universal explanations of culture are questionable and only through significant examination of a culture, scholars could explain leadership behaviours. Australia is a host of many different people, religions, and cultures. Also Australia is residence to Muslims who were born and raised in many countries, including Australia (Faris and parry, 2011). Faris and parry (2011) argue that not only does Islam have its own conceptions of leadership, but the mainstream cultures of those countries have many different expectations about how leadership phenomenon should be enacted.

Muslims in Australia plays an important part as one of the colourful cultural formulation of the Australian society. Undoubtedly there is a lack of research on leadership in Australia (Parry 1998). Ali (2005) contended that most of the current research on Islamic organisations is in its infancy. This infancy proved to be the case as well for the research on leadership in the Islamic organizations

around the globe – particularly the Australian Islamic organizations. With a few notable exceptions, leadership scholars have largely eschewed the distinctive leadership dynamics within Islamic groups and organisations. Apart from a handful of general works, little has been written about the latter. Beekun and Badawi (1999); Beekun and Badawi (2004) wrote about leadership process in Islam and leadership from an Islamic perspective. Two other dissertations concerning leadership in American Islamic schools from an educational perspective have been written recently (Aabed, 2006; Elsegeiny, 2005). So an understanding of leadership of and within Muslim organisations in societies that are majority non-Muslim (as well as in Muslim societies) is much needed.

## **2 Leadership through the lenses of Westerners and otherness**

Stogdill (1974:3) defined leadership as “the process of influencing the work of an organization towards goal setting and goal achievement”. Bass (1985) brought the theory of transformational leadership to light and contended that transformational leadership moves followers to higher levels of motivation and commitment and at later stage Bass and Avolio (1990) developed indicators for transformational leadership through the following factors: first: Idealized influence with a strong overlap with the notion of ‘charisma’. Second: Inspirational motivation which is an ability to enthusiastically convey the achievability of a vision. Third: Intellectual stimulation that questioning the status quo and thinking ‘outside the square’. Forth: Individualized consideration which concentrates on developing the potential of followers. Yukl and Van Fleet (1992) see that the best definition of leadership usually causes confusion and animosity rather than providing new insights into the nature of the process. They define it as a process that influences the task objectives and strategies, maintenance, identification, and culture of a group or people in the organization. Rost (1993) explained leadership as an influence involvement of leaders and followers to achieve positive change through mutual purposes. Burns (2003) highlights leadership as the source of initiatives that bring creative acts among potential followers.

In defining leadership in Islam, Beekun and Badawi (1999) contended that it is to set a clear role model approach for followers to emulate as the prophet of Islam has modeled the way for Muslim leaders and followers for all times.

Abbas Ali (2005:146) sees leadership in Islam from different angle:

Muslim perspectives on leadership and leaders have always been linked to the nature of followers. Indeed, according to a Muslim saying; the leader reflects the quality of his people. That is, in a situation where followers are educated and responsible, the leader will be receptive and participative. But in a situation where followers are dependent, avoid initiative and responsibility, the leader has to be decisive and in control.

Leadership in Islam is considered as a trust and a responsibility. A leader is required to meet his obligations to God, as well as to discharge his duties towards his followers to the best of his abilities (Khan, 2007).

### **3 Historical background of Muslims in Australia**

Muslim contact with Australia has a history that pre-dates European settlement. At the very earliest, parts of the northern coast of Australia can be seen in the maps of ninth and tenth century Muslim cartographers (Akbarzadeh et al., 2009). Muslim migration to Australia has been traced as far back as the 16th and 17th centuries (DIAC, 2009). The Macassans, an ethnic group of fisher folk from eastern Indonesia, began visiting the northern shores of Australia in the sixteenth century (Kabir, 2005). The remains of settlements and cemeteries of the sixteenth century Macassans Muslim fishermen have been discovered on the southern coast of the continent, and in Aboriginal settlements in northern Australia (Saeed, 2004). The first 'Ghantown' mosque was built in 1889 in Broken Hill in outback New South Wales and the building survives today as a museum occupied by the Broken Hill Historic Society (Akbarzadeh, 2001).

Early Australian settlers, under the dominion of the British Empire, used many Muslim people from the islands, territories, and overseas as slaves and navigators (Cleland, 2002). Joseph

Bruce brought out eighteen of the first Afghans, who arrived in South Australia in 1838 (Moretti, 2002). In 1866 Samuel Stuckey went to Karachi to bring camels to Australia, He succeeded in importing more than a hundred camels and 31 Afghan cameleers as well. In the 1860s, some 3000 camel drivers - with camels - came to Australia from Afghanistan and the Indian sub-continent (Jones, 2007; Moretti, 2002). Although these, and later, cameleers came from different ethnic groups and from vastly different places such as Baluchistan, Kashmir, Sind, Egypt, Persia, Turkey and Punjab, they were known collectively as Afghans, Later they came to be known as Ghans - a shorter form of the word 'Afghan' (Saeed, 2004).

#### 4 **Muslims in contemporary Australia**

The Australian government's implementation of the White Australia policy in the early twentieth century made it difficult for Muslims to come to Australia (Saeed, 2004). The end of World War II was the beginning of a real shift in Australian policy, and after 1945 there was a rising stream of migrants from a large number of Muslim countries (Cleland, 2002). From the 1970s onwards, the Australian government adopted a policy of 'multiculturalism' (Saeed, 2003), and Muslims from more than sixty different countries began to settle in Australia. The new arrivals came mostly from Turkey, Lebanon, Indonesia, Iran, Fiji, and Bosnia-Herzegovina (Akbarzadeh & Saeed, 2003). Quite a few came from other countries like Yugoslavia, Malaysia, Albania, Sudan, Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, Egypt, Syria, Pakistan and Singapore (Saeed, 2004). The immigrants from south-east Asia included a high proportion of professional people and skilled technicians, and there were also those who came for higher education and training (Saeed, 2004).

The Muslim population of Australia has been rising steadily over the years. Muslims have grown to 2.25% per cent of the total Australian population, with approximately 476,300 Muslims (ABS, 2012). Muslims have immigrated to Australia from more than 120 different countries (Saeed, 2004). Australian Muslims represent a mix of ethnic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds and the majority resides in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, and Western Australia. (Akbarzadeh & Smith, 2005).

## **5 Muslims' contribution to Australia**

In contemporary Australia, Muslims from all over the world enrich the country with multicultural diversity (Saeed, 2004). This diversity has enriched cultural and religious identity for Muslim immigrants within diverse groups settled through the continent's population. Muslim migrants who came from 120 different countries are culturally diverse through their backgrounds, values, and views which enriched the perceptions and the views of the Australian-born Muslims which in turn still contributing to an increasingly culturally diverse community. Data from this research showed that the Australian-born Muslims exposed to different immigrants views on social, cultural and political aspects that increased their level of awareness of otherness and lent them greater understanding and ability on intra and inter- contextualization levels.

Nowadays Muslim Australians are strongly involved in all facets of Australian life, including sport, the arts, fashion and politics, and many high-profile Muslim Australians making notable contributions to Australian society today (MIA,2012). Also Muslims have developed trade links between Australia and their countries of origin, particularly through the export of meat that has been slaughtered in a special way (Saeed, 2004). The higher education system has not been flourished as the recent time, thanks to tens of thousands of Muslim students from different Islamic countries throughout the world who are currently studying in Australia, and they add significantly to the advancement of the higher education system in this country.

## **6 The organizational context for Muslims in Australia**

There are many organisations representing the interests of Australian Muslims at local, regional and federal levels. These organisations represent community and special interest groups including women's groups, Human rights, professional groups, business leaders and educational institutions.

In this research, the main Muslim organisation under investigation is the Islamic council of Victoria (ICV). Whilst ICV is not living in a vacuum, the relation of ICV with the affiliation local societies and state members within the peak Muslim body the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC) will be under investigation.

AFIC is the national council and each state and territory also has a council. Each council represents local Islamic societies, who elect the membership of the state or territory council. There are nine Islamic councils at the federal, state and territory level, and one hundred local Islamic councils at the regional level. The Islamic councils are representative of the broader Muslim community, and deal with issues of daily life and religious significance as well as acting as lobby groups for issues affecting Australian Muslims (AFIC, 2011).

ICV is part of AFIC and the former president of the ICV Yasser Soliman acknowledged that:

ICV was a founding member of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils. ICV is an umbrella organisation made up of approximately 30 major self-governing Islamic organisations in Victoria and is widely representative of the strength and diversity of the Muslim community in this state. It is incorporated under the *Association of Incorporation Act* 1981. ICV represents the Victorian Muslim communities on many issues to State, Federal and Local governments and departments, various local and federal authorities, the media, authorities and other organisations. It liaises with federal government ministers, departments and representatives, and other regional representatives. ICV plays an active role as the Victorian Muslim's peak body for consultation, co-operation and advocacy with the State Government and its agencies. It has a further role in providing the Australian public with information about Islam and its beliefs, as well as the concerns of the Muslim community in promoting understanding and co-operation between all faiths and ethnic groups in combating all manifestations of racial and religious tolerance (VCAT, 2002:7-8).

Document analysis revealed the difficulties of ICV organizational journey. Since ICV inception the state organization faces internal and external challenges. Internal challenges from within the Islamic community in Victoria and from the Islamic federal body AFIC. The external challenge represented mainly by media and the racism attitudes towards Muslims in general. Internal challenges needs more investigation and will be highlighted further after data analysis. Although difficulties pose serious challenge to ICV, but the success of ICV is noticed among Muslims in Australia. The latest news of success is the appointment of three leading Muslim figures on the board of Victorian Multicultural commission (VMC). One of those appointees is the Ex ICV president. VMC is the state

Victorian body that promote full participation by Victoria's diverse communities in the social, cultural, economic and political life of Victoria (VMC, 2011). The achievement of ICV contradicts the failure of other Islamic State Councils peers and AFIC. The odd story of ICV brings serious questions about ICV success. Among the very important questions are the research questions for this research:

## **7 Research question**

**RQ1** How does the current Australian Islamic setting considered to be within the wider Australian context?

**RQ2** How does leadership perceived within the Australian Islamic setting, in particular the substantive settings of ICV, AFIC, and related state and local organizations and why?

## **8 Methodology**

A qualitative emergent research methodology was employed. Data were triangulated and analysis was qualitative which consists of partially grounded theory methods along with reflexive interpretations. I feel that grounded theory analysis could be dry from the language dynamics unless articulated with reflexive interpretation. The reflexive interpretation helps to close the gap created by explicit participants views with the articulated main themes emerged through concurrent analysis. Reflexivity engagement and subjective auto-ethnographic assessment could enhance the phenomena of leadership and organizing (Alvesson, 1996). Parry and Boyle (2008) encouraged researchers to be part of the personalized and emotive nature of reflexive approach to phenomena of leadership processes for a richer and more plausible interpretation of the emerging theory.

Answering the call of Glaser (1992) for the researcher to remain open to actual incidents, maximises my theoretical sensitivity of the phenomenon being researched taking into consideration that this research is not theory testing, but It is theory emergent research. I attempt to be as objective



as possible in my ethnographic assessment of leadership processes to lay down the worries of being a member of societal, organizational and ethnic culture. Following the notion of Denzin (1989) that interpretive research begins and ends with the biography and self of the researcher, the researcher acknowledges the importance of this notion in the current research, due to the substantive setting sensitivity of being one of a minority in a broader multicultural society. Brooks (1988) noted that the identification of researcher biases serves two purposes. First, the explicit acknowledgement of bias improves the potential effect of that bias. Second, declaring biases at the beginning of the research allows those examining the research to evaluate its objectivity.

### **8.1 Data Gathering.**

Thirty four personnel participated at four unstructured interviews and three focus group meetings which formed the basis of data gathering. Unstructured interviews help to conceptualise the in-depth discussion for the later stage of focus group meetings. Focus group meetings took place on two different states.

Document analysis was ongoing from the start point of this research and continued on later stages as the findings emerged. Data analysis was conducted concurrently with the gathering of data. Constant comparison method progressively enhanced the utility of the data.

Data triangulation of unstructured interviews, focus group meetings, observations and document analysis is helping to improve the validity of the findings. Merriam (2002) suggested that the best strategy to shore up the internal validity is by triangulation. Triangulation is usually considered to be at its best when a range of qualitative data and quantitative data are combined. Stronger data triangulation will also include quantitative data. The sources of data discussed below:

*8.1.1 Unstructured interviews.* Four people interviewed formally with minimal control, so that the widest possible interpretation can be placed on the subject by the interviewee, to enable all possible views, thoughts and experiences to flow without intervention. Unstructured interviews are mostly used in anthropological research where the interviewees have the freedom to tell their stories

in their own way. At this research the first four unstructured interviews helps to probe the main themes to be further investigated at the focus group meetings.

A key informant assisted with access to these participants. The key informant helped to ensure that rich data were obtained. Interviews lasted for between one and three hours. Because all were willing and enthusiastic participants in the research, they were able to provide very rich data.

*8.1.2 Focus group.* Three focus group meetings took place in different cities around Australia and at different times. The first focus group included six women with different backgrounds and professions. The second focus group meeting included thirteen men and three women. The third focus group meeting consists of six men and three women. These colorful participants represent organizations for women affairs, human rights, state organizations, local organizations, business, and charitable organizations. The age span runs from the age of 20 to the age of 80 years old. Profession background entails Imams, academics, university students, doctors, entrepreneurs, voluntary workers, accountants, and business owners.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994:365) state that Merton et al. coined the term 'focus group' in 1956 to apply to a situation in which the interviewer asks group members very specific questions about a topic after significant findings has already been discovered. The empirical findings from unstructured interviews help me to ponder upon more specific questions for the focus group meetings.

Focus groups are appropriate to conduct for the current setting since it is an Islamic setting within a broader Australian society described by organizational vulnerability and ethnic minorities (Calderon, Baker & Wolf, 2000). Glesne and Peshkin (1992) suggest that group interviewing at times proves very useful for people who are reluctant to talk individually, but when they are in company with others they are emboldened to talk. One of the distinct features of focus-group interviews is its group dynamics; hence the type and range of data generated through the social interaction of the group are often deeper and richer than those obtained from one-to-one interviews (Thomas et al. 1995).

8.1.3 *Document analysis.* Document collection and analysis was undertaken in conjunction with the other data collection. The documents consisted of newsletters, mission statements, policy implementation memorandums, newspaper articles and other forms of news media.

8.1.4 *Observations.* Observation is grounded in direct experience. It is the most direct form of information gathering and enables the researcher to perceive interaction in real time. I attended five conferences ranging from youth forms to local conferences, and intellectual seminars. Data was written immediately after finishing each event.

8.1.5 *Analysis.* All conversations were recorded and transcribed, allowing me to take notes and guide the subject into areas in more depth or to related areas that appeared a priority to the subject. I reviewed memos and transcripts, to determine the themes that emerged from the data and to determine the direction of the next data gathering episode. Emerging themes were coded as categories. In the spirit of the grounded theory method, constant comparison means that each collection of data was coded and categorized before the next collection of data was gathered. From the very first unstructured interview, a narrative illustration was developed to reflect the essence of the interview. With each subsequent data collection event, emerging categories were compared and contrasted until a highest-order model emerged which reflected the phenomena at the highest level of abstraction. After each observation of each forum, the principal researcher summarized and reflected upon the field notes to find similarity or difference with the other data, and to determine concurrence with emerging core categories. In conjunction with the other data that were gathered, categories emerged and were saturated quickly. In particular, contextual complexity and its relationship with leadership were determined quickly.

NVivo 9 is qualitative analysis software which plays a very important role in easing the process of tracking data and builds a very strong concept models. We used the NVivo qualitative data programme to establish the validity of our assessment by using auto-coding tools. In the spirit of a critical realist approach to qualitative research (Kempster & Parry, 2011); emerging findings were communicated with respondents in the later stages of analysis to help determine their plausibility and

practical adequacy. Over three-quarters of those interviewed agreed that the findings are consistent with their respond.

## 9 Finding

There were two main findings from this research. The first finding was *the* multifarious and complicated *multicultural context*. *This complexity* has a large impact on organizational workability represented mainly by the effect on leadership. The second finding was the split of leadership into *enigmatic leadership and magnanimous leadership*. The emergent category of Multifarious and complicated multicultural context will be dealt with first, followed by the leadership split.

### 9.1 Multifarious and complicated multicultural context.

The first high-order category is Multifarious and complicated multicultural context. The multifarious and complicated context of the Islamic setting in Australia can be seen from two angles. The first angle is the Macro-context and the second angle is the micro context.

*9.1.1 The Macro-context.* The macro context at this research comprises two contexts the first one is Islam and the second is the Australian society. From the outset it is worth noting here that Islam is not a culture - it is a world religion of well over 1 billion diverse people with diverse cultures. Islam forms the basis of a world civilization, accommodating a great variety of local cultures (Tibi, 2001). Islam has a substantial connection with modern society and the policies which govern it. It is embedded in the Muslim's mind that Islam is well and truly the energizer of the human being at all times. Islam was established fourteen hundred years ago with ideas that are still more relevant today. Islam is a way of life, not just ideas from the past with no connection to the present age. Islam is a catalyst of life that ultimately transforms Ideas into a living reality and is an all-encompassing religion (Tayeb, 1997). Regardless of Islam's core monotheistic theology and practices, there is huge space for cultural expression. Muslims in Australia consist of communities spanning more than 60 nationalities, with a corresponding variety in language, customs and cultures. Notwithstanding this discussion,

Muslims do not live in a vacuum separated from their societal surroundings of the Australian broader society.

The Australian context plays a big part in the manifestation of leadership within this Victorian Islamic organisational setting. The significance of this macro-context emerged during the stage of focus group meeting held in Victoria. Most of the leader's figures that are now in charge of the ICV are the generation who exposed to both Islamic and Western values. This Australian multicultural context provides fertile ground for new-generation leaders in Victoria to flourish. In general Australian society exposes Muslims to Western values, and it also brings them into contact with Muslims from other ethnic backgrounds which give them rich experience in dealing with a great base of grassroots. The ICV leadership is among the new generation of Australian Muslims that seems to have most confidently embraced this cross-cultural experience of living in Australia. Data obtained shows that the current spectrum of Victorian Muslim community famous figures and Organizational leaders are active participants in the wider community and very well know professionals in their fields. Those personnel span from top executives to famous media presenters. While they are very active participants in the wider Australian society, they still hold the view that Islam has something distinctive to contribute to understandings of freedom, critical thinking, fair go, justice, morals and values.

*9.1.2 The Micro context.* The micro context represented by the ethnic cultures and the groups with different religious interpretation. Ethnic cultures came to Australia with immigrants who resided as groups in certain places some times, scattered places other times, and designated new places on several occasions. It is still noticeable in recent generations, that their cultural identity is formed through locally based social ethnic groups. Australian communities of Muslims often keep in close touch with the older generation based on an ethnic base. This ethnic base generates diversity of ethnic identities, ethnic cultures and even organization based on ethnicity.

It is clear that for Muslims in Australia, cultural or ethnic identity is much stronger than Islamic identity. Although they are articulate about preserving their own social life, traditions, politics

and language, these groups are seen to be firmly sticking to ethnic cultural issues rather than organizational platform. Unfortunately there is no real attempt to counter ethnocentric in cultures? The data obtained showed no effort to answer the question: Why should the first culture we learn be the last? Given that we are living in ethnically diverse and socially complex world.

One female senior leader said:

The Leaders assume that what works for their ethnic group should also work for all Muslims in Australia. This is not true! This kind of mentality is not well suited or applicable to the Australian context. If the current leaders have not diversify and adjust in being flexible to accommodate the other ethnic cultures and followers' norms and social relation in their constituent, the way ahead for Muslim organizations will be very difficult.

The second micro context represented by groups with different interpretation to Islam. These groups have established local organizations that mainly based on conservative rhetoric or cultural ethnicity. They cannot tolerate different opinions nor can they live among the already established organizations because they think high of themselves and down to others.

## **9.2 Enigmatic leadership and magnanimous leadership**

Faris and Parry (2011) identified three streams of organisational leadership in the Australian Islamic context: religious leadership, intellectual leadership, and organizational leadership. Data obtained from this research revealed the second higher-order category of magnanimous leadership and enigmatic leadership. Leadership at this substantive setting perceived to be mostly magnanimous leadership with enigmatic leadership represented at the local organizations and federal levels. The following discussion starts first with enigmatic leadership followed by magnanimous leadership.

*9.2.1 Enigmatic leadership.* Enigmatic leadership denotes the problematic leadership which indulge in leadership deficit and problematic processes. Enigmatic leadership manifested at the local and federal levels among the two streams of religious and organizational leadership. Through lengthy investigation and analysis I realized the building blocks of frustration with leadership. This frustration

doesn't come out of the blue, but it carries a lot of substance. Losing hope of leadership is the symptom but not the cause. The words of interviewees were taken very carefully and then analysed to capture the reality behind the image of zero leadership that instantly pops up in front of every interview. This image has much to do with processes going inside organizations. Processes like lack of accountability, communication, transparency, interaction, apathy, and last but not least trust. This type of leadership stems from the conceptualization of religion, conceptualization of self and the intramural ethnic based context. The aforementioned conceptualization stems mainly from the micro-context mentioned above. Figure 1 shows the effect of the micro-context on leadership.

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*First: the conceptualization of religion.* Higher objectives of Islam emphasis freedom, justice, equality, human rights, human dignity, human well-being, education, pluralism, accountability, transparency, and civil society not just for Muslims, but to all mankind. Auda (2007) made it very clear that the higher objectives of Islam emphasize the ethical and justice system. The latter adheres to the role of law, the role of people in selecting their political representative, consultative government and pluralism. This overriding goal rope up extensively with the western objectives and the universal objectives for humanity. Leadership at the local and federal levels does not reflect this reality. Instead, this research found that the leadership contradict the obvious foundation of the mutual similarities of both the Islamic and western objectives. The reasons behind this contradiction are multi faceted and paradoxical in nature. One of the reasons is a lack of knowledge about this important issue. The other reason is the thought these objectives are primarily western objectives that do pose conflict with Islam. The third point is the conservative tone of rhetoric could not be achieved with the promotion of such objectives. And the fourth point is the promotion of those objectives will question the legitimacy of this current leadership.

*Second: conceptualization of self.* The conceptualization of self at the Islamic setting entails ego, pride, personality, attributes, and noteworthiness. The individual who are in local or federal leadership position conceptualized self as ultimately superior to others. Superiority in terms of seeing

others as naïve and ignorant while the earlier is the knowledgeable and brilliant. This conceptualization creates an endless pattern of self-importance Vs negligence-others. The current conceptualization of self brings an explanation of the recycle leaders and long live leaders in formal positions who cannot imagine themselves to be other than leaders. The enigmatic leaders create a circle of people who legitimize things for them and keep them running in same positions year after year. Those enigmatic leaders like to keep people in a state of following without enhancing their capabilities to be leaders of the future. Those type of leaders set on self defining religion and ethnicity to continue capturing the helm at the current setting.

*Third: conceptualization of Intramural ethnic based identity.* Enigmatic leadership struggle for power in the current setting runs on the ground of conflict among ethnic groups. This struggle is rooted in national, ethnic, and sectarian assumptions. Each side in the conflict uses a variety of justifications in order to dictate their terms and place themselves in a superior position vis-à-vis the other. Each group justifications stem from a multi-dimensional perception of the quest for power. The ethnic narrative, sets on the basis of superiority of one ethnic race or background over others. One of the interviewee's confirms: the struggle for power among ethnic entities within Australian Muslims remains intoxicating. Each group tries to hold on power. They see this as a protective measure for their own interests. Some of these ethnic groups even will not allow any other group to enter the contest for elections by manipulating the process of elections. At the end of the day they succeeded till now to stop the logic flow of a transparent elevation of power.

The above statement confirmed that struggle for power among Islamic ethnic groups remains strong. It gets two different phases. The first one is relevant to the situation where the ethnic groups struggle for power legitimize to challenge the other ethnic groups hard hand grip of power and their discriminate practices. Secondly, it is sometimes divisive when the ethnic groups who struggle for power consider themselves the best on the helm and no one is up to the task other than them. They tend to disbelieve on power sharing arrangement, sharing the control of resources and the decision



making process. This is why their aggressively hold to power is very high which leads to enigmatic leading.

*9.2.2 Magnanimous leadership.* Magnanimous leadership in this research denotes the hard working, responsible, humble, sincere, achieving, trustworthy, sensible, and sensemaking leaders. Magnanimous leadership manifested at the state level of Victoria namely The Islamic council of Victoria ICV. The data obtained showed that the religious leadership, intellectual leadership, and organizational leadership of the state level of Victoria considered being in the category of magnanimous leadership. The combination of this effective leadership stems broadly from *the broader contextualization of religion, contextualization of self and contextualization of Human values.* The aforementioned contextualization's stems mainly from the macro-context mentioned above. Figure 2 shows the effect of the macro-context on leadership.

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*First: Broader contextualization of religion.* Contextualization at this research means accommodating eloquently both traditional Islam and the modern thinking. The participants of this research affirmed the notion that Islam is a way of life and considered to be an embedded perspective. The basic Islamic principles of leadership are also embedded in the minds and hearts of ICV Muslim leaders through their belief and affection for Islam. Leaders and followers at this setting is not an exception; they are all having strong relation with their religion and Islam is the driving force behind their life. Islam for people at this setting is their way of life and they live with it as they confronting their daily life. At the same time ICV leaders are embracing the Australian modern thinking and practicality that eloquently allowed them to contextualize Islamic issues within the Australian context and engage the wider community about the contribution of Islam and Muslims in Australia.

Commenting on a controversy comments fuelled by a very well known religious leaders back on 2007, a member of the executive of the Islamic Council of Victoria said:

With the previous controversy, the one a few months ago, late last year, the Islamic Council of Victoria took a very, very strong position on that and, obviously, condemned the comments, but called for his resignation then. So our position on that has been fairly clear for a very long time and I'm not sure there's much more we can say. He added that: There's no doubt they do a considerable amount of damage, and it's not a matter of my organisation as opposed to any other. There's Muslims all over Australia who are working very, very hard in interfaith and even just in communications with wider Australia to put out - I wouldn't say to put a favourable message or image of Muslims out there, but just to put a real one out there. I think that does get damaged very, very quickly when you have a senior figure, who says things that are controversial and occasionally divisive. It is very, very hard to come back from that. It takes years and years and years of work to build and it takes only fractions of seconds to destroy. He is sure that: the only thing we can do is try to place his comments in context. I think as long as we just contextualise these things and it's understood, then perhaps we can move on. It's where those sorts of things are not contextualised and we assume this is the equivalent of the Pope speaking that we run into some trouble (Moore, 2007:1-3)

During one interview at 2012 I asked a member of ICV executive committee about that incident, she recalls that:

One example where strong leadership was evidenced was when a famous religious figure made offensive comments in 2006 about women and a likened those who do not cover to pieces of meat. The ICV checked that he was not taken out of context and asked a number of individuals to verify these comments from the original speech that was given in Arabic. It was verified and ICV made a public stance asking that he step aside.

That was a courageous action from ICV leadership to call for that figure to step aside because it was the only call among the Islamic organization and that put ICV in confrontation with many in the Australian Islamic setting.

*Second: Contextualization of self.* The leaders at ICV look at the role of leadership differently. One leader explains “leadership essentially is not a desire, it is a huge responsibility”. He makes it very clear that “according to our traditional wisdom, the best of people who is the most beneficial to others”. He added “that is a huge statement”. Another member confirmed that “with the values and benefits of ICV, not many people want to be on the board, because they know it is all about sacrifice and commitment”. He elaborated “ICV means a lot of hard work, which is why not many individuals are prepared for it”. But he promises his followers to “build new leaders for the future through role modelling, social and organizational engagement”.

The above passage shows the contextualization of the self within the role of leadership. The self mostly do not involve in seeking ego or pride, nor does it stand still not performing. Data from this research shows that self at this context plays the role of hard servant leadership through Islamic self-examination upbringing and it is exposed to western leadership models as transformational leadership.

At the outset the framework of Islamic leadership represents a comprehensive view of onerous, responsibility and servant like. The concept of servant leader came out of the Islamic system, and leaders are servants of their people (Abed, 2006).

*Third: Contextualization of human values.* The focus group meetings point out clearly that the ICV leadership comprehend that Leadership in Islam attached to high moral standards and Islam has provided humanity with the highest possible standard of morals.

One overarching theme emerges from the latest set of interviews is that ICV leaders are taking initiative in presenting the higher objectives of Islam as an ethical system that resonates much with the Australian values. They are presenting the important role of the higher objectives of Islam in bridging the gap between Muslims and the broader community in Australia. By so doing they can moderate the effect of uncertainty and paradox upon their organizations, and reconcile with their followers on important internal issues that have negative effect on the organizations.

They take the right steps on arguing upon the common ground with the western objectives. Islam higher objectives are to establish Freedom, Justice, equality, human rights, well-being, education, pluralism, accountability and transparency. These objectives of Islam are in broad sense the same objectives of western nations including Australia. By advocating and emphasizing the importance of these objectives, Islamic organizations eventually can find itself as similar to the western system as any home grown organization operating in a welcome environment rather than conflicts the basics with the western societies.

## **10 Recommendations, Implications and future research**

This research contributes substantially to the knowledge of leadership in minority of non-dominant culture working within a dominant culture. Recommendations and implications to be given attention are as follows:

A key contributor to the well of Australian Muslim organizations is the minority of magnanimous leadership. To that end a substantial federal and state funding package should be provided to a range of Australian Islamic organisations to undertake leadership training which help in promoting magnanimous leadership. The second important issue is that this research found that insufficiently understanding of leadership healthy participation, responsibility, commitment to the contextualization of self, religion and values can result simply in leaders and followers replacing the latter issues with conflicting and selfish conceptualization of self, religion and values. This second point support the need for active participation of Australian Muslim leaders and followers alike in the whole range of activities and understanding macro context and the active participation in local, state and national organizations.

Future research needed to discover how leadership perceptions may be implanted through culture, values, religion and dominant cultures. The future research could inform and investigate the highly pliable nature of leadership in this complicated setting.

## **11 Conclusion**

My final conclusion involves the relationship between context and the making of leadership. I found that context impact the creation of leadership. The micro-context in this research impacts leadership negatively, and macro-context impacts leadership positively. To this end this is an obvious finding, but the formulation between leadership and a context needs further investigation. Magnanimous leadership can accommodate the multifarious context, and can even transform that context, while Enigmatic leadership impact is highly negative.

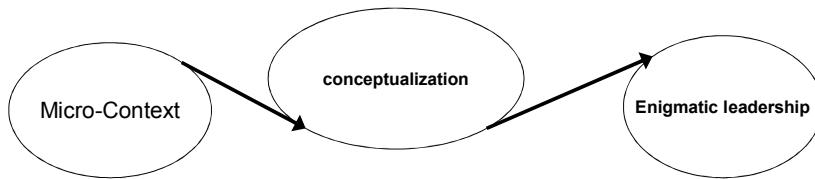
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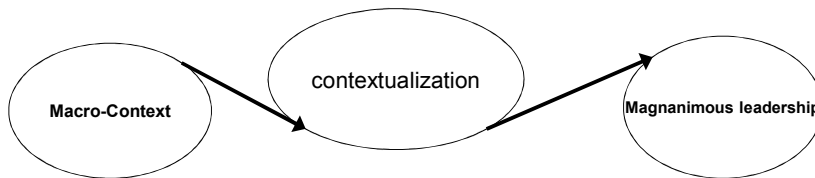
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Figure 1. Micro context.



All path coefficients are negative unless indicated otherwise. All path coefficients represent strong impact.

Figure 2. Macro context.



All path coefficients are positive unless indicated otherwise. All path coefficients represent strong impact.