

THE NEXUS BETWEEN GENERAL COGNITIVE ABILITY OF IMAMSHIP AND *MASJID* PERFORMANCE: A MEDIATING QUANTITATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: *This study aims to formulate the mediating effect of Islamic Ethical Administrative Practice (IEAP) on the nexus (relationship) between general cognitive ability (GCA) of Imamship (leadership in Islam) and Masjid performance (MP) of the Islamic community (Muslim Ummah) in Lagos State, Nigeria. This study is quantitative using a cross-sectional survey questionnaire, and statistical techniques to analyze the collected data with partial least square structural - equation modelling - version 3 (PLS-SEM-V3). The determinants of IEAP include four dimensions which are: (a) Competition, (b) Effort, (c) Morally Responsible Behaviour, and (d) Transparency. The GCA of Imamship factors are (a) Knowledge/Wisdom, (b) Truthfulness, (c) Responsibility/Trust, and (d) Deliverance of Khutbah. While the MP is measured with three dimensions: (a) Masjid Attendance, (b) Masjid Activities, and (c) Masjid Funding. The researcher sampled 310 Chief Imams of Central Masaajid (mosques) as respondents in Lagos State of Nigeria. The findings showed that all the IEAP factors had a significant positive relationship with GCA of Imamship and MP. The results of the study provide some insights into the Imamship of Masaajid in Lagos State, Nigeria in particular, and all other Masaajid in the country in general.*

Keywords: *General Cognitive Ability, Imamship, Masjid Performance, Islamic Ethical Administrative Practice.*

Introduction

Islamically, it is a general knowledge that *Masjid* (mosque) performance (MP) refers to a large of Muslims that come to the *Masaajid* (mosques) and offer their obligation *Solawât* (five times daily prayers), include seek more knowledge about Islamic *Shari'ah* (jurisprudence) which is related to a complete way of their lives, and thereby strengthening their faiths with Allah Almighty (SWT) (Alhassan, 2017; Eniafe, *et al.*, 2020; Jaafar, *et al.*, 2013; Omer, 2018). Includes calling the name of Allah Almighty (SWT) with glorifying Him (SWT) and other religious activities for their spiritual uplift. According to the Holy *Qur'an* in *Surah al-Jinn* (*Qur'an*72, Verse18).as follows: -

“And [Allah Almighty-SWT, revealed] that the Masaajid is for Allah, so do not invoke with Allah [Allah Almighty-SWT] anyone”

*(Qur'an*72, Verse18).

Likewise, the *Masjid al-Nabawiy* (Prophet Muhammad's Mosque in *Madinah* City – Saudi Arabia) is one of the greatest multipurpose *Masjid* and administrative centres of all the major events (Omer, 2018). It is a centre where *Muslim Ummah* perform five daily congregational *Solawât* and other religious activities, as it equally teaches religious knowledge and moral standards of lives and strengthens their relationships with the Almighty Allah (SWT), the families, and the community in general (Arshad, & Zain, 2017). Moreover, *Abu Hurayrah*¹ (RTA), who hold narrated *Hadith* from the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), says: -

“Whoever comes to my Masjid (Masjid an-Nabawiy), with the good intention to conduct learning or teaching activities, and to promote beneficial knowledge will have his reward equivalent to the person who fights (Jihad) in the path of Allah [SWT];”

(Sunnan Ibn Majah: Vol; 1, Chapter: 17, Hadith: 227, cited in Al-Khattab 2007).

The above *Hadith* indicates that the *Masjid an-Nabawiy* has been performed well since the time of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). It also was performed regularly in the period of *Khulafahir-Rāshideen* (four Caliphs/Successors who were rightly guided-RTA), who lead the *Ummah* after the demise of the Prophet (SAW) -from the 7th to 15th centuries (570 CE – 8 June 632 CE).

Despite the growing number of *Masaajid* around the globe, several Islamic researchers *e. g.*, Alade, *et al.*, (2016); Eniafe, *et al.*, (2020); Mutalib, *et al.*, (2017); Rahman, *et al.*, (2015) have discovered that MP has become one of the contemporary issues in the Islamic religion. *Masjid* as an institution in recent times is faced with so many challenges that have negative effects on positioning it for better performance. For example, in Malaysia, according to Mutalib, *et al.*, (2017), who hold discovers low attendance *Masjid* of *Jama'ah* (congregants) to perform obligatory congregational *Solawât* regularly. In addition, Zakariyah (2014) stated that one of the most obvious issues that exist in the administration of *Masaajid* in Malaysia is the *Tabung Masjid* (poor management of funds).

¹- His name was 'abdus-Shams, who was born in Republic of Yemen, in year 603 CE (19 years before *Hijrah*). The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) changed his name to 'abdur-Rahman/*Abu Hurayrah* (Radhiya Allah Ta'alaa 'anihu -RTA) in Islam. He (RTA) was the most narrator of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) *hadiths*. Also, *Abu Hurayrah* (RTA) narrated about 5,375 *Hadith*, despite the fact that he (RTA) only spent three years in the company of the Prophet (Samad, 2015).

In the United States (US), where Soldo, (2017) emphasized the lack of training among Imams of *Masjid* to fulfil their responsibilities effectively to their followers and manage funds to provide tools of practices for *Masaajid* in the country (US). While, the people in Nigeria have criticized the ineffectiveness in the management of *Masaajid* by imamship (Eniafe, *et al.*, 2020; Isa 2017; Kareem and Adetoro, 2017). The unethical practices of Imamship in administration also add to this problem of ineffectiveness in the management of *Masjid* in Lagos State (Eniafe, *et al.*, 2020; Yusuf and Raheem 2013), This aligns with the argument of Imosem (2012) cited in Abdullateef, *et al.*, (2018) that: -

“It appears that many Nigerians are religious without being righteous. We observed all the prayers, fasting, and attendance of services, but do not reflect the true teachings of our religions in our day-to-day interaction with our fellow citizens. We compartmentalize our lives such that what is taught in our Churches or Mosques stay there”

(Abdullateef, *et al.*, p370).

Due to these issues above, most *Masaajid* is no longer serving the purpose for which they are established in terms of their roles in shaping the thoughts and the ideology of the *Muslim Ummah* (Rahman, *et al.*, 2015). Also, this study attempts to examine the mediating effects of IEAP on the relationship between GCA of Imamship and MP among *Muslim Ummah* in Lagos State, Nigeria.

To highlight the justification for choosing Lagos State. Lagos State is selected as a case study for this study because Islamic Religion is practiced among Lagosians since 1774CE. According to Oloyede, (2015); Zuglool² (1987) viewed that the first *Masjid* for the *Muslim Ummah* in Lagos was built in 1774CE, during the reign of King Adele Ajosun (who ruled Lagos State till -1780CE) during the colonial era and after the Nigerian independence (1960). Hence, Oniyide, (2019) stated that the Central *Masjid* with Qur’anic education witnessed tremendous development in Lagos during the post-colonial era, and growth by one of the often-acclaimed greatest Islamic scholars called Shaykh Adam Abdullah al-Ilory³ Rahimahu-Allah Ta’alaa (RAT), who situated his Arabic school; Arabic and Islamic Training in Agege, Lagos, as Quranic Center. According to Makinde (2012) cited in Oniyide (2019, p137): -

²- He was Shaikh Mustapha Akanni Zuglool Sanusi (Rahimahu Allah Ta’alaa- RAT). He was born on 18th of Aug; 1938, at Ikirun town, Osun State, Nigeria. He (RAT) was one of the greatest researchers in Islamic historiography, and an eminent preacher and scholar in Nigeria. He (RAT) was also the founder of *Daru-Da’wah-Wal Irshad* (Islamic/Arabic Studies Centre) at Isolo, Lagos State Nigeria. Likewise, he (RAT) was one of the earliest students of Sheikh Adam Abdullah Al-ilory (RAT). His Sheikh (Sheikh Adam Al-ilory -RAT) was very proud of him (Zuglool -RAT) and among his many brilliant students, he singled him out and said that “if I’m asked by the Lord on the day of Judgement, what good have you done? I would say – proudly- ‘I taught Zuglool;’ (Zuglool. 1999).

³- Sheikh Adam al-Ilory (RAT) was born in 1917 at a town called Waza in the Republic of Benin. His father (Abdul-Baqi bn Habībullah -RAT), who hailed from Ilorin in kwara State of Nigeria. Sheikh Adam (RAT) was one of the greatest international Islamic scholar Nigeria has produced. He studied various Islamic books on different fields of Islamic knowledge under many Muslim scholars *e, g.*, Shaykh Salihu (Esin-ni-yoo-biwa - RAT) at Ibadan in 1934, Shaykh ‘Umar Agbaji (RAT) in 1939 while he was in Lagos. He was also taught by Shaykh Adam Namaji (RAT) at Kano State (d.1944). He (RAT) also learnt from Sayed Musa al-Amin (RAT) who was a trader from Syria that settled down in Lagos (Eniafe, *et al.*, 2021; Oniyide, 2019).

“Prior to 1952, Yoruba land including the area today known as southwestern Nigeria never had modern standard Arabic school. What was common were the traditional Qur’anic school that operated in mosques or known as Ile-kewu. The first modern standard Arabic school surfaced in 1952. This was Markaz- Institute of Arabic and Islamic Training Center established by our illustrious scholar, Sheykh Adam Abdullah al-Ilory in April of that year”

(Makinde 2012, cited in Oniyide 2019, p137)

Therefore, the *Imam Maliki* school of Islamic *Shari’ah* which is the prevailing school of thought in Lagos State, and other states in Nigeria, and all countries in Africa (Adelani, 2015). Despite the growing number of *Masaajid* in Lagos State with more *Muslim Ummah*. Given the significant role of the *Masaajid* in the *Muslim Ummah* of today, it has become imperative to revive the idea of the *Masjid* as a community centre of spiritual upliftment.

Literature Review

Masjid Performance (MP)

The performance of *Masjid* is the population of Muslims that come to the *Masaajid* to observe their *Solawât*, learn more about Islam and thereby strengthen their faith (Eniafe, et al., 2021; Jaafar, et al., 2013). It’s always associated with the state of religious behaviour in many *Muslim Ummah* (Alade, et al., 2016; Eniafe, et al., 2020; Mutalib, et al., 2017; Oskooii, & Dana, 2018). Nigeria has the largest population of Islam adherents, but Nigeria government specifically does not adopt one religion as the state religion and as a result, it allows individual religion to manage its affairs such as *Masjid* leadership and management (Alade, et al., 2016; Jimoh, 2016; Oloyede, 2015). The situation currently being experienced among Nigerian faithful’s has revealed that MP in Lagos State is typified by poor management acumen and the inability of Imams and *Masjid* officials to understand and cope with the dynamics of this age. Also, several studies e.g., Abbas, (2016); Alade, et al., (2016); Yusuf & Raheem, (2013), identified poor MP in terms of ineffective management of Imamship in the Lagos as a lingering problem against virtuous Islamic leadership antecedents exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), and his *Khulafahir-Rāshideen* (RTA), lead the *Ummah* nations after his death (SAW), The main issue is the ineffectiveness of Imamship to lead and manage the *Masaajid* (Abbas, 2016; Alade, et al., 2016; Yusuf & Raheem, 2013). Accordingly, Yusuf and Raheem (2013, p8) stated that:

“It is however pathetic and disturbing that Muslim community for a very long time have not been able to live up to expectation judging by its moribund institutions of which the mosques is one”.

Utaberta, Asif, Rasdi, Yunos, Ismail, and Ismail, (2015), stated in their study on *Masjid* in America: -

“Unfortunately, we, Muslims today facing difficulties to implement the commandments of Allah and following the footsteps of Prophet (PBUH) as we have deteriorated from the guideline that was prescribed for us and adopted the western philosophy of life, as a result, the most significant institution of Muslim community i.e. the mosque has become insufficient to be integrated with the fabric of the Muslim societies. Now with the present resurgence of Islamic thoughts and philosophy, once again the time has come to revive the institution of mosque completely based on the direction that is prescribed in

the Qur'an and the practices of Prophet (PBUH) and the early generation of the Muslims which portrays the practical aspect of utilising the advantages mosque institution to its fullest extent"

(Utaberta, *et al.*, 2015, p374).

In these regards above indicate that *Masaajid* in recent times are faced with so many difficulties that we have to revive our *Masaajid* to perform efficiently. In line with this, Rahman, *et al.*, (2015), measured MP with tangible and intangible resources, such as expenses ratio of religious events, religious education, charity and community services to indicate how efficient the *Masaajid* resources are utilised. While, Mutalib, *et al.*, (2017), measured MP with three items, which are: *Masjid* attendance, fund-raised by *Masjid*, and assets of *Masjid*. Additionally, the MP should be continuously investigated regularly (Mutalib, *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, this study attempts to provide some insights on how we should revive our *Masaajid* to perform efficiently by measuring MP in three dimensions which includes: (a) *Masjid* attendance, (b) *Masjid* activities, and (c) *Masjid* funding. Based on the direction of the Holy *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* of Prophet (SAW) and the early generation of the *Khulafahir-Rāshideen* (RTA) which portrays the practical aspect of utilising the advantages of *Masjid* institution to its fullest extent. The dimensions of MP for this study will be explained in the following subheading below: -

Masjid Attendance

Masjid attendance defines as regularly attend *Masjid* for compulsory congregational *Solawât*. According to the Holy *Qur'an* in *Surah an-Nisaahi* (*Qur'an*4, Verse103): -

"When you finish your Solât (congregational Solawât), remember Allah's praises, while you are standing, sitting down, or lying down on your sides, but when you are free from danger (secure), perform Solât (daily Solawât) regularly, Indeed, Solât (daily Solawât) are enjoined on believers at the appointed times"

(*Qur'an*4, Verse103).

Additionally, the *Hadith* reported by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), indicates the importance of attendance congregational *Solawât* as the following: -

"The Solât in congregation is twenty-seven times superior to the Solât offered by person alone"

(*Sahih Bukhari* – Book 11; *Hadith* 618).

Masjid Activities

Masjid Activities refers to the various activities that *Muslim Ummah* performs in the *Masjid* through the *guidance* of the Holy *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* (Mutalib, *et al.*, 2017; Omer & Farhadullah 2019). While, Eniafe, *et al.*, (2020); Mutalib, *et al.* (2017); Rahman, *et al.*, (2015) stated that attendance *Masjid* regularly and offer compulsory congregational *Solawât*, is an important ritual activity of MP. The *Masjid* activities are identified by the voice of call (*adhān*), performing five daily *Solawât*, Islamic readings such as recitation of the Holy *Qur'an*, *Azkar/Wirid*, and organizing Islamic education for Muslims in the *Masjid* (Mardhatillah, 2020). Moreover, among of companions of the Prophet (SAW) a platform was called the *Suffah* platform (*Ahlus-Suffah/Ashabs-Suffah*), they dedicated themselves to activities of teaching and learning of religious sciences the Holy *Qur'an* and *Hadiths'* Prophet Muhammad (SAW) regularly and systematically to the spiritual-moral life (*Azkar/Wirid*) in the *Masjid an-Nabawiy*

activities (Eniafe, *et al.*, 2020; and Said, 2020). Additionally, *Masjid al-Haram*, *Masjid al-Quba*, and *Masjid an-Nabawiy* are centres of field *Da'wah* (propagation of Islam) that disseminates knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence (*i.e.*, delivering lecturing and learning of the Holy *Qur'an*, *Sunnah*, and schools of thought in Islam, via *'ibādah* Allah Almighty (SWT) (Said, 2020). According to *al-Imam al-Ghazali* (RA) said: -

“Masjid is an institution. It is the source of spiritual and material guidance; it is the hall for worship, the school for knowledge and the centre for literacy pursuits. Strongly attached to the duty of prayers and the rows of worshippers are more attitudes and traditions which form the essence of Islam”

(*Al-Ghazali*, 1999).

Therefore, there are several studies that Islamic researches e.g., Alade, *et al.* (2016); Eniafe, *et al.*, (2020); Mutalib, *et al.*, (2017); Omer, and Farhadullah (2019); Rahman, *et al.*, (2015) have found that *Masjid* activities are significant with organized through the *Masaajid* and are the symbol of those who receive guidance from Allah Almighty (SWT).

Masjid Funding

Masjid funding is the number of funds raised by *Masjid* and received from contributions of individuals, agencies, endowed by the government or through a voluntary charitable endowment by private companies to the *Masjid*. According to *Surah at-Taobah (Qur'an9, Verse18)*: -

“The Masaajid of Allah are only to be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day (Day of Judgment), perform the Solât (conduct of daily obligatory Solawât), and give Zakat (almsgiving to the poor), and fear none but Allah. It is they who are on true guidance”

(*Qur'an9, Verse18*).

Also, it is found that amount of funds raised by *Masaajid* have a significant positive association with the attendance of *Masjid* (Eniafe, *et al.*, 2020; Mutalib *et al.* 2017). Moreover, *Masjid* funding can develop socio-economic as well as contribute to new knowledge relating to the principle of Islamic finance (Razak, *et al.*, 2014). Hence, Mutalib, *et al.*, (2017); and Razak, *et al.*, (2014), found in their studies that there is a significant relationship between *Masjid* funding and MP. While, in Lagos State of Nigeria, Amuda, (2013), noticed that no organization or society pays the salaries of Islamic leaders particular Imam, Quranic learning and other related to Islamic affairs, hence they are forced to search for alternative means of financial assistance. Additionally, there is no provision for the ministry of religious affairs in Nigeria (AbdulKareem, Ogunbado, AbdulGaniyy & Mahmud, 2019). Therefore, many *Masaajid* in the country needs financial assistance and support for the funding of MP, maintenance and Islamic activities. According to Riwayatanti, (2019) as follows: -

“Funds can be utilised for empowerment activities/programs, useful for the ummah... however, is not easy because the takmir might have different backgrounds, have different understandings...these differences sometimes could also raise conflicts of thinking”

(Riwayatanti, 2019, p201)

General Cognitive Ability of Imamshiep

GCA of Imamship is defined as the brain-based skills and mental processes needed to carry out any task and have more to do with the mechanisms of how he learns, remember, and pay attention rather than any actual knowledge he has learned (Mahazan, & Abdullah, 2013). While, Bensaïd, Machouche, and Grine, (2014); Mahmood, Arshad, Ahmed, Akhtar, and Khan, (2018) have argued that the GCA is the depict same with intelligence variables that they are empirical evidence that supports the importance and predict GCA of Imamship. This is also alternatively referred to as the lead intelligence or qualities in several studies. According to Scholars, posited that amongst variables explaining GCA “intelligence has probably received the most attention in studies of Imamship (Mahazan, & Abdullah, 2013).

Therefore, GCA of Imamship is found as one of the predictors of leadership in some previous researches. Consequently, the GCA of Imams influenced MP, and, as such, it is reasonable to suggest that an Imam with GCA would make significant contributions to the organization of *Masaajid* where he works as Imam (Mahazan & Abdullah, 2013; Mutalib, & Ghani, 2013). Furthermore, there are many studies on Islamic leadership, *e. g.*, Daud, *et al.*, (2014); and Rahman and Shah, (2015) conducted their studies, and were concerned about its implication on measuring characteristics of the Islamic leadership. Also, they developed four model factors characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), include knowledge/wisdom, truthfulness, responsibility/trust, and deliverance. This organic relationship is shown in the Holy *Qur'an*'s thesis whereby the cognitive dimensions of spiritual intelligence are integrated. Also, it is grounded firmly in the teaching of revelation and has been demonstrated practically throughout the life and example of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), nourished through the contribution of people of wisdom, scholars, and those grounded in knowledge and action (Bensaïd, *et al.*, 2014). According to the Holy *Qur'an*, in *Surah al-Nisaahi*: -

“But those of them who are well-grounded in knowledge and the believers, believe in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down before you. And those who keep up the Solât and those who give alms (Az-Zakât), the believers in Allah and the Last Day, these it is whom We will give a Mighty Reward”

(Qur'an 4:162).

Therefore, this study adopted four dimensions' measures of Islamic leadership characteristics align with the behaviours of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), from Daud, *et al.*, (2014); and Rahman, and Shah, (2015) for GCA of Imamship. Based, on the nature GCA of Imamship in this study, they are the greatest divine assets for the MP. Moreover, these qualities are needed in the management of *Masaajid* to perform well in Lagos State. Also, this study explains each of four sub-dimensions as following: -

Knowledge/Wisdom (*Fatonah*)

Knowledge/Wisdom both are the attributes of Allah Almighty (SWT), also He (SWT) explicitly directs human beings in the Holy *Qur'an* to seek and employ knowledge for the development of human potential. The religion of Islam encourages human beings to acquire skills of knowledge/technology (Rana, & Malik, 2017). While Akgün (2020) indicated the difference between knowledge and wisdom is that wisdom is the ability for a person with true leadership potential to apply his knowledge into fruitful action towards an articulated goal. However, the word wisdom precedes the teaching of knowledge, indicating the former is gifted to a person as an inherent quality whereas the latter is acquired through learning”. Therefore,

the Imamship have interpreted knowledge with their wisdom according to the Holy *Qur'an* in *Surah al-Jumu'ah* (*Qur'an*62, Verse2) as following: -

"He [Allah Almighty -SWT] it is Who raised among the illiterate people a Messenger [Prophet Muhammad -SWT] from among them, reciting to them [people] His verses [in the Holy Qur'an], purifying them [cleansing their souls from the filth of disbelief and polytheism], and teaching them the Book [the Holy Qur'an] and the wisdom [imparting them throughout his examples and saying];"
(*Qur'an*62, Verse2).

Also, the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) says: -

"Wisdom is the lost property of the believer, wherever he finds it, he has more right to it"

(*Sunan al-Tirmidhī* 2687).

Therefore, knowledge/wisdom are an integral part of Imamship requirements in Islam which are fundamental points that are needed in the management of *Masaajid* in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Truthfulness (*Siddiiq*)

Truthfulness is a quality in general cognitive ability for Imamship in this research. According to Daud, *et al.*, (2014), one of the Imamship qualities that required consistency between words and actions is truthfulness. Additionally, truth is a value that drives the commitment of an imam as a leader and subsequently leads to better performance (Daud, *et al.*, 2014). Rahman and Shah (2015) defined trustfulness as the sense of responsibility, honour, courtesy, showing optimal results and respect for others. An imam has to speak truth always and to be truthful from the core of his heart, not for affectation but for the establishment of moral standards in the *Muslim Ummah* (Daud, *et al.*, 2014). Also, Rahman and Shah (2015) affirmed that a believer has to fulfil the obligation to achieve success in this world and hereafter. While looking to become a successful person, one has to be obedient to Allah Almighty (SWT), and His terms and rule. According to the Holy *Qur'an* says in *Surah an-Nisaahi* (*Qur'am*4, Verse58): -

"Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing"

(*Qur'am*4, V58)

Hence, *Imam Al-awza'ee* (RA) 774CE/157Ah said: "learn truthfulness before learning knowledge". Additionally, Consequently, the Prophet Mohamed (SAW) says: -

"Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise"

(*Al-Bukhari*).

Responsibility/Trust (*Amanah*)

Responsibility is trust (*Amanah*) and an Islamic perspective is about how Muslims enact their leadership role (Aldulaimi, 2016). A true leader does not seek his interest but the welfare of others. In the context of work culture in an organization, every worker must be aware that a position that he holds is decided by him (Aldulaimi, 2016). Truthfulness is the opposite of lying, and it is the mother of all good in a person's character, and it is the source of all other virtues. Imam of the *Masjid* must show responsibility in his character and competence to

influence the behaviour of members of the congregation in the *Masjid*. While, the responsibility of an Imamship consists of six dimensions, which are named: Emotional Control, Leader helping, Forgiveness, Integrity, Patience and Justice (Mukred Mohsen, 2007). Therefore, the responsibility of Imamship is to manage the *Masjid* according to Allah's wants and to establish good relationships among mankind (Alimin, Awang, Ahmad, & Nain, 2018). Moreover, our beloved Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was the best example of a responsible leader. According to *Sheikhayni (Bukhari and Muslim)* the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) saying: -

“All of you are providers of care and everybody is responsible to do it right for his subordinates and dependents”

(Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

Delivery of message (Tabliigh)

Delivery of message is required to the purpose of the mission clearly and to inspire people to follow it. The Holy *Qur'an* itself is the most eloquent document and it appeals both to the mind and the heart. For example, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) delivered messages of Islam in a way that was instantly admitted by *Ummah*, fulfilled the trust, advised the nation, and struggled in Allah Almighty (SWT) with the right of his struggle. Also, the Delivery of message is Communication refers to the ability to articulate ideas and views with clarity and eloquence (Daud, *et al.*, 2014). While, Communication is an extremely important quality that needs to be learned, practice and master by every leader, especially Chief Imam of the Central *Masjid*. According to Muhamedi, and Ariffin, (2017), communication might help management to spread Islamic values among its members such as prayers, fasting and fight corruption. Not at that level only but also may help to spread *Da'wah* and Islamic values to the public. Allah Almighty (SWT) says in *Surah Jinn*: -

“To ensure that the Messengers [SWA] fully deliver the messages of their Lord [Allah Almighty - SWT] though He [SWT] ‘already’ knows all about them, and keeps account of everything”

(Qur'an72, Verse28).

Islamic Ethical Administrative Practice (IEAP)

IEAP is referred to Islamic ethics formed by the teachings of the Holy *Qur'an* as explained and practiced by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) via his actions, silent permissions of the Prophet, and his words, (Eniafe, *et al.*, 2020). Also, it is an essential mediating factor for this study. The mediating effect is created when a third variable or construct intervenes between other related constructs, understand how mediating effects work (Hair, *et al.*, 2016). IEAP in this study seeks to give the administration guidelines for integrity in their operations. This integrity, in turn, leads to the fostering of trust in the *Masjid* community.

In Lagos State of Nigeria currently, the inability of *Masjid* administration to cope with the dynamics of the modern age, no mechanism for constant monitoring performance of *Masaajid*, and non-participation of *Jama'ah* appear to be significant challenges facing the *Masaajid* (Alade, *et al.*, 2016; Kareem, & Adetoro, 2017; Yusuf, & Raheem, 2013). There is an increasing public fear and complaints that the administrative effectiveness of the Imamship is jeopardizing, especially in Lagos where poor *Masaajid*, Administration has been the major challenge according to several Islamic researchers *e. g.* Abbas, (2016); Alade, *et al.*, (2016); Eniafe, *et al.*, (2020); Yusuf and Raheem, (2013), identified the poor MP in terms of ineffective

management and unethical practices of Imamship administration of Imamship of Central *Masaajid* in Lagos.

In this regard, IEAP is excavated from the Holy *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*, and it could be said to incorporate the four dimensions (competition, effort, morally responsible conduct and transparency) with included 17 items. Also, all items are derived from the Holy *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Such as: *'adl* (justice), *Birru* (righteousness), *Haqq* (right), *'ibādah* (worship), *Ikhlas* (honesty), *Istiqomah* (integrity), *Jihad* (effort), *Ihsan/Khayr* (goodness), *Maslahah* (public interest), *Ma'roof* (known/approved), *Nahyu 'anil-munkar* (forbidden wrong), *Qist* (equity), *Shura* (consultation), *Tableeq* (deliverance), *Taqwaa* (piety), *Thiqqoh* (trustworthiness) and *Wafaahu* (fulfil), (Eniafe, *et al.*, 2020; Haider, & Nadeem. 2014; Wahab, 2017).

Competition (*Musabaqoh*)

Competition is regarded as *Shura* which Imams are encouraged to preach to their *Jama'ah* in line with the concepts of IEAP. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as a great example, laid the good foundation of a civilization, an ethical value, also conceived as a set of major leadership traits of the Prophet (SAW) was *Shura*. The *Shura* was held to be very important and he of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) consulted and followed his companions' advice in several matters, as Allah Almighty (SWT) revealed in *Surah al-'imraan*:-

“...and consult them in the matter;”

(*Qur'an*3, Verse159).

Effort (*Jihad*)

The effort is *Jihad* in the Arabic language. *Jihad* is important for chief Imams of the *Masaajid* to invest their *Juhud* (efforts) in professionalism to congregations of the *Masaajid*. In this regards Islamic ethics that is excavated from the Holy *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*, was proposed by previous studies (Eniafe, *et al.*, 2020; Wahab, 2017). While, *Jihad* is considered as perform *'ibādah* in Islam and will be rewarded, as the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said: -

"Worshipping has seventy avenues, the best of them is the involvement in an honest and earned living"

(cited in Aldulaimi, 2016; Wahab, 2017).

Morally Responsible Behaviour

Morally responsible behaviour is a good peace to the entire *Muslim Ummah* and other establishments. It is also Islamic ethics that addresses the concept of equity, justice, goodness, truth, public interest, knowledge, forbidden wrong, righteousness, piety and *Shura* (Eniafe, 2020; Wahab, 2017). Therefore, some Imams may abide by the code of IEAP and some may show indifference. Imam who has high associations with IEAP is expected to show a high relationship with types of MP, which is desirable for the progress of their *Jama'ah* as well as the *Masjid* as a whole in attendance of *Masjid*, activities of *Masjid*, and fund of *Masjid* through his performance towards *Jama'ah* in the *Masjid*. The people of *al-Ihsan* are the best among the servants of Allah Almighty (SWT), who are doers of good deeds which leads to goodness and guidance (Kadhim, Ahmad, Owoyemi, & Ahmad, 2017) as indicated by the word of Allah Almighty (SWT) says in *Surah al-Kahf* (*Qur'an*18, Verse30): -

“As to those who believe and work righteousness, verily We shall not suffer to perish the reward of any who do a [single] righteous deed”

(Qur'an18, Verse30)

Transparency

Transparency is a good value and relates to good character and morals (*Akhlaq al-Hasanah*). Eniafe, *et al.*, (2020); and Wahab, (2017) have defined transparency as a pillar of IEAP that is built on good values such as honesty (*Sidqah*), integrity (*Istiqomah*), justice (*'adl*), sincerity (*Ikhlas*), and trustworthiness (*Thiqqoh*). Likewise, the transparency of IEAP is deeply rooted in the belief in Allah Almighty (SWT), having trust in Him while an *Imam* is anticipated to be fair, and behave righteously towards the affairs of his followers in the *Masjid*. According to Riwijanti, (2019), who hold emphasized as following: -

“...building trust among members is very important, being transparent. In the mosque, it will be easier to do this because mosques apply management based on the ummah. So, people will trust each other. The problem usually appears because when they have public trust, they break the trust”

(Riwajanti, 2019, p200).

Also, he is to be relating responsibly and be accountable for what he is entrusted with. This is because justice is one of the transparent principles of Islam, and it is also associated with the qualities of Imamship as Allah Almighty (SWT) says in *Surah Sod*: -

“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing”

(Qur'an4, Verse58).

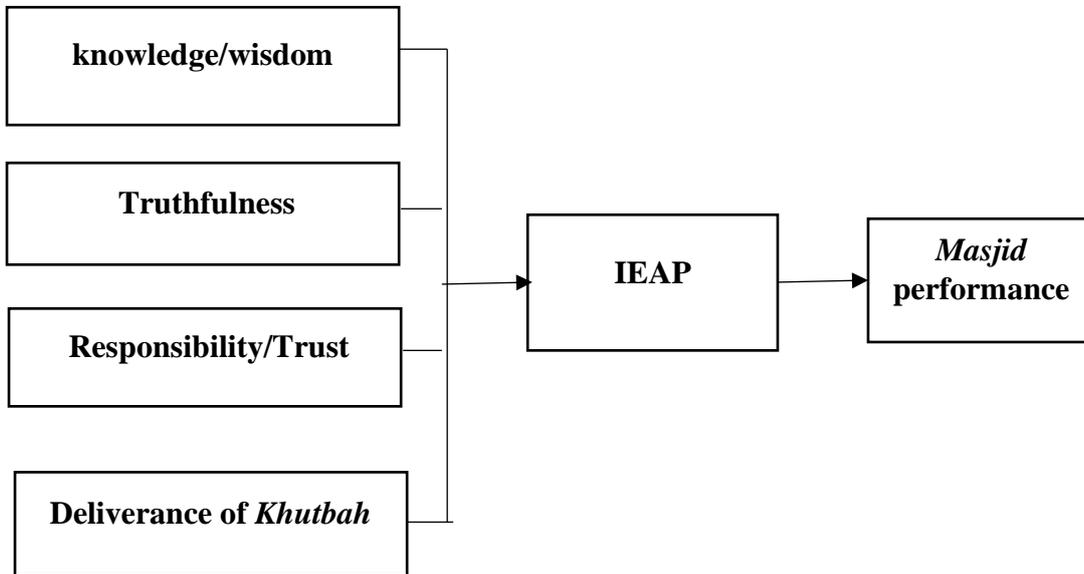
Methodology

This section discussed the methodology that was implemented in this study. It is divided into five sections with sub-sections: Includes Conceptual Framework and Underpinning; Theory of the Study; Hypotheses Development of the Study, Data Collection; Statistical Analysis Results; And Structural Model Measures.

Conceptual Framework and Underpinning Theory of the Study

The conceptual framework is a much broader concept that encompasses, practically all aspects of your research (Kivunja, 2018). The conceptual model of this study also contains six variables. They are developed to identify elements of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), which is the most influential leadership style of all.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework (General cognitive ability of Imamship)



Additionally, all these instruments used in this framework above could be justified based on the fact that the items and measurements are theoretically supported. Also, the conceptual framework of this study has provided additional support to the use of Resource-Based Theory (RBT) and Islamic Human Resources Management (IHRM). Based on the constructs and measures used in this study, the RBT and IHRM are adopted as an underpinning theory for this study. Hence, this framework is grounded in RBT which postulates that effective and efficient utilisation of organization intangible resources that are valuable and inimitable that are controlled by the firm would result in the achievement of superior performance in an Islamic organization (Rahman, *et al.*, 2015). Moreover, *Masjid* is considered an Islamic organization that manages the religious activities of *Muslim Ummah*. Rahman, *et al.*, (2015) utilized RBT to examine MP, considering that RBT is usually linked to firms' performances. Also, an organization's human and organizational resources allow the *Masaajid* to consider and carry out strategies that can lead to the efficiency of *Masaajid* and the effectiveness of their programs (Barney *et al.*, 2012; Barney, & Mackey, 2016). Likewise, Islamic human resource management observed the concept of faith in Allah Almighty (SWT) and use the Holy *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), in accomplishing the human resource function.

Hypotheses Development of the Study

A hypothesis is defined as a preliminary postulate or clarification by the researchers of what the researchers consider that the result of the study will be (Rahi, 2017; Singh, 2020). Based on this, this study is premised on thirteen hypotheses (nine direct hypotheses and four indirect hypotheses), included with four subsections. The first direct hypotheses test the relationship between the independent variable of GCA of Imamship with four dimensions (knowledge/wisdom, truthfulness, responsibility/trust, and deliverance of *Khutbah*), and the dependent variable of MP. The second direct hypotheses test the relationship between the mediating variable of IEAP and the dependent variable of MP. The third direct hypotheses test the relationships between GCA of Imamship (knowledge/wisdom, truthfulness, responsibility/trust, and deliverance of *Khutbah*) and IEAP. While, the fourth indirect hypothesis considered the mediating roles of IEAP between the GCA of Imamship (knowledge/wisdom, truthfulness, responsibility/trust, and deliverance of *Khutbah*) and MP.

Relationship between GCA of Imamship and MP.

Several studies have examined the relationship between the GCA of Imamship and MP. For example, the study conducted by Mahazan, and Abdullah, (2013), concerning the effect of Imam leadership on MP in Malaysia, revealed a significant relationship between the GCA of Imamship and MP. In the light of this, this study would adopt four dimensions' measures for characteristics of the Islamic leadership via relates to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) from Daud, *et al.*, (2014); and Rahman, and Shah, (2015) for GCA of Imamship by using four items of the Prophet's behaviours and values which includes: Knowledge/Wisdom, truthfulness, responsibility/trust, and deliverance of messages of Allah Almighty (SWT). Moreover, the four dimensions align with the behaviours of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) by having a good relationship with Allah Almighty (SWT) and the relationship with other human beings. Based on the above, the following hypotheses are proposed for empirical analysis: -

H1,2,3,4: There is a relationship between GCA of imamship (i.e., Knowledge/Wisdom, Deliverance, Responsibility, and Truthfulness), which positively predicts MP.

Relationship between GCA of Imamship and IEAP

For instance, Mahazan, and Abdullah (2013) found that GCA of Imamship (knowledge, and abilities of leadership) predicted skills through mediating effect IEAP. Also, other factors of GCA of Imamship mediated the relationship between IEAP. The same was also found by Chan and Drasgow (2001) in their leadership behaviour research. Therefore, the following hypothesis is presented below: -

H5,6,7,8: There is a relationship between GCA of imamship (i.e., Knowledge/Wisdom, Deliverance, Responsibility, and Truthfulness), which positively predicts IEAP.

Relationship Between IEAP and MP

IEAP is an essential mediating variable factor for this study. It can assist imams to improve *Masjid* performance (MP). In line with the above-mentioned studies, the study of Noor, *et al.*, (2017) investigated the relationship between Islamic work ethic and performance management among employees of Islamic organizations in Malaysia. The study reported a significant relationship between ethics and performance management (among employees of Islamic organizations). In the light of these studies above, this study aims to increase our understanding of the influence of IEAP of Imams towards MP. Based on these findings, the following hypothesis is presented: -

H9: There is a relationship between IEAP mediates and Masjid performance

Mediating Effects of IEAP on the Relationships Between IVs and DV

The mediating effect is divided into two options which were: direct and indirect mediating effects (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Direct mediating effects linked the relationship between two constructs with a single arrow, and it is model as a possible mediator for the indicated relationship. While the Indirect effects are those relationships that involve a sequence of relationships with at least one interfering construct (Hair, *et al.*, 2014).

This study predicts that the IEAP will be influenced on GCA of Imamship includes: Knowledge/Wisdom, Truthfulness, Responsibility/Trust, and Deliverance of *Khutbah*, on MP for the *Muslim Ummah* in Lagos State. As the study discussed earlier that several studies *e, g.,*

Mahazan, and Abdullah, (2013); Mutalib and Ghani (2013); Mutalib, *et al.* (2017), have examined its influence on the Imamship in Malaysia towards MP. The studies reported a significant mediating of Imamship influenced MP.

Based on the existing studies on mediating effect, this study examines the effects of IEAP on the relationship between GCA of Imamship (Knowledge/Wisdom, Truthfulness, Responsibility/Trust, and Deliverance of *Khutbah*) on MP for *Muslim Ummah* in Lagos. In the sum of this, a proper understanding of the issues revolving around the Imam's leadership and MP can be achieved through the empirical investigation in various perspectives. Therefore, the mediating hypotheses of this study are presented below: -

H10, 11, 12, 13: IEAP mediates the relationship between GCA of imamship (i.e., Knowledge/Wisdom, Deliverance, Responsibility, and Truthfulness), positively predicts and MP.

Data Collection

This study designed online questionnaires for the strategy for data collection. By using social media group (WhatsApp) of Chiefs Imams of Central *Masaajid* in Lagos State, Nigeria. Which it is comprising five administrative divisions of Ikeja, Badagry, Ikorodu, Lagos-Island and Epe which were which are regarded as the IBILE (Eniafe, *et al.*, 2020). Due to the deadly virus called Covid-19 around the world making it is difficult for the researcher to meet respondents face to face. Moreover, Remillard, Mazor, Cutrona, Gurwitz, and Tjia, (2014) acknowledged that online questionnaires have been successful in targeting groups of individuals who are members of organizations/institutions.

Additionally, each item that aids as a question was coded in line with the initial variable and rendering to its position as itemized under the numerous unnoticed latent constructs (Hair, *et al.*, 2016). For instance, three items measuring knowledge/wisdom were coded as K/W01 till K/W03, and the same process was applied to other independent variables, mediating variables, and dependent variables. Also, the individual allotted codes for an item on the respondents' profile. Hence, every item associated with the constructs was found to be within 5 Point Likert scales used in the questionnaire of this study.

Statistical Analysis Results

Partial Least Square, Structural Equation Modeling - Version 3 (PLS-SEM-V3) was used to examine and analyse purposes in this study since it is considered the best. PLS-SEM is an explanatory methodology that counts on both primary and secondary data (Hair, *et al.*, 2014). Additionally, the results of PLS-SEM are recommended in most works of literature and the two stages comprise the measurement model and structural model assessment. For this study, the two models need to be put in place.

Structural Model Measures

The structural model measures the relationships connecting the latent constructs in the hypothetical model (Hair *et al.*, 2016). The dealings between all the variables in the anticipated research model designated the hypotheses were tested through the structural model. Similarly, the structural model evaluates the inter-connections amid exogenous variables, organization intangible resources of GCA of Imamship (Knowledge/Wisdom, Truthfulness, Responsibility/Trust, and Deliverance of *Khutbah*), and the endogenous variable, MP as well

as the proposed mediator IEAP. In this study, the structural model was evaluated for path coefficient significance of the structural model relationships, level of coefficient of determination (R^2), effect sizes (f^2), the predictive relevance (Q^2).

Structural Model (Inner Model) and Hypotheses Testing

Table 1: Summary of the Hypotheses

	Relationship	Direct Effects		Mediating Effect		Result
		β	P-Value	β	P-Value	
H ₁	K/W -> IEAP	0.18	0.000*			Supported
H ₂	K/W-> MP	0.07	0.000*			Supported
H ₃	IEAP -> MP	0.48	0.000*			Supported
H ₄	T -> IEAP	0.72	0.000*			Supported
H ₅	T -> MP	0.56	0.000*			Supported
H ₆	R/T -> IEAP	0.42	0.000*			Supported
H ₇	R/T -> MP	0.31	0.000*			Supported
H ₈	D -> IEAP	0.29	0.001*			Supported
H ₉	D -> MP	0.33	0.000*			Supported
H ₁₀	IEAP*K/W->MP			0.50	0.000*	Supported
H ₁₁	IEAP*T ->MP			0.67	0.000*	Supported
H ₁₂	IEAP*R/T->MP			0.41	0.000*	Supported
H ₁₃	IEAP*D->MP			0.22	0.001*	Supported

Discussions of Findings and Conclusions

The finding of this study indicates that when Imamship in Lagos State, Nigeria in particular, and all other *Masaajid* in the country in general, demonstrates good attitudes, and the four qualities of GCA of Imamship dimensions the characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), includes Knowledge/Wisdom, Truthfulness, Responsibility/Trust, and Deliverance of messages of Allah Almighty (SWT), such leader gains the confidence, support and the followership of his people the *Masjid* congregation and *Muslim Ummah*. Because the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has a higher level of exemplary leadership which all leaders are expected to emulate especially the imams as Allah Almighty (SWT) testifies to his ethical standard and as a person possessing all good exemplary characters that are desired from a leader. He (SWT) says in *Surah al-Ahzab & al-Qolam* (*Qur'an*33, Verse21; *Qur'an*68, Verse4): -

“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often;” (*Qur'an*33, Verse21); Additionally: *“And indeed, you are of a great moral character”*

*(Qur'an*68, Verse4).

Theoretical and Practical Contributions

The theoretical and practical contribution of this study perspectives lies in identifying how the mediating effect of IEAP in the relationship between GCA of Imamship (Knowledge/Wisdom, Truthfulness, Responsibility/Trust, and Deliverance of *Khutbah*) on MP for *Muslim Ummah* in

Lagos State, Nigeria in particular, and all other *Masaajid* in the country in general. Governments across levels should make *Jihad* towards creating a Ministry to overlook Religious Affairs. Also, the ministry could organise conferences, seminars, and workshops from time to time for Imamship, Islamic lecturers, *Amīr/Amīrah* (Presidents of Muslim Organizations: Male/Female), and Religious Preachers, to keep them informed of trends in religious circles. Therefore, as a recommendation of this study, the government of Lagos State and other the states in Nigeria. Governments should get involved in monitoring the Imamship of central *Masaajid* to checkmate unholy practices such as hate and extremist *Khutbah*, *Tazkirah* (preaching) capable of disrupting the peaceful co-existence among different societies of Islam and religions since the state is a multi-religious state. Moreover, the Holy *Qur'an* states in *Surah al-ani'am* (*Qur'an*6, Verse108).: -

“And do not insult (abuse or revile) those they invoke other than Allah, lest they insult Allah in enmity without knowledge. Thus, We have made pleasing to every community their deeds. Then to their Lord is their return, and He will inform them about what they used to do”

(*Qur'an*6, Verse108).

Conclusion

Based on the constructs (the mediating effect of IEAP on the relationship between GCA of Imamship and MP), and measures used in this study, the IHRM and RBT are adopted as underpinning theory. Overall, the study concluded that effective and efficient implementation and utilization of an organization's intangible resources with the adoption of IEAP will enhance MP. The empirical results of this study have contributed to the body of literature on the subject. To start with, though several studies have investigated MP, this study addressed the important theoretical research gap by integrating the mediating role of IEAP on the relationship between the GCA of Imamship and MP. Further, the study added to the limited studies within the confine of IEAP in developing countries towards improving MP. In addition to the theoretical contributions, this study also provides important practical insights to Chief Imams on how to improve the MP, and people will be attracted to coming to the *Masjid* for praying, learning, listen to *Khutbah Jumu'ah*, and consulting with them. It is hoped that this study will be able to serve as a guide for a better performance of the *Masajid* based on the Holy *Qur'an*, the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), and by emphasising spiritual motivation based on Islamic *Shari'ah*, in Lagos State, Nigeria in particular, and all other *Masaajid* in the country in general, and to serve the purpose for they are meant to serve in Islam.

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