

Received: May 2023 Accepted: June 2023  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58262/ks.v11i2.417>

## Teacher's Prophetic Leadership in Aceh, Indonesia

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### Abstract

*Prophetic leadership as the ability to influence others based on the teachings of the prophet has not yet been able to increase the competence of teachers in Aceh. The issue of prophetic leadership has relevance to the majority of Muslim teachers and students in Aceh. The government has made many regulations and programs to increase teacher capacity in Indonesia, but the programs that have been set have not been able to improve teacher competency and the quality of education, one of which is in Aceh Province. This study aims to explain educational problems from the point of view of teacher leadership. Then, this study discusses the implications of spirituality for prophetic leadership, when spirituality does not appear in teachers it is difficult to internalize prophetic leadership. Quantitative method using correlation test was used in this study. Researchers used the Daily Spirituality Experience Scale (DSES) questionnaire and the prophetic leadership scale. Questionnaires were given to 522 teachers in 17 districts of Aceh province. This study found that there was a positive relationship between spirituality and prophetic leadership with a value of  $r = .247$ ,  $n = 522$ ,  $p < .001$ . Other findings state that there was no difference between male spirituality, but spirituality as the basis for prophetic leadership was different between men and women because greater domestic consideration for women. However, that does not mean that prophetic leadership was not present for women. The presence of prophetic leadership and spirituality was as an alternative in alleviating intrinsic educational problems so that teachers have meaningful work and become leaders in education in Aceh.*

**Keywords:** *prophetic leadership, spirituality, education and teachers.*

### 1. Introduction

The achievement of current learning success is generally perceived based on cognitive aspects alone as measured by a range of numbers or ratings. Meanwhile, the essence of education is a process of changing students' attitudes, behavior and knowledge. This is in line with Law number 20 of 2000 which states that education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character. as well as the skills needed by himself, the community, the nation and the state (Munawir et al., 2022). The role of the educator also tends to be positioned as a teacher who is only tasked with producing quantitatively intelligent children who are raised in the extent to which they achieve the highest grades and the accuracy of the study period. This condition unknowingly

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marginalizes the task of educators who also play a major role as facilitators and motivators for students.

Currently, the teacher as a driving force in a formal education system has lost its spirit as an educator. The teacher's responsibility is only emphasized in the realm of teaching and evaluating learning outcomes without realizing it this condition that has slowly removed the teacher's function as a leader for their students (Clarke, 2013). When the educational orientation only refers to numerical achievements and no longer seeks to change students' attitudes and behavior, behavioral problems such as juvenile delinquency, free sex, drugs, moral crises and other learning obstacles cannot be avoided and will tend to be increasingly carried out by students (Shahmohammadi, 2015).

In Greece education, teachers position themselves as leaders and are more flexible in presenting various ideas that are integrated with the learning process so that learning is more innovative and encourages independence (Lourmpas & Dakopoulou, 2014). This emphasizes that the teaching profession involves dimensions of leadership to be able to plan, organize, implement, evaluate, motivate learning activities and students' personal lives (Haug & Mork, 2021). Aceh today needs professional teachers in terms of cognitive as well as professional attitudes and behavior. This was also encouraged by the results of a survey by the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) which placed the province of Aceh in 15th place out of 34 provinces in Indonesia on the human development index and was not included in the top 10 provinces with the best education in Indonesia.

This research examines a prophetic-based social education approach in unraveling problems in the scope of education above based on scientific studies and Islamic teachings where this context is very closely related to the culture and habits of the people of Aceh who are predominantly Muslim (Habiba & Sholikhah, 2018). Islam offers educational improvement solutions that lead to a teacher's prophetic leadership approach, in which teachers are required to have personal, professional and social competencies. Every Muslim, as any profession, is obliged to build relationships with others, including the relationship between teachers and students by involving God in it. One of the models referred to by every Muslim is to imitate the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Humans are responsible for themselves and others to act and behave as actors (moral persons) and moral managers (moral managers) and this is a central issue for teachers who are in charge of educating their students. Prophetic leadership by the Prophet Muhammad SAW is an ideal and pragmatic model compared to the Western leadership model (El Syam, 2017). In presenting prophetic leadership, spirituality is needed as this is supported by the results of previous studies including those conducted in New Zealand. The results of this study found that spirituality encourages leadership in teachers and has a positive impact on students' lives at school (Mackie, 2017).

The presence of spirituality in the teacher will affect the personality and condition of the soul to be calm and enthusiastic in carrying out activities. This situation is an incentive for teachers to fulfill their duties in teaching and educating both when transferring knowledge and honing students' skills. Spirituality has a transcendent dimension, namely belief in God Who has great power over everything (Soha et al., 2016). Prophetic leadership arises from the power of spirituality felt by individuals. Prophetic leadership is a form of leadership applied by Rasulullah SAW which is based on the Al Quran. The application and internalization of prophetic leadership values is based on belief in Allah SWT and believing in Rasulullah SAW as the messenger of Allah SWT who is a role model in all aspects of life, including emulating the attitudes and behavior of Rasulullah SAW in leadership. This research departs from three

arguments. First, spirituality becomes important for teachers because it contributes to prophetic leadership. Second, spirituality can present a meaning of work that is not only limited to material or financial achievements. Third, self-development in teachers requires the meaning of work spiritually to form a mature self and be responsible for oneself independently (Paul et al., 2020). Based on this, this study aims to examine how the role of spirituality in the pattern of prophetic leadership in teachers. Furthermore, this study will look at differences in spirituality and prophetic leadership in terms of gender. This research will be a useful source of data and information for related parties and policy makers on the importance of strengthening spirituality in enhancing the professional capacity and personality of teachers.

## **2. Literature**

### **2.1. Prophetic Leadership**

Prophetic leadership, known as prophetic leadership, is a form of leadership practiced by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Prophetic leadership is based on Islamic religious teachings which are implemented in the life of Muslim society. Prophetic leadership is the ability to control oneself and sincerely influence others to achieve common goals as was done by the prophets, with the attainment of leadership based on four types namely, sidiq, amanah, tabligh, and fathonah (Abd Rahman et al., 2022).

Islamic leadership is superior to previous leadership. The prophetic leadership practiced by the Prophet is guided by the Al-Quran and Hadith as the operational basis so that there is no doubt for those who apply it. This is certainly different from western leadership which emerges from the results of practical and changing empirical studies. Meanwhile, in the concept of prophetic leadership, there is an exemplary standard that lasts all the time (Syahid & Fitri, 2021). The concept of prophetic leadership in Indonesia was popularized by Kuntowijoyo as a new formula in the study of individual behavior based on prophethood including prophetic leadership. The word prophetic comes from the English word prophet which means prophet or prophecy which is the adjective of prophethood, so prophetic leadership is how a person behaves based on the nature of the prophet as a messenger of God (Mirela et al., 2021).

Prophetic leadership is based on an understanding of the Quran and consists of personal competency components in the form of siddiq, amanah, tabligh, and fathanah traits as the foundation for human example. Prophetic leadership as a leadership style that is intrinsic contains spiritual value in which a person can influence others to achieve common goals as explained by Sus Budiharto and Himam. In general, prophetic leadership can be defined as a leadership concept that is structured based on a religious perspective, namely the Islamic religion which refers to the four characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad SAW which become a reference in the implementation of leadership (Yusuf, 2022).

### **2.2. Spirituality**

The term spiritual comes from the basic English word "spirit" which means soul, spirit, morals and ultimate purpose or meaning. Meanwhile, spirituality in Arabic is related to spirituality and meaning related to something bigger than the human self (transcendent) (Faizah, 2021). The concept of spirituality originates from the work of Allport, an expert in the field of psychology who is oriented towards individual religious studies (Hardt et al., 2012). According to Allport, a person's religious orientation can be extrinsically and intrinsically driven. In individuals who are extrinsically oriented, the meaning of religion looks more at the practices and rituals, while intrinsically it comes from a

deep awareness of a belief which is then equated with spirituality. Spirituality is the point where individuals find meaning, comfort and inner peace. Hence spirituality differs from religiosity as seen in religious rituals and practices (Sudirman & Latifa, 2019).

In the academic field, spirituality has been discussed for a long time starting from England in 1944 where spirituality was made the goal of education and was stipulated in the Education Act. In these regulations, the government ensures that the school contributes to the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of all staff and students. Spirituality in education makes teachers able to contribute to the mental formation of students in learning, and can give meaning to the lessons delivered (Nasrollahi et al., 2020). Spirituality is human experience and human process in finding understanding and meaning in life that directs behavior in every activity (Sri et al., 2022). Spirituality refers to the experience of cognition (beliefs, attitudes, feelings and emotions) where in spirituality there is power or known as transcendence and this is a form of extraordinary power or existence outside of oneself and the mind which is connected with the concept of God The Almighty (Mayseless & Russo-Netzer, 2017). It can be said that if a teacher has spirituality, then he believes in the existence of God (transcendent) because human nature is a reflection of the nature of God, therefore the teacher's spirituality can emerge because of belief in transcendent (Lepherd, 2015).

### **2.3 Relationship between Spirituality and Prophetic leadership**

Leadership broadens the perspective of leadership on how the relationship between leaders and followers is by emulating the behavior of the Prophet in leading, namely acting based on truth, integrity, personal values and ethical practices. These attitudes and behaviors will emerge if individuals have faith in Allah SWT and feel spiritual values in it which will be connected with the need to emulate prophetic leadership patterns by trying to be *sidiq*, trustworthy, *tabligh*, and *fathonah*. (Irfan budiono et al., 2020). Dalam perspektif Islam, dimensi spiritualitas selalu dihubungkan dengan keberadaan Tuhan, karena tingkah laku manusia adalah produk spiritual dan materinya adalah kepemimpinan. Berbeda dengan konsep kepemimpinan dari perspektif barat yang memisahkan dan membedakan kegiatan kepemimpinan dengan spiritual. Kepemimpinan dalam Islam bertumpu pada spiritualitas (transenden) sehingga mustahil muncul *prophetic leadership* tanpa ada adanya spiritualitas (Abd Rahman et al., 2022).

For a believing Muslim, imitating the Prophet's behavior as an example in behaving and behaving in accordance with the Al-Quran and Sunnah is a must and is a form of submission and love to Allah SWT. This is done with all my heart and faith. In other words, the implementation of spirituality in a Muslim will be seen from his efforts to embody the characteristics of the Prophet in his daily life, including in emulating the Prophet's leadership model (Mirela et al., 2021). Spirituality as a manifestation of a person's belief and closeness to his Creator is a source that drives his efforts to present a prophetic leadership model (El Syam, 2017). On the other hand, if there is no spirituality, the leadership of the Prophet's model will not be an option (Nafi'a & Gumiandari, 2022).

### **2.4. Hypothesis**

This study proposes three hypotheses, namely:

**H1:** *There is a relationship between spirituality and prophetic leadership*

**H2:** *There are differences in spirituality in terms of gender*

**H3:** *There are differences in prophetic leadership in terms of gender*

### 3. Method

This study uses a quantitative approach with the correlation method. A total of 522 teachers, both with the status of Civil Servants (ANS) and non-ASN from elementary to high school levels, spread across Aceh Province, were selected as research samples through the incidental sampling method. The research variables were measured using teacher competency instruments with 32 items and the prophetic leadership scale totaling 24 items developed by researchers and the Daily Spirituality Experience Scale (DSES) adapted from Underwood and Teresi which consists of 16 items (Underwood & Teresi, 2002). All of the instruments were tested and met very good reliability values, namely above 0.8, namely 0.844 for the DSES, 0.948 for the teacher competency scale, and 0.954 for the prophetic leadership scale.

Research data were analyzed using the Spearman rho correlation test to examine the relationship between spirituality and prophetic leadership, and the Mann Whitney test to determine differences in spirituality and prophetic leadership in terms of gender. Data analysis was carried out with the help of the SPSS version 23 program.

### 4. Research Findings

#### a. Research Demographic Data

This research involved 522 teachers in Aceh Province spread across several districts. Table 1 describes the research subjects in full based on demographic data.

**Table 1.** Research Demographic Data

No.	Subject Description	Subject Number	Percentage	Total
1.	Gender			
	Man	139	26.62%	100%
	Woman	383	73.4%	
2.	Age			
	20-40 Years	285	54.6%	100%
	41-60 Years	236	45.21%	
	61-over	1	0.19%	
3.	Employment status			
	ASN teacher	359	68.8%	100%
	Contract Master	163	31.22%	
4	Ministry of origin			
	Ministry of Education and Culture	461	88.31%	100%
	Ministry of Religion	61	11.68%	
5	Teaching Time			
	< 10 years	161	30.84%	100%
	10-20 years	269	51.53%	
	> 20 years	92	17.62%	
6	Subject/School Location			

No.	Subject Description	Subject Number	Percentage	Total
1.	Aceh Besar	54	10.34	100%
2.	Aceh Jaya	14	2.68	
3.	South Aceh	60	11.49	
4.	Aceh Tamiang	5	0.95	
5.	Southeast Aceh	14	2.68	
6.	East Aceh	2	0.38	
7.	North Aceh	1	0.19	
8.	Bener Meriah	4	0.76	
9.	Bireuen	1	0.19	
10.	Nagan Raya	2	0.38	
11.	Pidie Jaya	2	0.38	
12.	Simeulue	2	0.38	
13.	Banda Aceh	78	14.94	
14.	Langsa	266	50.95	
15.	Lhokseumawe	2	0.38	
16.	Sabang	2	0.38	
17.	Subulussalam	13	2.49	

#### 4.2. Hypothesis Testing

The results of data analysis using the Spearman rho correlation test found that there was a positive relationship between spirituality and prophetic leadership with a value of  $r = .247$ ,  $n = 522$ ,  $p < .001$ . This shows that a high score on the teacher's spirituality measurement was followed by a higher display of prophetic leadership. Thus, the research hypothesis (H1) was accepted.

The leadership of a teacher is at the level of instructional, pedagogic, professional competence and attitudes and behavior as an implementation in teaching in the classroom (Bulgaru, 2015). In the Islamic concept, prophetic leadership is attributed to Rasulullah SAW who has internal capabilities in emotional and spiritual terms with the four characteristics of *sidiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathonah* which are actually in line with teacher competence, namely teachers must have pedagogic, professional, personal and social competencies. The implementation of prophetic values by educators is the best choice, because of this nature it allows for changes in the moral and mental education of educators and students because the prophet's leadership includes Amanah as a personality competency, *fathonah* as a professional competency and *tabligh* as a pedagogic competency. Prophetic leadership can be an advantage in the character of educators, because it is able to maintain the harmony between humans and God, that's why a teacher who leads can build the credibility of a teacher (Farichah, 2022).

Leadership becomes a form of spirituality, where the form of spirituality is a belief that is practiced by humans in the form of leadership behavior which in the Islamic view of leadership is an integral part of spiritual beliefs (Brooks & Ezzani, 2022). The practice of leadership in the world of education will involve efforts to understand authentic, consistent and congruent references to spirituality (the leadership of the prophet), because this form of leadership has an impact on the interests of others, leading in this form will help students and colleagues in the



institution in the individual and community development of the school. Teachers who have spiritual values will see this life as more noble and sacred by living the teaching profession as a vocation, finding the purpose of life from serving ideas not for self-gratification (financial) but for the noble purposes of God.

Furthermore, this study also looks at differences in spirituality and prophetic leadership among teachers in terms of gender. The results of the Mann Whitney test found that there was no significant difference in spirituality between male ( $Md = 260.67$ ,  $n = 138$ ) and female ( $Md = 261.80$ ,  $n = 384$ ) teachers,  $U = 26381$ ,  $z = -.076$ ,  $p = .940$ . Conversely, there was a significant difference in prophetic leadership between male ( $Md = 290.81$ ,  $n = 138$ ) and female ( $Md = 250.97$ ,  $n = 384$ ) teachers,  $U = 22451$ ,  $z = -2.669$ ,  $p = .008$ . Male teachers had higher scores on the prophetic leadership variable than female teachers. The results of this study directly reject H2 and instead accept H3.

As previously stated, prophetic leadership is a leadership pattern that presents prophetic values, namely *siddiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh* and *fathanah* in directing and influencing the people they lead (Abd Rahman et al., 2022). The results of this study indicated that male teachers tend to display more prophetic leadership roles which include managerial roles, task completion and decision making, as well as power/influence compared to female teachers. Leadership in Islam requires elements of masculinity such as firm, wise, rational and physically strong characters, especially leadership in the public, social and political spheres that prioritize these characters. This is certainly different from women who emphasize their gentle attitude and rely on feelings. The explanation in the Quran, Surah Annisa, Verse 34, states (Sugiyanto, 2020).

*Men are the caretakers of women, as men have been provisioned by Allah over women and tasked with supporting them financially. And righteous women are devoutly obedient and, when alone, protective of what Allah has entrusted them with.<sup>1</sup> And if you sense ill-conduct from your women, advise them 'first', 'if they persist,' do not share their beds, 'but if they still persist,' then discipline them 'gently'.<sup>2</sup> But if they change their ways, do not be unjust to them. Surely Allah is Most High, All-Great.*

This verse implies that men are leaders who carry out the task of directing women and paying attention to their needs because of the privileges that Allah SWT has specifically assigned to men in the form of excess intelligence and stature so that they can become leaders, rulers, soldiers in war and others. In a cultural context, the societal perspective also reinforces stereotypes of masculinity in leadership so that men are seen as superior individuals and are identified as leaders rather than women. This is one of the explanations that can be put forward regarding the results of this study which found high prophetic leadership in male teachers compared to female teachers. The reason women avoid top positions is because they don't want to sacrifice family life, so the position of leader in an institution is not their first choice (Cahyati et al., 2021).

Based on categorization, the majority of teachers were in the high category, both spirituality (93.3%) and prophetic leadership (99.4%). This data show that almost all subjects have a high spiritual meaning within themselves. This relates to one's belief in God's power in every life that is visible from thoughts and behaviors that fully involve the creator (Yusuf, 2022). Teachers who have high spiritual values will interpret their work as a mandate and a form of responsibility to their God (Harjanti, 2021). Efforts will appear to carry out the task of educating students wholeheartedly. Likewise in the category of prophetic leadership, both male and female subjects have a good understanding of the leadership characteristics of Rasulullah SAW. The teachers in this study have spiritual beliefs and agree on the characteristics of the prophet,

shown by the characteristics of *siddiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathanah* which were in line with the teacher's competence, namely personal, social and professional.

This study also found that there was no difference in spirituality between men and women. This indicates that spirituality is an inseparable part of every human being, therefore both men and women submit themselves to the provisions of the power without any manipulation (Tisdell, 2007). In general, both male and female teachers had the same character strength in terms of spirituality where they interpret the purpose of their profession as a teacher as a responsibility to Allah SWT (Rohyatin et al., 2020).

In the cultural context of Indonesian society, teachers are known as a group of people who are religious and strong with spiritual life. A spiritual person will tend to be obedient in carrying out religious rituals or worship and interpret them as a need and purpose in life. Teachers with high spirituality will interpret their work as worship and continue to strive to be fully involved in the educational process of their students which is not only limited to imparting knowledge but also setting an example for the attitudes, behavior and morals of students (Polisetty & Sheela, 2017). Individual spirituality represents psychological experience, belief and transcendence, because this makes humans work to grow and develop and achieve the goals of what they believe in (Marghzar & Marzban, 2018).

In the view of Islam, spirituality is divine because it comes from God and not from reason, therefore the value of spirituality can cleanse the human soul (bad traits) and make it more pious that is not limited to age, gender and others (Indriyani, 2022). In practice, a teacher will work with compassion and care that will be fair to anyone including not discriminating against students and meeting their needs in knowledge and example (Aslam et al., 2022).

Lazar's research (2016) suggests that pursuing a profession because of God's calling will provide greater and positive benefits and impacts on oneself and others. A teacher who understands his work as worship will certainly try to apply religious teachings and the example of his Prophet in directing, guiding and making decisions that need to be carried out as illustrated by the function of a leader (Lazar et al., 2016). The belief in spirituality inspires people to become teachers, because spirituality influences their perception of how to become a teacher, namely building student morale as the prophet practices it in leading people (Hartwick & Kang, 2013). Work that is based on a calling makes educators more spiritually satisfied and more sincere in doing work (Korkmaz & Menge, 2018). Spirituality studies on teacher's state that spirituality is correlated with prophetic leadership, because educators are seen in their competence and ability to carry out their role as educators (Kumari & Chahal, 2017). Spirituality is an inherent part of every human being, only by managing it can one succeed in acting as an educator because it contains meaning about life (Zhaleh & Ghonsooly, 2017).

Another implementation of the results of this study is also important information about efforts to minimize the problem of the current moral decline of students. It is time for spiritual competence to become part of teacher competence which will strengthen students' moral reasoning processes. The teacher becomes a model or role model directly in conveying moral values and providing an understanding of belief in God at the theoretical to constructive level because it is carried out in an educational situation (Jumala, 2017). Individual life will be better when it is connected to God, because the teacher fosters students with the beliefs they have (Muvid, 2021). Another influence of spirituality is on the presence of prophetic leadership where without faith (spirituality) it is impossible to obtain prophetic leadership. This responds to the educational and moral crisis of the



nation's children, where improvement must start from upstream, namely educators, because the figure of a teacher must be mentally mature and understand the concept of leadership (Wasehudin, 2018). Teachers who deeply understand their spirituality of their belief in God will find it easier to build their awareness to implement the four prophetic traits, namely *Sidiq*, *Amanah*, *Tabligh*, and *Fathonah* which will become models that are directly observed by students. Students will easily learn about moral and ethical values directly through the example of their teachers so that the application of prophetic leadership not only strengthens the personal and professional character of teachers but also becomes the initial spearhead in solving complex problems faced by the nation's young generation today which is increasingly being eroded by a moral crisis in today's digital era (Artanto et al., 2022).

## 5. Conclusion

This study found that spirituality has a relationship with prophetic leadership. Teachers with high spirituality who interpret their work or profession as a mandate and a form of responsibility to Allah SWT will tend to present the leadership values exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Teachers who apply prophetic values in leadership practices in their teaching will provide an ideal learning and educational climate for students. In this case, the teacher not only feels his/her responsibility to deliver material or knowledge but also educates students to behave according to moral and religious values. This application will of course help change the social order of society for the better in producing a knowledgeable and civilized generation where educational institutions are one of the important pillars. On the other hand, this study also found that there was no difference in the results of measuring spirituality for male and female teachers. However, in the results of measuring prophetic leadership, male teachers tend to be higher than women. These findings suggest that in certain contexts, the leadership role of men is more appropriate, especially in the public, social, and political spheres without marginalizing the importance of the role of women in the domestic sphere and relations. In general, every individual is a leader, especially for himself, so it requires efforts to continue to hone skills and competencies as instructed in the teachings of Islam and the role model of the Prophet Muhammad. Spirituality and prophetic leadership are necessary elements present in an educator. Educators substantially become movers, dynamists, and coordinators in conveying God's message so that a life order is achieved that builds a *baladatum thayyibatun warabbun ghafur* society.

## 6. Suggestion for Future Research

This research is limited to the number of individual internal variables, without paying attention to other elements such as personality, competence, culture, and others, so that future research can examine these elements with prophetic leadership. The results of this study also need to be tested in other areas of Indonesia.

## 7. Co-Author Contribution

The author confirms that there is no conflict of interest in this article. Author 1 conducted fieldwork, prepared a literature review and neglected to write an entire article. Author 4 wrote the research methodology and performed data entry. Author 5 performed statistical analysis and interpretation of results.

## 8. Acknowledgements

For the completion of this article, we would like to thank the Association of Teachers of the Republic of Indonesia for the Aceh Region as a partner in collecting data on teachers in Aceh. Hopefully this article is useful and can enrich academic references and in improving the quality of education and in dealing with the problem of the mental crisis of the younger generation, which in education is more value-oriented and dry psychological and spiritual values and the application of prophetic values in education and the social environment.

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