

The Administration of Moral Governance in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Government

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ABSTRACT

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The study aimed to analyze the administration of moral governance in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao government. A descriptive case study using interview guide questions to gather the responses from the 14 participants utilizing purposive sampling to members of the parliament, ministers, religious and tribal leaders, and academic and business sector representatives. The data were refined and clarified by grouping ideas or concepts to form clusters using thematic analysis. As analyzed, moral Governance in Islam is based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). It considers a governance of conscience coupled with good action and right behavior for the day-to-day operations and processes of the Bangsamoro government that must be duly implemented as



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the general habitual practice of all employees. It is the blend result of correct creed (aqeedah), good character (akhlaq), values (qiyam), integrity (nazaha), accountability (mas'ooliya), transparency (shafaafiya), and excellence (tamyeez). However, participants have confided that traditional politicians, leaders, and some professionals with secular knowledge having no or less background in Islamic laws and philosophies were some challenges they would encounter. Thus, to effectively administer moral governance, leadership should be based on Ibadah (worship), Ikhlas (sincerity), Hamd (praise), Sabr (patience), Taqwa (piety), Shura (consultation), Maslaha (public interest) and Tawakkul (reliance to God).

INTRODUCTION

Moral governance, a fundamental concept in ethics and politics, underscores the importance of guiding principles, values, and ethical standards in a society or institution's decision-making and rule-setting processes. It posits that the actions and policies of governments, organizations, and leaders should be grounded in a strong ethical framework to promote justice, fairness, and the well-being of individuals and communities (Arjoon et al., 2018).

The challenge of moral governance is ensuring that those in power adhere to legal regulations and act by a broader sense of right and wrong, ultimately shaping a just and equitable society (Nonet et al., 2017). The government should not merely be concerned with enacting and enforcing laws. However, it should also be guided by a strong ethical framework that upholds principles of justice, fairness, and the well-being of its citizens (Halpern et al., 2019). It is rooted in the belief that government actions and policies should align with a broader sense of right and wrong, meeting legal standards and adhering to a higher ethical code (Raz, 2017).

Moral governance is new in administration development in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao government and elsewhere. The expected moral governance to be adopted and implemented in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao shall be based on the teaching of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) when he organized the people of Makkah and Madinah. Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) categorically emphasized the importance of moral governance as morality and ethics as character-building (Susilawati et al., 2022).

From the Bangsamoro perspective, the challenges are still very much evident. Chief Minister Murad Ebrahim Al-Hajj said, "We cannot allow ourselves to fall complacent; the adversary of a moral government is a citizenry that renders itself complacent. This must also be reflected in the Bangsamoro Transition

Authority and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) government's code of ethics. We can use existing national laws, such as the Republic Act 11032 or the "Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Delivery of Government Services." The Republic Act 6713, or "The Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees," upholds the time-honored principle of public office being a public trust and ensures that the integrity of our leaders is intact.

Further, he emphasized that "the government must evolve into not just about creating and enacting laws, but a government that listens to the people and adjusts legislation accordingly guided by ethics and morality. The Holy Prophet's propagation process was carried out this way. He taught monotheism, Mecca ethics, and Medina religious laws (Husni, 2022). Morality and ethics were used to analyze the success of this concept following the theological method and the scientific method. The theological method is accepted as an undeniable premise that the Prophet possessed a moral character, and these moral principles were accomplished in the political sphere. In contrast, the scientific method is the moral aspect of the Prophet's governance and is considered a mere hypothesis (Isfahani, 2012).

It is incontrovertible that religion and belief systems have their unique proactive role in the evolution of ancient and modern civil societies. It impacts the development of a country, playing an essential role in its economic, political, and social governance (Ghaus-Pasha, 2015, as cited in Malik, 2019). Religion as an ethical doctrine could provide the internal good for development through its social cohesion, cooperation, and virtue-based community doctrines (Fanon, 2016). Cortina (2007), as cited in Malik (2019), surmised that traditional bonds could motivate the work of development by motivating society to attain internal goods within specific ethical and moral frameworks through the cultivation of virtues by different social agents according to specific models facilitated by political, economic, and citizens institutions based on specific philosophical foundations (Malik, 2017).

Thus, it is assumed to be a solution to the social maladies that the BARMM must overcome to create a just, moral government. In this context, this study was conceived to describe how moral governance is conceptualized as a philosophical analysis of the government's workings and how it is to be administered in the development of the Bangsamoro region.

FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on moral administration, which involves ethical conduct and organizational decision-making, emphasizing integrity, accountability, and fairness. It serves as the foundation for moral governance, which extends these principles to the broader societal context. One theoretical framework is based on Kohlberg's (1981) stages of moral development, suggesting that individuals within administrative roles progress through stages of ethical reasoning. This framework posits that a morally competent administration contributes to effective moral governance, fostering a just and responsible society. According to Collins (2007), a commonly used framework for analyzing, assessing, and evaluating moral governance is the "Four-Ethics Framework," which includes four key components, such as Ends-Based Ethics, used to evaluate outcomes and consequences to determine the moral worth of governance decisions. Rule-based ethics assesses decisions based on adherence to moral rules, principles, or codes of conduct, followed by Care Ethics, which considers the impact of decisions on relationships and empathy towards stakeholders, and the Social Contract Ethics used to evaluate decisions in light of agreements and expectations within the societal context. This framework provides a comprehensive approach to moral governance analysis.

Also, in this study, moral governance was based on the Holy Qur'an, described as the law of justice, a just and principled order, and compliance with societal rights and responsibilities (Bhatti & Bhatti, 2009). The Qur'an declares: "Those, when given authority in the land, establish (system of) *salah*, give *zakah* and enjoin what is good (*mauruf*) and forbid what is wrong (*munkar*) (Quran, al-Hajj) (Ahmed, 2019). Islamic view of moral governance includes rules of law (*As-Shura*), *Khilafah*, accountability, transparency, justice, equity, and *Al-amr bil maruf wa nahi al-munkar* (Yunus, 2017).

It is the general view that Islam does not categorically define how a government should be derived or how a person can be elected or made leader of that government (Arjomand, 2001). Imam al-Mawardi stated that several conditions can make a person eligible for supreme leadership. He also stated that supreme leadership can be established either by selection by the electors or appointment by a predecessor. As such, the form of government is not defined in Islam. However, Imam al-Mawardi noted that once a leader has been appointed, he must fulfill ten public duties, including guarding the faith and enforcing the law (Kleidosty, 2018). Islamic jurists have defined those public duties or goals as *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* or the goals and objectives of Islamic Law (Jamaa, 2018).

The *Maqāṣid* have generally been classified into five major categories

- to preserve and promote the well-being of the people by safeguarding their faith (Deen), their lives (Nafs), their intellect (Aql), their progeny (Nasl), and their wealth (Mal) (Rosidi et al., 2022). Thus, the governance of an Islamic nation fulfilling the Maqāṣīd al- Sharī'ah is the manifestation of the Tawḥīd (Khairulyadi & Ahmad, 2017), that is, the juristic component of what a state must do to achieve what it is supposed to govern and administer either as part of the intervention or reclamation-process towards a society that is conducive for the worship of Allah (Cahya et al., 2019).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to analyze the gaps, strengths, and weaknesses of the concept of administration of moral governance in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao government as understood by its employees. This includes the definition of moral governance and its basis, how it will be achieved in BARMM, how it can be applied in the Philippine government, and the challenges the BARMM leaders may encounter in embracing moral governance.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative approach using a case study research design to investigate the research problem. The qualitative case study is a research design that helps explore a phenomenon within some particular context through various data sources, and it undertakes the exploration through various lenses to reveal multiple facets of the phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Qualitative research is an iterative process in which an improved understanding of the scientific community is achieved by making new significant distinctions resulting from getting closer to the phenomenon studied, developed as a tool to help improve research designs (Aspers & Corte, 2019), while a case study design was used as a methodology embedded within this qualitative research study (Alkaabi et al., 2023), because of its ability to provide the researchers with a deeper understanding of specific individuals, an identified problem, or a distinctive situation by closely studying the phenomenon in intensive and great depth (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Hence, this research design was appropriate to use.

Research Site

The study was conducted at the offices, ministries, and agencies of the Bangsamoro government center in Cotabato City, the state university in

Maguindanao, the Higaonon tribe in Lanao del Sur, and the business sector in North Cotabato Provinces.

Participants

The participants of the study were five (5) members of the Parliament of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, one (1) Chief of Staff of the Chief Minister, one (1) Bangsamoro Grand Mufti, One (1) Brigade Commander of the Transporter Division of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces, one (1) Bangsamoro Wali, One (1) Regional Treasurer, one (1) from the Bureau of the Madaris Education, one (1) from the academic sector, one (1) Higaonon tribal leader, and one (1) from the business sector. They were chosen based on their knowledge of the topic, involvement in the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and participation in the Bangsamoro government. Fourteen (14) participants were chosen as the study's sample size using purposive sampling.

Instrumentation

The researchers designed an interview guide questionnaire for the data collection instrument of this study, which was validated by three (3) experts in governance studies. The content of the interview guide questions guided the participants to emerge relevant themes from their experiences. The questionnaire has ten (10) structured questions that involve ethical conduct and organizational decision-making, emphasizing integrity, accountability, and fairness aligned to the Four-Ethics Framework, varying from the participants' personal experiences, observations, and recommendations, and identifying strengths and weaknesses for improvement. This questionnaire encompassed trustworthiness (Polit & Beck, 2010), credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The study followed research ethics protocols such as confidentiality, the role of the researcher, privacy, anonymity, and acknowledgment of works were emphasized due to the study process's in-depth nature concerning ethical issues when conducting face-to-face interviews with vulnerable participants to ensure integrity (Arifin, 2018; Polit & Beck, 2010). Hence, careful examination was required to ensure the privacy and security of the participants. These difficulties were identified to avoid future issues concerning the study process. After describing the study's goal to the participants by text and direct message, they gave their written informed consent release permission. The participants' identities were kept private, and a verbal agreement was obtained before recording. Another ethical consideration in this study was giving due credit to the data sources by citing them properly and ensuring correct citations were made. The data were refined and clarified by grouping ideas or concepts to form clusters using thematic analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Definition of Moral Governance

The themes under the definition of moral governance centered on how the participants understand this concept based on their knowledge of the topic, involvement in the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and participation in the Bangsamoro government. In analyzing the data, three themes emerged:

Moral Governance as a form of governance and leadership style

Almost all participants responded that moral governance is a form of governance and leadership style. According to a member of parliament, Ustadz Said Salendab, BARMM Regional Treasurer:

“Moral governance refers to the people or the nation who run the government according to the laws and policies within their respective country or region. In other words, moral governance means the form of governance where the leaders’ interest is focused on the welfare of the people and the country or region.”

According to Dr. Ismael G. Abdullah, Director of the General Bureau of Madaris Education.

“Moral governance is a form of governance in which the goal is for the good of the people in the region and country in general.”

According to Ustadz Khalifa Nando, Wali of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

“Moral governance is a unique form of governance focused on the employee’s personality to become more responsible and accountable in his/her work.”

Engr. Abedin M. Solano, Chief of Staff of Chief Minister Al-Hajj Murad Ahod B. Ebrahim, said:

“Moral governance can be defined/interpreted in several ways, depending on the culture and religious affiliation of the concerned. It is a form of governance where laws are implemented properly, equally, and humanly.”

Atty. Lanang Ali, Jr., Majority Floor Leader of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, mentioned that in the context of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao,

“Moral governance is the governance of conscience coupled with good action and right behavior as taught in the Qur’an and sunnah for the day-to-day operations and processes of the Bangsamoro government.”

Ali Salik, a member of parliament of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, said:

“Moral governance is a leadership style that takes into utmost account and consideration morality and religion in all acts of leadership. It embodies all core leadership values, including integrity, accountability, transparency, excellence, etc.”

According to Engr. Halim Sandato, a businessman from Pikit, North Cotabato, he said:

“Moral governance is a leadership style that has for its core the teaching and principles of leadership in Islam that does not contravene with the laws of the Philippines.”

This implies that moral governance and leadership style emphasize ethical principles, shaping decision-making processes and fostering a culture of integrity and responsibility within an organization. Moral governance is considered a distinct form of governance and leadership style because it centers on ethical principles, influencing decision-making and organizational culture (Treviño et al., 2006). It involves leaders guiding actions based on moral standards, fostering trust and accountability (Treviño & Brown, 2005).

However, its gaps include subjectivity in defining morality, potential cultural clashes, and challenges balancing diverse perspectives. This is why the Bangsamoro government strictly implements clear ethical guidelines for all newly hired employees, encourages open communication, and provides ongoing moral governance onboard training. Through this, it can foster a diverse and inclusive environment that can help navigate cultural differences while engaging stakeholders in the ethical decision-making process can mitigate subjectivity. Regular assessments and adjustments to ethical frameworks also contribute to a more robust moral governance system.

Moral Governance as Islamic values from the Qur'an and hadith and as ethical values

When asked about the definition of moral governance, the Bangsamoro Grand Mufti, His Eminence Shiekh Abu Huraira Abadulrahman Udasan's concept of moral governance has a basis both in the Qur'an and hadith. In his words:

"Allah Subhanahu Wa Tallah praised the Prophet Mohammad (S.A. W.) for this good moral."

In the Qur'an, specifically in Surah Noor, Allah said in the holy Qur'an, "It is you, Oh Muhammad, who best of you moral."

Further, he said:

"Islamic is not just a mere religion, but a socio-political system, and it is a complete code of each civilization on which religion is a part."

Atty. Lanang Ali, Jr., Majority Floor Leader of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, mentioned:

"Moral governance is based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Mohammad (S.A. W.)."

These statements were further elaborated by Dr. Radzak A. Sam from the academic sector when he responded:

"Moral Governance is Islamic values that must be duly implemented as the general habitual practice of the Bangsamoro people."

This definition was stressed by Ustadz Abdullah Gayak, a member of parliament of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority where he said:

"Moral governance is the overall purpose of ethical values to direct human conduct, and it helps individuals lead good lives by applying moral principles to ensure good governance."

According to a member of parliament, Ustadz Said Salendab, BARMM Regional Treasurer, he added:

“in moral governance, the country’s citizens should feel the fair treatment and equal delivery of basic service from the government and to the people.”

More importantly:

“In moral governance, there was an established code of conduct which led both higher and lower ranks to work to the best of their knowledge and skills.”

Also, Prof. Raby Angkal, Secretary General of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, reiterated that:

“Moral Governance is dearer to Allah (S.W.T.). It is the blend result of correct aqeedah, good akhlaq, and shari’ah on rules of political, social, and economic affairs.”

Hence, *“if moral governance is pursued, it will develop the Bangsamoro homeland,”* as Benzar Hadji Ali, Brigade Commander of the Transporter Division of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces, responded.

This implies that moral governance is rooted in Islamic values from the Qur’an and Hadith, which involve aligning societal structures with the principles outlined in these sacred texts. It emphasizes justice, compassion, honesty, integrity, and equality (Aziz & Ahmad, 2019), while moral governance as ethical values transcend religious boundaries (ElKaleh & Samier, 2013; Schwartz, 2005) and focuses on universally accepted principles of right and wrong (Crossan et al., 2013; Eisenbeiß & Brodbeck, 2014).

However, differing interpretations of religious texts, cultural variations, political manipulation, potential misuse of power, and conflicts between religious and secular perspectives can pose challenges to the administration of moral governance. That is why fostering open dialogue, emphasizing education on shared values, and implementing accountable governance structures ensure accountability, transparency, and respect for Islamic and broader ethical values and can help align actions with ethical principles.

Moral Governance provides better services.

When asked about the definition of moral governance, two participants mentioned:

“Moral governance is about cooperation and providing services by the government through donation,” as for Datu Renelio Sisayan, Chieftain of the Higaonon tribe of Tagoloan II, Lanao Del Sur.

This definition, according to Dr. Mohammad S. Yacob, a member of parliament and Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reform, *“is the theory of the BARMM Chief Minister that he wants to be implemented in his administration.”*

Moral governance often leads to better services as it prioritizes fairness, transparency, and accountability. Citizens are likelier to trust organizations that operate ethically, fostering cooperation and social harmony (Van Bavel & Packer, 2021). Additionally, moral governance promotes long-term sustainability by considering the well-being of future generations. It encourages responsible decision-making considering environmental, social, and economic factors, contributing to holistic and enduring benefits (Downe et al., 2016). However, challenges arise in defining universal moral standards, and implementing them consistently can be complex. To overcome this, strict monitoring and evaluation of the programs and projects implemented by the Bangsamoro government can help.

Basis of Moral Governance

In analyzing the data, the Qur’an and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and Republic Act No. 6713 emerged as the themes:

Moral Governance based on the Qur’an and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

When the participants were asked about the basis of moral governance, almost all participants responded:

The Bangsamoro Grand Mufti, His Eminence Shiekh Abuhuraira Abadulrahman Udasan, said:

“the basis of moral governance is the glorious Qur’an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). The glorious Qur’an is the constitution of Islamic life. It is the final word of Allah to mankind. The second basis is the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), demonstrated by the Prophet during his time.”

For Dr. Radzak Sam, *“the basis of moral governance is the teaching of the Qur’an and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) of the true Islamization by heart and mind.”*

According to Benzar Hadji Ali, Brigade Commander Transporter Division of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces, is the *“Qur’an and Hadith”*

To Ustadz Khalifa Nando Wali of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao,

“The basis of this form of government was the four caliphates until the time of the Ottoman empire and their other Muslim leaders.”

According to Dr. Ismael G. Abdullah, Director of the General Bureau of Madaris Education,

“The basis of moral governance is the Qur’an and the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W).”

For Prof. Raby Angkal, Secretary General of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“The basis of moral governance is the divine revelation (Qur’an), Sunnah of the Prophet (S.A.W.), Ijma (consensus of the learned authorities), Qiyas, Constitution, and values.”

According to Ustadz Abdullah Gayak, a member of parliament of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“The general objective is to ensure good governance with prime concern for moral values, practices, and behavior.”

To Ali Salik, member of parliament of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“Although they cannot be wholly implemented as there are restrictions and/or limitations under the law, the basis of Moral governance, as how I understand it, are the Qur’an, the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, and the Ijma and Qiyas.”

According to Atty. Lanang Ali, Jr., Majority Floor Leader Bangsamoro Transition Authority, is the “*Qur’an and Sunnah*.”

For Dr. Mohammad S. Yacob, a member of parliament and Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reform, it is the “*Quran and Sunnah*.”

To Engr. Halim Sandato a businessman from Pikit, North Cotabato is the “*Qur’an and Hadith*.”

However, for Engr. Abedin M. Solano, chief of staff of Chief Minister Al-Hajj Murad Ahod B. Ebrahim, said, “*The basis of moral governance is adherence to the written books of all religions and traditional cultures of the different Filipino tribes*.” Also, the basis of moral governance, according to Datu Renelio Sisayan, chieftain Higaonon tribes of Tagoloan 1, Lanao Del Sur, is “*faith and values*.”

Moral governance in Islam is derived from the Qur’an and Hadith, which guide ethical behavior and societal conduct. The Qur’an is the primary source, containing verses emphasizing justice, compassion, and integrity (Faris et al., 2018). Hadith, the sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), further elaborate on ethical principles (Salin et al., 2020). Ultimately, the Qur’an and Hadith provide a comprehensive ethical framework, and its effective implementation requires a holistic approach involving leadership, community, education, and individual commitment to Islamic values.

However, the basis of moral governance may be interpreted differently, leading to divergent moral perspectives, while cultural influences may impact the application of ethical principles. Additionally, individual shortcomings can undermine moral governance. Addressing these challenges involves promoting a deep understanding of Quranic and Hadith teachings, fostering intercultural dialogue to bridge gaps, and emphasizing individual moral development through education and awareness. Encouraging scholars to provide contextually relevant interpretations helps align moral governance with evolving societal needs.

Moral Governance based on Republic Act No. 6713

When asked about the basis of moral governance, Ustadz Said Salendab, a member of parliament and the BARMM Regional Treasurer, stressed:

Moral governance is based on Republic Act No. 6713, an act establishing a code of conduct and ethical standards for public officials and employees. On the other hand, from the perspective of Islam, the principle and fundamental purpose of

Islamic morality is love for God's creatures. Additionally, the religious conception is that humankind will behave morally and treat each other in the best possible manner to please Allah. In short, both Islamic and non-Islamic perspectives are sources and basis of moral governance."

This implies that moral governance serves as the ethical compass for those in public service, outlining principles and standards to ensure integrity, accountability, and transparency as stipulated in Republic Act 6713, the "Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees" in the Philippines. This legislation is a clear framework for ethical behavior, which aims to cultivate a culture of trust, promote public welfare, and safeguard the interests of the Filipino people (Hernando, 2020). This legal foundation is crucial for maintaining moral governance, fostering public confidence, and upholding the values essential for effective and responsible public service (Brillantes & Fernandez, 2011; Nuñez & Guhao Jr, 2020).

However, it can be pointed out that moral governance under RA 6713 is challenged by certain issues, such as enforcement of this law, inconsistent implementation, potential conflicts of interest, the difficulty in comprehensively monitoring public officials' behavior, and the need for clearer definitions of ethical standards. To address these, strengthening oversight mechanisms, providing comprehensive training, and periodically reviewing and refining the legal framework to adapt to evolving ethical concerns could be beneficial.

Challenges Experienced in Adopting the Concept of Moral Governance

In analyzing the data, the themes that emerged were the traditional politicians and misunderstanding of the teachings of Islam:

Traditional Politicians

When asked about the challenges experienced in adopting the concept of moral governance, almost all the participants mentioned traditional politics or politicians.

Prof. Raby Angkal, Secretary General Bangsamoro Transition Authority, reiterated:

"traditional politicians, leaders, Philippine constitution, professionals with 100% secular knowledge having no or less background of Qur'an, Sunnah, and shari'ah Islamiya."

According to Dr. Radzak Sam, the challenges that the BARMM may experience:

“Are the vested interest of a person in power, the traditional politicians, insatiable businessmen, and greedy people.”

For Datu Renelio Sisayan, Chietain Higaonon tribes of Tagoloan 1, Lanao Del Sur,

“The challenges faced by the moral governance is traditional politics.”

Benzar Hadji Ali, Brigade Commander Transporter Division of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces, is the presence of the *“traditional politicians.”*

Honorable Engr. Abedin M. Solano, chief of staff of the chief minister Al-Hajj Murad Ahod B. Ebrahim, said:

“the big challenge facing the BARMM is choosing the right leaders and placing the right person to the right functions.”

According to Atty. Lanang Ali, Jr. Majority Floor Leader Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“Constitution, spoilers, status quo, the corrupt mindset of the few Bangsamoro.”

According to Ustadz Khalifa Nando Wali of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao,

“The challenge is how to uniformly understand the Interim Chief Minister concept and how it relates to his 12-point agenda.”

According to a member of parliament, Ustadz Said Salendab, BARMM Regional Treasurer,

“The difference of beliefs, orientation, experiences, exposures, cultures, and practices as well as the acceptability of BARMM to non-pro BARMM.”

According to Ustadz Abdullah Gayak, a member of Parliament Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“The crucial concern is how the organization relates to each other, how they relate to citizens, and how citizens are given voice.”

Ali Salik, a member of parliament of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, said:

“Moral governance is not a new concept; however, it is seldom applied. One can say that it is not a popular concept; therefore, its current implementation seems to be new to everyone. Its adoption is a great change from the previous setup. And like all things new, there is a sense of unease, confusion, and discomfort in the people, officials, and the populace alike, in its acceptable. However, I am positive that through time and continued enforcement, moral governance will become as easy and natural as breathing.”

This implies that traditional politicians or politics are one of the challenges experienced in adopting moral governance due to various factors. These include entrenched power structures, a history of patronage politics, and prioritizing short-term gains over long-term ethical considerations (Atia & Herrold, 2018). Sources of resistance to moral governance can stem from vested interests, a lack of accountability mechanisms, and a reluctance to change established practices that may not align with ethical standards (Bowman & West, 2021). Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive reforms such as implementing transparent and accountable systems, strengthening anti-corruption measures, and fostering an ethical leadership culture. Drawing inspiration from successful case studies, such as countries with effective anti-corruption strategies or political movements advocating for moral governance, can provide valuable insights.

Misunderstanding of the Teachings of Islam

The second theme that emerged as one of the challenges experienced by the participants in adopting the concept of moral governance is a misunderstanding of some Bangsamoros about the teachings of Islam.

According to the Bangsamoro Grand Mufti, His Eminence Shiekh Abuhuraira Abadulrahman Udasan mentioned:

“The moral government will be facing many challenges, one of which is that many people misunderstand what Islam is; this will make moral government develop.”

This statement was supported by Dr. Mohammad S. Yacob, a Member of

Parliament and minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reform, where he said:

“Ignorance of majority of the people of BARMM about Islam as a good citizen of the country.”

Also, to Dr. Ismael G. Abdullah, Director General of the Bureau of Madaris Education, he stressed:

“The challenge is how to change the attitude of the Bangsamoro from the old practices, which they feel more comfortable with, to what is desired, but against the teaching of Islam.”

For Engr. Halim Sandato, a businessman from Pikit, North Cotabato, mentioned the *“Church and State”* as the challenge he experienced in adopting the concept of moral governance.

Misunderstandings about Islam’s teachings often arise from cultural biases, political agendas, and misinterpretations of religious texts, posing challenges in implementing moral governance rooted in Islamic principles.

Misunderstandings about Islam often arise due to misinterpretations of its teachings. One challenge in adopting moral governance is the diversity of interpretations within the Muslim community. Various cultural, historical, and political factors contribute to differing perspectives on Islamic principles (Sahin, 2018). Sources of misunderstanding can include selective quoting of religious texts, lack of context, and ignorance of the historical and cultural context of certain practices (Sardar, 2017). To address these challenges, promoting education on Islam, fostering interfaith dialogue, and encouraging open discussions within the Muslim community are essential. Scholars and religious leaders also play a crucial role in clarifying misconceptions and promoting a nuanced understanding of Islamic teachings.

Form of Leadership the BARMM May Adopt

In analyzing the data, the themes that emerged were collective and consultative leadership, Islamic leadership, and principled leadership:

Collective and Consultative Leadership

When asked about the form of leadership the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao government may adopt, participants mentioned collective and consultative leadership.

The Member of Parliament, Ustadz Said Salendab, BARMM regional treasurer, mentioned:

“In the first place, BARMM was crafted from the struggle of the Bangsamoro people and is currently run by the revolutionary people. Regarding what leadership may adopt until now, the BARMM leadership remains consultative to its constituents as part of moral governance.”

According to Dr. Radzak Sam,

“BARMM may adopt the very essence of leadership, which is collective and consultative, so that all will be involved and may be able to share their ideas.”

Benzar Hadji Ali, Brigade Commander Transporter Division of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces,

“Leadership of the BARMM may adopt consultative and collective leadership guided by Qur’an and Hadith.”

Ustadz Khalifa Nando, Wali of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao,

“The BARMM should adopt the collective form of leadership from the top level to the lower leaders.”

To Dr. Ismael G. Abdullah, Director General Bureau of Madaris Education is the *“Consultative leadership.”*

Based on these responses, collective and consultative leadership appeared to be the most preferred form of leadership that the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) government may adopt. Collective leadership is often favored for several reasons, particularly in complex and diverse

settings like the BARMM government, because decision-making is distributed among a group of leaders rather than concentrated in a single individual (Yukl, 1981; 2012; Yukl et al., (2019). While consultative leadership, on the other hand, emphasizes seeking input and feedback from various stakeholders before making decisions (Ashford et al., 2009; Ekowati et al., 2023).

However, the gaps in collective and consultative leadership may arise from challenges in coordination, potential conflicts of interest, and slower decision-making processes. Implementing clear communication channels, fostering a culture of collaboration, and establishing efficient decision-making protocols can be crucial to addressing these gaps. It is important to address potential challenges in the form of time constraints and conflicting opinions and ensure a balance between consultation and decisive action to maintain efficiency in governance.

Islamic Leadership

Some participants mentioned Islamic leadership when asked about the form of leadership the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao government may adopt.

According to the Bangsamoro Grand Mufti, His Eminence Shiekh Abuhuraira Abadulrahman Udasan said:

“The kind of leadership that should be adopted in moral governance is Islamic leadership. As some researchers define, Islamic leadership influences and directs the group’s tasks. Further, Islamic leadership is based on the Qur’an and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A. W).”

For Datu Renelio Sisayan, chieftain Higaonon tribes of Tagoloan 1, Lanao Del Sur, and Engr. Halim Sandato, a businessman from Pikit, North Cotabato, also mentioned *“Islamic Leadership.”*

Atty. Lanang Ali, Jr., Majority Floor Leader Bangsamoro Transition Authority, is the *“Leadership of Caliph Umar Ibn Al-Khattab.”*

For Dr. Mohammad S. Yacob, a Member of Parliament and Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reform,

“Islamic leadership; the collective and consultative leadership.”

Islamic leadership in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) government is rooted in principles derived from Islamic teachings. It emphasizes justice, compassion, consultation, and accountability (Nasab, 2016). Islamic leadership strongly emphasizes serving the community and promoting the well-being of its members (Rafiki, 2020). However, there are potential gaps in adopting this form of leadership, such as the interpretation and application of Islamic principles, potential biases, and challenges in balancing religious and secular governance. To address these gaps, the BARMM government can establish clear guidelines for interpreting and applying Islamic principles in governance to ensure consistency and fairness, implement transparent and accountable governance mechanisms to address potential biases and ensure the responsible use of power, and foster strong community engagement to understand and address the needs and concerns of the people, aligning with the Islamic emphasis on serving the community.

Principled Leadership

Three participants mentioned principled leadership when asked about the form of leadership the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao government may adopt.

According to Prof Raby Angkal, Secretary General Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“Principled leadership, leading based on Ibadah, Ikhlas, Hamd, Sabr, taqwa, Ihsan, Shura, Maslaha, and Tawakkul.”

Ustadz Abdullah Gayak, a member of parliament of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“The essential duty of governance is to effectively and equitably implement the social contract, changeover the liberation and economic reforms.”

According to Ali Salik, a member of parliament of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“BARMM may adopt moral governance as its form of leadership.”

Principled leadership in the context of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) government involves adhering to ethical principles, transparency, and accountability. It emphasizes fairness, integrity, and a commitment to the well-being of the people. However, gaps in principled leadership may arise, such as potential conflicts of interest, lack of inclusivity, and insufficient mechanisms for public participation (Hendrikz & Engelbrecht, 2019; Kumar & Dhiman, 2020). To address these gaps, the BARMM government can implement robust ethics training for officials, establish clear conflict-of-interest policies, and actively involve diverse stakeholders in decision-making processes. Additionally, enhancing transparency through regular public reporting and fostering a culture of accountability can contribute to more effective principled leadership.

The Need for Moral Governance in BARMM

In analyzing the data, the theme that emerged was possible zero corruption:

Possible Zero Corruption

Participants mentioned a possible zero corruption when asked about the need for moral governance in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

According to the Bangsamoro Grand Mufti Shiekh Abuhuraira Abadulrahman Udasan:

“Moral governance is necessary for the BARMM if you base moral governance on the Qur’an and Hadith; so many verses in the Quran are our basis in running moral governance, and there should be zero corruption. There should be a balance of honesty and zero corruption.”

To Ustadz Khalifa Nando, Wali of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao,

“Moral governance is needed because of the reformation not only in good leadership but also in the employee’s personality.”

For Prof. Raby Angkal, Secretary General Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“Moral governance is needed in BARMM for acceptable change from bad to good, from good to better and from better to excellence, for the attainment of

guidance, blessing, and rewards from Allah (S.W.T.), for the attainment of just and dignified peace and the general welfare and benefits of the public.”

According to Atty. Lanang Ali, Jr. Majority Floor Leader Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“Moral governance is needed because, as stated, the previous Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) was a failed experiment, and the corruption in the ARMM became practiced among the Bangsamoro leaders and, therefore, it was rampant. To guide the next leaders of the Bangsamoro in the BARMM, moral governance in the BARMM must be institutionalized.”

Dr. Radzak Sam said:

“Moral Governance is indeed needed in BARMM since we did not accept the ARMM status-quo as a failed experiment based on the statement of former Philippine President Benigno Aquino, Jr.”

Based on the responses, there is a need to adopt moral governance in the Bangsamoro Autonomous in Muslim Mindanao because of possible zero corruption. However, achieving zero corruption is challenging. Adopting moral governance in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) can substantially minimize corrupt practices (Harutyunyan, 2021). Moral governance through collective and consultative leadership, including Islamic and principled leadership, fosters a culture of transparency, accountability, and integrity, reducing the incentive and creating an environment less prone to corrupt practices (Faris & Abdalla, 2017; Hamoudah et al., 2021).

Will Moral Governance be applicable in the Democratic Republic of the Philippines?

In analyzing the data, the themes that emerged were the following: applicable through consultation and applicable through an asymmetric relationship.

Applicable through consultation and promotion of ethical practices

When asked about the applicability of moral governance in the Democratic Republic of the Philippines, almost all participants indirectly stressed that it is applicable through consultation.

According to Prof. Raby Angkal, Secretary General Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“Moral governance is good and is applicable through effective consultation, aiming at peace, unity, progress, and development. Leaders are elected through the democratic will of the people.”

According to Ustadz Abdullah Gayak, a member of parliament of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, said:

“It is hard that ethics and moral governance can bring good governance and maximum public welfare; therefore, government and private employees must promote ethical practices in administration.”

For Dr. Ismael G. Abdullah, Director General Bureau of Madaris Education,

“Moral governance will be applicable in any form of government because it teaches good and prohibits evil actions.”

Similarly, Honorable Engr. Abedin M. Solano, chief of staff of the chief minister Al-Hajj Murad Ahod B. Ebrahim, said:

“do not do to others what others you do not want to do to you.”

For Datu Renelio Sisayan, chieftain Higaonon tribes of Tagoloan 1, Lanao Del Sur,

“The best methodology is convincing power to the Bangsamoro people and masses.”

According to Dr. Mohammad S. Yacob, a member of parliament and Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reform, it is through *“advocacy and education.”*

Based on the responses, participants have the same thoughts that moral governance is applicable in the Democratic Republic of the Philippines through consultation and promotion of ethical practices. This involves guiding principles, ethical conduct, and organizational or societal decision-making (Kem, 2016). In this context, consultation fosters open discussions to determine shared values (Bettini & Head, 2016). Ethical practices are promoted through transparency, accountability, and a commitment to moral standards (Bietti, 2020).

Applicable through asymmetric relationships

When asked about the applicability of moral governance in the Democratic Republic of the Philippines, some participants mentioned that it is applicable through asymmetric relationships.

According to Ali Salik, a member of parliament of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“Moral governance in BARMM will be applicable through an asymmetric relationship with the national government. Through it has for its basis Islam, moral governance is never meant to contravene with the laws of the Philippines.”

To Engr. Halim Sandato, a Pikit, North Cotabato businessman, is *“by asymmetric form of government.”*

Benzar Hadji Ali, Brigade Commander of the Transporter Division of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces, says it is *“if there is a good relationship.”*

According to Ustadz Khalifa Nando, Wali of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao,

“Moral governance will be applicable in this country because of our being autonomous, through the Presidential Decree 1083 known as Code of Muslim Personal Laws, and also in the Philippine Constitution.”

According to Atty. Lanang Ali, Jr. Majority Floor Leader Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“Although the BARMM is still subject to the provisions of the constitution, the moral governance can co-exist with the Philippines government. It is my humble opinion that all actions, processes, and practices in the Philippine governance that are not declared haram are halal.”

According to a member of parliament, Ustadz Said Salendab, BARMM regional treasurer,

“If the BARMM leadership is doing its mandate according to what is stipulated in the Bangsamoro Organic Law but not going beyond the 1987 Philippine Constitution, moral governance will be applicable in the Democratic Republic of the Philippines. Accordingly, if something is unclear between the central government and the BARMM, the party will bring the issue to the proper venue.”

Likewise, the Bangsamoro Grand Mufti, His Eminence Shiekh Abuhuraira Abadulrahman Udasan, said:

“You know, many people think it is impossible to introduce moral governance in the Democratic Republic of the Philippines because of the different system. In the Philippines, there is a presidential system, while in the BARMM, there is a ministerial system, but it is very possible to have harmony between these two systems, the parliamentary system and the presidential system of the Republic of the Philippines. This will depend on how the leadership of BARMM will be in harmony with the leadership of the national government.”

Participants stressed that moral governance is applicable through asymmetric relationships when power, knowledge, or resources are shared between the central government and the BARMM. These relationships often involve one party having more influence or control than the other (Tedeschi, 2017; Emerson, 2019). While moral governance is crucial in fostering fairness and accountability, its application has inherent gaps. One notable gap is the potential for exploitation by the more powerful party. The imbalance in resources or authority can lead to abuses of power, undermining the ethical foundation of the relationship. Additionally, communication challenges may arise, making it difficult for the less powerful party to express concerns or assert their rights. Implementing checks and balances, such as external oversight or ethical committees, can also help mitigate the risk of exploitation, and transparency and open communication are vital to address these gaps.

How will Moral Governance Be Achieved in BARMM?

In analyzing the data, the emerging themes were achievable through education and advocacy and achievable through compliance with the law and Islamic points of view.

Achievable through education and advocacy

Almost all participants mentioned education and advocacy when asked whether moral governance will be achieved in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Dr. Ismael G. Abdullah, Director of the General Bureau of Madaris Education, said:

“through education.”

To Raby Angkal, Secretary General Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“Strong political will of the executive, and strengthened da’wah and education.”

According to Ustadz Khalifa Nando, Wali of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao,

“This will be achieved through continuous advocacy from the top to the lower level and also continuous monitoring of the monthly performance of all agencies.”

For Atty. Lanang Ali, Jr. Majority Floor Leader Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“Moral governance will be achieved in BARMM through capacity building, training, and seminars of all employees with the participation of our fellow professionals graduated from known universities in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan.”

According to Dr. Mohammad S. Yacob, a member of parliament and Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reform, it is through *“advocacy and in-depth study of Islam as a way of life.”*

Likewise, the Bangsamoro Grand Mufti Shiekh Abuhuraira Abadulrahman Udasan said:

“In the Philippine government, we must educate our people to achieve moral governance in BARMM.”

According to Datu Renelio Sisayan, chieftain Higaonon tribes of Tagoloan 1, Lanao Del Sur is through *“advocacy, participation, and cooperation.”*

To Engr. Halim Sandato, a businessman from Pikit, North Cotabato, said:

“Educate the people and let the people feel the presence of moral governance.”

According to Ustadz Abdullah Gayak, a member of parliament of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority,

“the advancement of ethics and moral values in good governance suggest legality of

government action, rationality in policy, and decision-making involving a sense of responsibility, ensuring accountability, and strengthening work commitment.”

Based on the responses, moral governance is achievable through education and advocacy, as these pillars foster ethical awareness, critical thinking, and responsible decision-making. Education imparts values, shaping individuals' moral compass (Sarbaitinil et al., 2023), while advocacy ensures the dissemination and reinforcement of ethical principles in society (Dudgeon et al., 2017).

However, gaps in this approach exist. Firstly, educational systems may lack a standardized moral curriculum, leading to inconsistent values. Additionally, advocacy efforts might face resistance or fail to reach certain demographics, leaving pockets of moral ambiguity. To address these gaps, establishing a comprehensive moral education framework and integrating ethical teachings across disciplines can promote consistent values. Moreover, targeted advocacy campaigns utilizing diverse media channels and community engagement can bridge outreach disparities, ensuring a more inclusive moral governance approach.

Achievable through compliance with the law and Islamic points of view

When asked whether moral governance will be achieved in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, some participants mentioned it through compliance with the law and Islamic points of view.

According to a member of parliament, Ustadz Said Salendab, BARMM regional treasurer,

“The main pre-requisite of achieving moral governance in BARMM is the compliance of the above-mentioned legal basis R.A. 6713 and the Islamic point of view. Secondly, when the delivery of basic services is equal to the people regardless of tribes and religion, moral governance will be achieved.”

Benzar Hadji Ali, Brigade Commander of the Transporter Division of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces, mentioned:

“if Qur'an and Hadith will guide the leadership.”

Engr. Abedin M. Solano, Chief Minister Al-Hajj Murad Ahod B. Ebrahim's chief of staff, said, *“Choosing the right leaders.”*

According to Ali Salik, a member of parliament of the Bangsamoro

Transition Authority,

“Moral governance may be achieved through incessant and continued observance and enforcement by all the Bangsamoro people, government officials and ordinary constituents alike.”

Moral governance can be pursued through the dual lenses of legal compliance and Islamic principles. Adhering to the law establishes a societal framework, ensuring a baseline of ethical behavior (Wood et al., 2015). Simultaneously, Islamic perspectives offer a moral compass rooted in religious teachings (Memon & Alhashmi, 2018). However, challenges arise when legal systems fall short of encompassing all moral dimensions, and interpretations of Islamic principles may vary. Fostering dialogue between legal and religious scholars is crucial to address these challenges. This synergy can refine legal frameworks to better align with shared moral values. Moreover, public awareness campaigns can bridge gaps in understanding, promoting a collective sense of morality. Key sources for this integrated approach include legal texts, Islamic jurisprudence, and scholarly works on ethics, creating a comprehensive foundation for moral governance.

Possible Methodologies to Adopt Moral Governance

In analyzing the data, the emerging theme was educating the Bangsamoro people.

Educating the Bangsamoro people

All participants mentioned educating the Bangsamoro people when asked about the possible methodologies to adopt moral governance.

According to Dr. Mohammad S. Yacob, a member of parliament and Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Agrarian Reform, stated:

“to educate the Bangsamoro people about Islam and moral governance and disseminating knowledge of what people should and should not do.”

Dr. Ismael G. Abdullah, Director of the General Bureau of Madaris Education, responded:

“Educating the Bangsamoro people is the possible methodology to adopt moral governance so they understand what is wrong and follow halal.”

According to Ali Salik, a member of parliament of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, mentioned:

“the best methodology for the Bangsamoro people to adopt moral governance easily is education. Moral governance must be taught to all Bangsamoro people.”

For Atty. Lanang Ali, Jr., Majority Floor Leader Bangsamoro Transition Authority, stressed:

“Moral governance can be adopted by the Bangsamoro people through education in both English and Arabic in all schools, colleges, and universities in the BARMM by way of teaching especially the history of Islam from Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and the caliphs; Abubakar, Umar, and Uthman on a better understanding of moral governance.”

Also, Raby Angkal, Secretary General Bangsamoro Transition Authority, said:

“grassroots systematic education on moral governance, leadership by example, by the local government units executives, and the rule of law should exist and be uniformly implemented, prevent and eliminate social, economic, political, and spiritual corruption.”

According to a member of parliament, Ustadz Said Salendab, BARMM regional treasurer,

“There is a need to strengthen the advocacy on moral governance through education from the top to the grassroots. This includes ensuring an updated, equal, and fair delivery of essential services among the constituents and ensuring oppression has no room in BARMM.”

According to Bazar Hadji Ali, Brigade Commander of the Transporter Division of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces, mentioned:

“education, communication, and coordination among leaders.”

Ustadz Abdullah Gayak, a member of parliament of the Bangsamoro

Transition Authority, said:

“Another possible method to adopt moral governance is through Motivating and educating the Bangsamoro people.”

Also, to Engr. Abedin M. Solano, chief of staff of Chief Minister Al-Hajj Murad Ahod B. Ebrahim, responded:

“is based on the Qur’an and Da’wah and hadith prescribed in moral governance.”

According to Bangsamoro Grand Mufti, His Eminence Shiekh Abuhuraira Abadulrahman Udasan,

“moral governance in BARMM should be inclusive regardless of tribe and religion.”

According to Datu Renelio Sisayan, chieftain Higaonon tribes of Tagoloan 1, Lanao Del Sur, said:

“Using education and convincing power to the Bangsamoro people and masses is a possible methodology to adopt moral governance.”

As mentioned by Engr. Halim Sandato, a businessman from Pikit, North Cotabato,

“The BARMM must have honest and fair leaders who will educate the Bangsamoro people.”

As supported by Ustadz Khalifa Nando, Wali of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, stated:

“They should set a good example for the followers to adopt moral governance quickly.”

Educating the Bangsamoro people involves implementing a multifaceted

approach, such as Culturally Tailored Curriculum, Inclusive Education, Peace Education, Community Involvement, Resource Allocation, Language Inclusivity, Vocational Training, and Conflict-Sensitive Teaching.

Implementing this approach involves addressing challenges such as limited educational resources, cultural diversity, and historical grievances (Khamis, 2022). To overcome these issues, educational initiatives should be continuously evaluated and adapted to address emerging challenges and ensure their effectiveness in promoting moral governance.

Model of Moral Governance in the Present Administration of BARMM

In analyzing the data, the emerging theme was the head of the Bangsamoro government and all its leaders.

The Interim Chief Minister, Members of Parliament, and all Bangsamoro Leaders

When asked who will be the model of moral governance in the present administration of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, all participants responded :

“the interim chief minister, his cabinet members, and all Bangsamoro leaders are advocating moral governance.”

For several compelling reasons, the Chief Minister of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and other leaders, such as members of the parliament and the ministers, are regarded as role models of moral governance. Their commitment to ethical leadership is evident in their consistent adherence to principles that prioritize the welfare of the people. This involves upholding transparency, accountability, and integrity in decision-making processes, fostering trust among the diverse communities within the region. Besides, part of the BARMM strategy is to promote moral governance through an updated and fair distribution of essential services to the people. They should be a God-fearing leader, a mujahid, a man with a good reputation and moral ascendancy.

They should impose the moral virtues of Islam because it is for humanity and not for Muslims alone. Ultimately, moral governance is about inner change, a spiritual matter that comes about through the internalization of universal Islamic values. This can be done by incorporating Islamic principles into the framework of moral governance while respecting the diverse perspectives within a society.

That is why BARMM employees are required to attend the onboard training on moral governance conducted by the Development Academy of Bangsamoro.

Moral Governance as a Possible Solution for Injustice, Poverty, Nepotism, and Corruption

When asked if moral governance is a possible solution for the injustice, poverty, nepotism, and corruption in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, the participants said yes.

However, some emphasized that moral governance is not a solution to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a vanguard of the Islamic movement in the Bangsamoro homeland in Mindanao and the neighboring islands, seeking autonomy for Filipino Muslims, claimed of injustice, poverty, nepotism, and corruption. Still, it can be part of the solution -Ustadz Said Salendab, BARMM regional treasurer.

Also, it was mentioned that moral governance could be practiced and implemented by all leaders from the top down to the lower level. Moreover, maybe, according to Ustadz Khalifa Nando, Wali of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, this is one of the stepping stones to address the decades of injustices, poverty, and all other unethical practices.

Moral governance is principally against all forms of injustices, evil deeds, abuses, poverty, nepotism, and corruption, as Prof. Raby Angkal, Secretary General Bangsamoro Transition Authority, stated. This was supported by Ustadz Abdullah Gayak, a member of parliament of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, where for him, the challenge for moral governance is, instead, advancing a government that is ethical and moral. A government whose vision is lasting peace, stability, democracy, and progress but all in the context of and is limited by ethical and moral values. Nevertheless, there is a need to change the mindset of the Bangsamoro people to eradicate the status quo, including the unity of the Bangsamoro people to establish moral governance, as opined by Atty. Lanang Ali, Jr. Majority Floor Leader Bangsamoro Transition Authority.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study's findings, the researchers conclude that the parliament and BARMM employees know moral governance. As defined, moral Governance in Islam is based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Mohammad (S.A.W.). It considers a governance of conscience coupled with good action and right behavior for the day-to-day operations and processes of the Bangsamoro government that must be duly implemented as the general habitual

practice of all employees. It is the blend result of correct creed (aqeedah), good character (akhlaq), values (qiyam), integrity (nazaha), accountability (mas'ooliya), transparency (shafaafiya), and excellence (tamyeez).

For the government to implement essential social services effectively, a governance based on the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) shall be adopted. It is important to note that collective and consultative leadership combined with Islamic and principled leadership are the answer to the management crisis of any bureaucratic leadership and that the BARMM and the entire nation need moral governance. These should be based on Ibadah (worship), Ikhlas (sincerity), Hamd (praise), Sabr (patience), Taqwa (piety), Shura (consultation), Maslaha (public interest), and Tawakkul (reliance on God). The regional government and national government should unite and cooperate to attain moral governance, including educating the people in BARMM territory on moral governance is very much needed.

The parliamentary and ministerial form of government of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao was based on the Republic Act 11054, otherwise known as the Organic Law of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region. It has been the longing and burning aspiration of the Bangsamoro people of Mindanao for almost half a century of the struggle of the Mujahideen for self-determination. They ascertain that they can cope with good governance since they have principled values and forms of leadership, which are moral governance, transparency, accountability, professionalism, and excellence. Thus, moral governance requires an integrated, long-term strategy built upon cooperation between government and citizens. It involves the participation of different institutions.

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

The findings of the study could be incorporated into the office manual of each ministry and agency, which can be used during the employee induction program, emphasizing the importance of moral governance in strengthening public service delivery. Also, the study's findings could be adopted by researchers on the same topic as a theoretical basis of the study.

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