

Islamic Governance and Local Wisdom: A Study of the Bacan Sultanate's Governance Model in North Maluku, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the governance model of the Bacan Sultanate, with a focus on integrating Islamic principles and local wisdom in governance practices. The research employs a qualitative approach, using ethnographic methods to collect primary data through interviews with key informants such as Sultanate officials, religious leaders, and local authorities. Secondary data was gathered from historical documents and literature related to the governance practices of the Bacan Sultanate. Ethnographic thematic analysis was used to identify key governance principles and their application. The study identifies four core principles in the Bacan Sultanate's governance model: Obedience to Allah (*Taat de ompu Allah Taala*), Maintenance of Trust (*Palihara Piling*), Justice and Truth (*Kaadilang Nang Kabanaran*), and Deliberation (*Bapatikamang*). These principles, rooted in Islamic teachings and local wisdom, have sustained the Sultanate's governance and maintained social harmony. The study also highlights the effectiveness of these principles in addressing contemporary governance challenges in the region. The findings suggest that integrating Islamic principles with local cultural wisdom can strengthen governance structures in regions with diverse populations. These insights can inform policy development to improve governance models in other regions with similar socio-cultural contexts. This research contributes to the limited body of literature on governance models in the Indonesian Sultanates, particularly in the Bacan Sultanate. It offers a unique perspective on the application of Islamic principles and local wisdom in governance, providing a potential model for other regions in Indonesia and beyond.

Keywords: Bacan Sultanate; governance model; Islamic principles; local wisdom; social harmony.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji model pemerintahan Kesultanan Bacan dengan fokus pada integrasi prinsip-prinsip Islam dan kearifan lokal dalam praktik pemerintahan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode etnografi untuk mengumpulkan data primer melalui wawancara dengan informan kunci seperti pejabat Kesultanan, tokoh agama, dan otoritas lokal. Data sekunder dikumpulkan dari dokumen sejarah dan literatur terkait praktik pemerintahan Kesultanan Bacan. Analisis tematik etnografi digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi prinsip-prinsip inti pemerintahan dan penerapannya. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi empat prinsip utama dalam model pemerintahan Kesultanan Bacan: Ketaatan kepada Allah (*Taat de ompu Allah Taala*), Pemeliharaan Amanah (*Palihara Piling*), Keadilan dan Kebenaran (*Kaadilang Nang Kabanaran*), serta Musyawarah (*Bapatikamang*). Prinsip-prinsip ini, yang berakar pada ajaran Islam dan kearifan lokal, telah menopang pemerintahan Kesultanan dan menjaga harmoni sosial. Studi ini juga menyoroti efektivitas prinsip-prinsip tersebut dalam menghadapi tantangan pemerintahan kontemporer di wilayah tersebut. Temuan ini menyarankan bahwa integrasi prinsip-prinsip Islam dengan kearifan budaya lokal dapat memperkuat struktur pemerintahan di wilayah yang memiliki populasi beragam. Hasil penelitian ini dapat digunakan untuk mengembangkan kebijakan guna meningkatkan model pemerintahan di wilayah lain dengan konteks sosio-kultural yang serupa. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap literatur yang terbatas tentang model pemerintahan di Kesultanan Indonesia, khususnya Kesultanan Bacan. Penelitian ini menawarkan perspektif unik tentang penerapan prinsip-prinsip Islam dan kearifan lokal dalam pemerintahan, memberikan potensi model bagi wilayah lain di Indonesia dan sekitarnya.

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Kata Kunci: Kesultanan Bacan; model pemerintahan; prinsip-prinsip Islam; kearifan lokal; kerukunan sosial.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a nation endowed by God Almighty with pluralism, spread across various islands in the archipelago. Diverse ethnicities, religions, and races coexist within the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (Ferdian Noor, 2019). This diversity is unified under the framework of *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (unity in diversity). In addition to its various ethnic groups, Indonesia has a vast territory, leading to the formation of regional governments within a unitary state, which operates under the broadest concept of regional autonomy. However, this does not eliminate Indigenous peoples and the sultanate governance systems in Indonesia (Abdulkarim, Komalasari, Saripudin, Ratmaningsih, & Anggraini, 2020; Sari, Chasiotis, van de Vijver, & Bender, 2018).

Indonesia's diversity is a unique phenomenon. The nation comprises multiple ethnicities, cultures, and religions, yet they have pledged to become one nation, known as the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. This cultural diversity is derived from various local cultures, such as that of the Bacan Sultanate. The emergence of this cultural diversity is a result of visible influences within society, which shape the culture itself. Over time, these cultural developments have played a significant role in enhancing the nationalist spirit. Local culture contains social values that need to be upheld by every Indonesian society. These social values are embedded within the local culture and are principles of obedience held by the community, used as rules or guidelines in life (Sadiah, Yanti, & Tarmuni, 2024; Sunhaji, Atabik, Mukhroji, Pradana, & Dharin, 2024; Winiarti, Sunardi, Ahdiani, & Pranolo, 2022)

Principles serve as the foundation for something, a guideline, or what is considered truth and the goal of thinking. In the principle of social and cultural unity, social life is inseparable from the social and cultural system. Indonesia's social and cultural unity principle encompasses diverse nations, making unity and oneness central to social and cultural principles. The social and cultural system represents the integrity of human social values and order, manifested in various aspects of life and state philosophy. This system also reflects the characteristics of a country and a nation (Ferdian Noor, 2019; Sarid, 2021).

The implementation of regional government is closely linked with the implementation of central government, as regional government is part of the administration of the state government. The principles and practices of local government adhere to the principles of decentralisation, deconcentration, and co-administration. The principle of decentralisation is implemented comprehensively in districts and cities. Co-administration can be implemented in provinces, districts, cities, and villages (Rahawarin, 2021; Sansom, 2013).

North Maluku Province is a typical archipelagic area that cannot be separated from the nation's history due to the presence of four Sultanates: the Sultanate of Ternate, the Sultanate of Tidore, the Sultanate of Bacan, and the Sultanate of Jailolo. These four Sultanates are spread across various islands in North Maluku, namely Ternate Island (Sultanate of Ternate), Tidore Island (Sultanate of Tidore), West Halmahera Island (Sultanate of Jailolo), and Bacan Island (Sultanate of Bacan) (Amal, 2010). During the archipelago era, these four Sultanates defended their territories from colonisers such as the Portuguese, Dutch, and Japanese, who sought control over their lands and natural resources, particularly spices. Thanks to the persistence and resilience of the Sultans and their people, the North Maluku region has continued to thrive. Subsequently, they voluntarily united to form the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (Situmorang, Sahman, Suryanto, & Gani, 2021).

The governance systems of the four Sultanates in North Maluku are based on principles upheld by the Sultan and his customary apparatus in administering the Sultanate. These principles, established in ancient times, are still preserved and practised by the Sultans and their apparatus today (Situmorang et al., 2021). The principles of governance in these Sultanates have not been thoroughly explored but hold the potential for transforming local government practices to address chronic issues of poor governance.

The Bacan Sultanate, one of the four Sultanates, played a significant role in Indonesia's independence. During the colonial era, the Bacan Sultanate maintained its strength as an Islamic-based government, fostering trust and loyalty among the people. Despite the historical significance of the Bacan Sultanate's governance principles, these principles have not been extensively explored, even though they could serve as a model for good governance in local governments in North Maluku and Indonesia (Nomay, 2019).

Ruslan and Irham (2022) examined how cultural literacy and peace education helped different communities in *Kepaksian Sekala Brak* (an Islamic-style kingdom in Lampung Province, Indonesia, which was Hindu until the 20th century) to harmonise their religious beliefs. The study used an ethnographic approach combined with a qualitative research methodology, employing open interviews, documentation studies, and observational approaches. The results highlighted the crucial role of traditional leaders in promoting cultural literacy and peace education in Sekala Brak. The philosophy and objectives of *Kepaksian Sekala Brak's* traditional leadership demonstrated how traditional leaders supported the state government system, developed local politics, and promoted harmony among religious communities.

Situmorang and Aslam (2020) investigated how religious teachings affect the moral conduct of traditional Muslims and how these changes relate to Indonesia's current sociopolitical climate. The findings indicated that literal interpretations of religious teachings contributed to dogmatic, inflexible, and intolerant attitudes among traditional Muslims. Additionally, the strong local culture and traditions preserved in religious rituals have shaped the diverse perspectives of Indonesia's traditional Muslims regarding politics. The interview findings suggested that the presence of *Pangaji* (religious authorities) in *Bobato* within the Sultanate of Ternate contributed to the development of individuals' unique characteristics, according to the diversity paradigm theory.

This research aims to examine in depth the governance model implemented by the Sultanate of Bacan and the values embodied in the governance principles based on the local wisdom of the Islamic community in the region. Through this exploration, the research seeks to understand how these principles were integrated into governance practices and how they can contribute to the development of effective local governance models in Indonesia.

This research is based on the argument that the long-established governance principles of the Sultanate of Bacan have the potential to serve as a model for strengthening local governance structures in Indonesia. These principles, rooted in local wisdom and Islamic values, are believed to provide solutions to the challenges faced in local governance. Although explicit hypotheses are not outlined, this study proposes that the governance practices of the Sultanate of Bacan can provide valuable insights for efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of governance in other parts of Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study focused on the Bacan Sultanate to explore its governance principles rooted in local wisdom and Islamic values. The Bacan Sultanate was chosen as the research object due to its historical significance and the unique governance model it represents within the Islamic communities of Eastern Indonesia. Field research was conducted in the Bacan Sultanate's administrative centre, particularly at the

Sultanate Palace, which serves as the hub of the Sultanate's governance and cultural activities. Key events and rituals associated with the Sultanate were also observed to understand how governance principles are practised in real-life scenarios.

We employed a sociological-empirical research design with a strong emphasis on qualitative data collection. Primary data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with key informants, including the Sultanate's secretary, staff members, youth leaders, religious figures, and local authorities. These interviews were designed to capture the participants' insights and experiences related to the governance principles of the Sultanate. Secondary data were gathered through a thorough review of historical documents, legal texts, and previous research that provided context and supported our findings. The combination of primary and secondary data allowed us to build a comprehensive understanding of the governance practices in the Bacan Sultanate.

Participants were selected based on their roles and expertise within the Sultanate. The key informants included Mr. Tufail, the secretary of the Bacan Sultanate; Mr. Ahya, a staff member of the Sultanate; Mr. Muhlis, the chairman of the youth division; and several religious leaders and local authorities who have direct involvement in the governance and cultural practices of the Sultanate. These participants were chosen for their ability to provide detailed and accurate information that is crucial for understanding the governance model of the Bacan Sultanate.

Data collection was conducted in multiple stages. Initially, direct observation was carried out at the Bacan Sultanate Palace to familiarize ourselves with the setting and identify key informants. Following this, we conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with selected participants. The interviews were designed to be flexible, allowing the discussion to evolve naturally while ensuring that all relevant topics were covered. The questions focused on the participants' experiences, perceptions, and the practical application of the governance principles within the Sultanate. These interviews were complemented by the observation of key events and the examination of documents that are integral to the Sultanate's governance.

The data were processed using qualitative analysis techniques, specifically ethnographic thematic analysis as outlined by Spradley (1979). This approach allowed us to systematically identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) within the data. We began with domain analysis to identify the broad categories relevant to the study, followed by taxonomic analysis to explore the relationships within these categories. Componential analysis was then used to differentiate between the elements within each domain, leading to a deeper understanding of the cultural and governance practices. Finally, cultural theme analysis helped us to connect these insights into a coherent narrative that explains the role of local wisdom and Islamic principles in the governance of the Bacan Sultanate.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Principles of Islamic-Based Government

A government determines the pattern of the system adopted by the state, whether theocracy, democracy, and so on. The style of government gives birth to the form of a state. The state's form becomes essential if a country's government becomes an engine of power run by a leader (Laird, 2020). As stated by Sirajuddin (Sirajuddin, 2007), government etymologically comes from the Greek word, *Huberman* or ship captain. That is, looking forward. Then "govern," which means looking ahead, determining various policies implemented to achieve society's future goals, and preparing policy steps to meet the development of society to the goals that have been set.

According to Surbakti (R. Surbakti, 1999) the government, as one of the basic structures of the political system, is an institution that organizes political mechanisms or wheels of government led by an official called "wali" or "amir." In the Islamic state system, the importance of the existence of a government is considered the same as the obligation of the existence of the state itself. Abdul Kadir 'Audah (Hasjmy, 1984) said that: "If Allah has made it mandatory for us to judge the teachings that have been revealed to His Messenger and rule with them, then the Muslims must establish a government that will enforce Allah's commands. in their midst, and each person worships according to the law, according to the teachings of Allah, just as they have worshiped by fasting and prayer. If establishing a state based on Islamic law is obligatory, it is also obligatory to establish an Islamic government.

The function of the Islamic government is to enforce the commands of Allah. In other words, upholding Islam, where the Qur'an has ordered the Islamic government to destroy shirk and strengthen Islam, establish prayer and take zakat, enjoin ma'ruf and forbid what is evil, and take care of human interests within the limits of the law. God's law (Adawiyah, 2015). According to Hasjmy (Hasjmy, 1984), there are three basics for administering the government: government justice, people's obedience, and deliberation between the government and the people. In a broad sense, government means all the state's functions. In terms of terminology, Islam contains meanings, namely (1) saying the sentence of creed; (2) surrendering entirely to the will of God. The Government System in Islam According to Hasan al-Banna (Whiteside, 2016), a government consisting of Muslim officials carries out Islamic religious obligations and does not commit immorality openly, carry out Islamic laws and teachings. The system of government practiced in Islam is closely related to the contextual conditions experienced by each ummah. Carrying out such an obligation is the same as carrying out the obligations Allah has required of all Muslims. Neglecting the establishment of the caliphate is a sin (disobedience) that Allah will punish with the most painful torment. Based on the consensus of friends, it is obligatory to establish a caliphate (Samat Musa, 2021).

The practice of government at the time of the Prophet Muhammad in the field of law was his position as a judge to resolve disputes among the people of Medina and to determine punishments for violators of the agreement. When the Jews violated the contents of the Medina Charter three times, twice, he acted as judge, and once, he represented his friends to carry it out. His position as a judge and this task he once represented to friends, and the appointment of Muaz bin Jabal and Ali bin Abi Talib as judges is evidence of the practice of the Prophet's government in the institutions of the legal and social field (El-Sharif, 2018).

From some examples of government practices by Muhammad SAW, his capacity as Head of State in governing the State of Medina can be said to be very democratic. Even though his laws are based on Allah's revelations, his Sunnah is included in the Medina Charter. He does not act authoritarian even though it is possible that he will do it and will be obeyed by Muslims, considering his status as Allah's Apostle, who must be obeyed (Ahmed, 2018). In that context, several experts expressed different opinions regarding the shape and style of the Medina State at the time of the Prophet. The formation of government is not included in the task revealed to him. Although these activities can be called government activities, the form of government is straightforward, and its power is general, covering matters of the world and the hereafter. Because, as an Apostle, he must have a more comprehensive power than the power of a king over his people. His leadership is the leadership of an Apostle who brings new teachings, and not the leadership of a king, and his power is only the power of an Apostle, not the power of a king (Umashankar, 2020).

The Model of Government of the Sultanate of Bacan Based on the Archipelago Islamic Community

History of the Establishment of the Bacan Sultanate

As is well known, the four sultanates of the *Moloku Kie Raha* peninsula were formed simultaneously. The number four has a particular significance, beyond its geographic connection to the four *Kie* (mountains). In the local language, *Kie Raha* means four mountains, specifically Mount Gamalama on the island of Ternate, Mount Kie Matubu on the island of Tidore, Mount Keten on the island of Moti, and Mount Kie Besi on the island of Makean (Baharuddin & Situmorang, 2020).

The history of the formation of these four sultanates in the *Moloku Kieraha* peninsula began with the famous Moti meeting. Specifically, for the Bacan Sultanate, its formation was closely tied to the introduction of Islam in the area. *Tanah Bayan*, later known as Bacan, was documented by Europeans after they explored the world and entered this peninsula (Nurachman Iriyanto, 2019). W.Ph.Coochans in Nomay (Nomay, 2019) stated that the Batjan community at that time had embraced Islam. Meanwhile, Pigafetta wrote about the visit of the Bacan Sultanate to the Tidore Sultanate in 1521, noting the mutual relations between the Sultanates.

Another version is provided by Tome Pires (Tuwow, Hariadi, & Djamhuri, 2021) who explains that the Malukan kings began to convert to Islam around 1540-1545. It was noted that the first King of Ternate adopted the title of Sultan, while others continued to use the title *Raja* (king). According to historical evidence, the people in Banda, Hitu, Haruku, Makean, and Bacan had embraced Islam by that time (Far-far, 2021).

This view is based on the fact that Sultan Zainal Abidin Syah (Mahoem), who served as Sultan of Ternate, accepted Islam from a Malay named Datu Maulana Husain. It was through these Malay traders that the process of Islamisation occurred. For the Sultanate of Ternate, led by Sultan Zainal Abidin Syah, Islam was immediately established as the official religion of the Sultanate, resulting in the mass conversion of the people of Ternate to Islam. The same process occurred in the other three kingdoms, which later followed in the footsteps of Sultan Zainal Abidin Syah. Thus, the four Sultanates in the *Moloku Kie Raha* peninsula, which originated from one family, transitioned from a royal system to a sultanate system (Assagaf, Sukoharsono, & Baridwan, 2020; Hasyim & Yusup, 2016).

It is evident that the institutionalisation of Islam in the form of a Sultanate in *Moloku Kie Raha* has deeply influenced the community's daily life. Tome Pires and Antonio Galvao (Abdulajid & Kamisi, 2021) explain that Islam entered this peninsula in the 14th century; some experts even argue that Islam has been present in the peninsula since the 13th century. In the 14th century, a missionary from Java named Datok Maula Husen arrived and was welcomed by King Marhom, who later adopted the name Zainal Abidin Syah, becoming the first king in the *Moloku Kie Raha* Peninsula to take the title of Sultan (Hasyim & Yusup, 2016).

Others, particularly people on the island of Ternate and its surroundings, believe that the foundations of Islam in this peninsula were established with the arrival of a figure from the Middle East named Jafar Sadik, or possibly Jafar Noh. His arrival is estimated to have occurred around 1245 or the 13th century (Far-far, 2021).

Before relocating to Bacan, the Sultanate of Bacan was situated in Limau Dolik, located on the island of Makean in *Desa Tahane* (Tahane Village), which has now reverted to its original name, Dauri. The formation of this Sultanate followed the Moti meeting, known to historians as Moti Verbon; this event took place in 1322. This meeting later resulted in the creation of four Sultanates in *Moloku Kie Raha*, now known as the province of North Maluku. Currently, the Sultanate of Ternate is located in Ternate, the Sultanate of

Tidore is on the island of Tidore, the Sultanate of Jailolo is in West Halmahera Regency, and the Sultanate of Makean, originally on Makean Island, later moved to Bacan Island (Andries, 2021).

The first king of the Bacan Sultanate, according to the *Hikayat* (legend), was Said Muhammad Bakir, or Muhammad Bakir Husen, who ruled for approximately ten years. During his reign, the Bacan Sultanate was still located on Makean Island. His leadership was challenged by frequent eruptions of Mount Kie Besi, which disrupted the government. Consequently, the Sultanate moved to a larger and safer location, Bacan Island, and thus its name was changed to the Bacan Sultanate (Muhammad, 2014).

Procedure for the Selection of the Sultanate of Bacan

In general, the succession of the Sultan of Bacan has been more straightforward and smoother compared to other regions, as there have been no frequent conflicts. According to historical records, there have been almost no issues during the succession process of the Sultan of Bacan, leading to an absence of conflicts within the Sultanate's internal families. Unlike other sultanates in North Maluku and even Indonesia, where internal family conflicts are common—such as in the Sultanate of Ternate, where power struggles have necessitated the appointment of an acting Sultan (*Pelaksana Tugas* or *PLT*)—the Bacan Sultanate has managed to avoid such disputes. This is attributed to the Sultan's ability and character, which have ensured the smooth functioning of the Bacan Sultanate to this day.

According to Ibnu Fail, the scribe of the Bacan Sultanate, the leadership of the Sultan has been highly influential both in society and within the Sultanate itself (Ibnu Tufail, Personal Communication, 2022). This is exemplified by the smooth transition from Sultan Gahril Shah to his son, Sultan Al-Hajj Abadurrahim Muhammad Gary Dino Ridwan Shah, MBA, who has been the reigning Sultan since 2010 (Andries, 2021). Although Sultan Al-Hajj Abadurrahim works for a private company in the United States and resides there, he continues to serve as the Sultan's successor. To manage the daily duties of the Sultanate, he appointed Ompu Jogugu as the executor of the Sultan's responsibilities. He typically returns to address the matter if something important or urgent arises.

This arrangement demonstrates the high level of trust the people have in the Sultan and the Sultan's authority and charisma. The people have never questioned his leadership, even though he resides abroad, including in the United States. Despite his absence, there have been no demonstrations or demands for his presence, which contrasts sharply with the situation in regional governments, where daily demonstrations might occur if a regent were absent from their duties. The Sultan of Bacan possesses qualities not shared by formal leaders such as regents. While the people directly elect regents, the Sultan is elected by an internal group within the Sultanate, usually with the approval of the previous ruling Sultan. Even though the Sultan is directly appointed by his father, the former Sultan evaluates the candidate's track record, with the candidate's character being the foremost consideration.

Furthermore, Ibnu Tufail (Personal Communication, 2019) explained that morality is the primary requirement for sultan candidates because the Sultan of Bacan is a scholar who serves as a reference for many people in their behaviour and communication, particularly with the broader community. The Sultan is a role model for society in every respect. His words are considered decrees by the people, especially within the majority Muslim community of the Bacan Sultanate. Since Islam is the religion of the Sultanate, the Sultan is not only a government leader but also a religious leader. As a government leader, the Sultan of Bacan must be well-versed in good governance and capable of leading his community towards improvement. He must understand government administration, even though it was more straightforward in the past.

Ibnu Tufail (Personal Communication, 2022), who currently holds the position of scribe, elaborated on the democratic government model initiated by European scientists in recent centuries but has long been practised by the Sultan of Bacan. The distribution of power in the Bacan Sultanate has implemented a democratic pattern of governance, and the leadership style exemplified by the Sultan is indeed very democratic.

The selection of the Sultan typically involves four key elements, referred to in the language of the Sultanate as *Pihak Ampat* (the Four Parties). These four elements accompany the Sultan in his governance. The selection process involves these four elements, which provide input to the Sultan to choose the best candidate based on their track record. The primary criterion for selecting a Sultan is the candidate's character. *Akhlaq* (morality) becomes the main measure because the Sultanate's mission in its governance is to promote Islamic teachings in the region, particularly through the mission of da'wah (Islamic propagation) (Al-Kiyumi & Hammad, 2020).

The Government Structure of the Sultanate of Bacan

In managing the government of the Bacan Sultanate, the Sultan adhered to a well-established hierarchical structure. This structure served as a guide for implementing the Sultanate's governance, with each position clearly defined by its responsibilities, often referred to as a "job description" in modern administrative terms.

Upon close examination, the four ruling Sultanates of the *Moloku Kie Raha* (the Four Mountain Sultanates) share similar organisational structures. A critical component of this structure is the role of the *Kapita Lau* (Admiral). This position is essential for maintaining the Sultanate's sovereignty and existence, requiring an individual of exceptional skill due to the considerable responsibilities. The *Kapita Lau* serves as the Sultanate's military leader, defending its territory and leading attacks against enemies attempting to invade or occupy the Sultanate's lands. These Sultanates do not possess land or air-based military forces, as their territories consist of large and small islands. Consequently, their military strategies are adapted to their geographical conditions (Muhammad, 2014).

A *Kapita Lau* needed to possess excellent naval guerrilla warfare capabilities to protect the Sultanate's territory and, when necessary, launch offensive operations against targeted areas. Guerrilla tactics were essential due to the limited size of the Sultanate's naval fleet, which required the *Kapita Lau* to master naval guerrilla warfare, much like the independence fighters led by General Sudirman, who strategically overcame colonial forces during the struggle for the nation's independence (Muhammad, 2014).

The Sultanates within *Moloku Kie Raha* typically share a similar governance structure, though their recruitment practices may differ. Each Sultanate has a *Kapita Lau*, who holds the highest authority over the kingdom's defence. This structure is also evident in the Bacan Sultanate (Abdulajid & Kamisi, 2021). More detailed insights are provided in Figure 1.

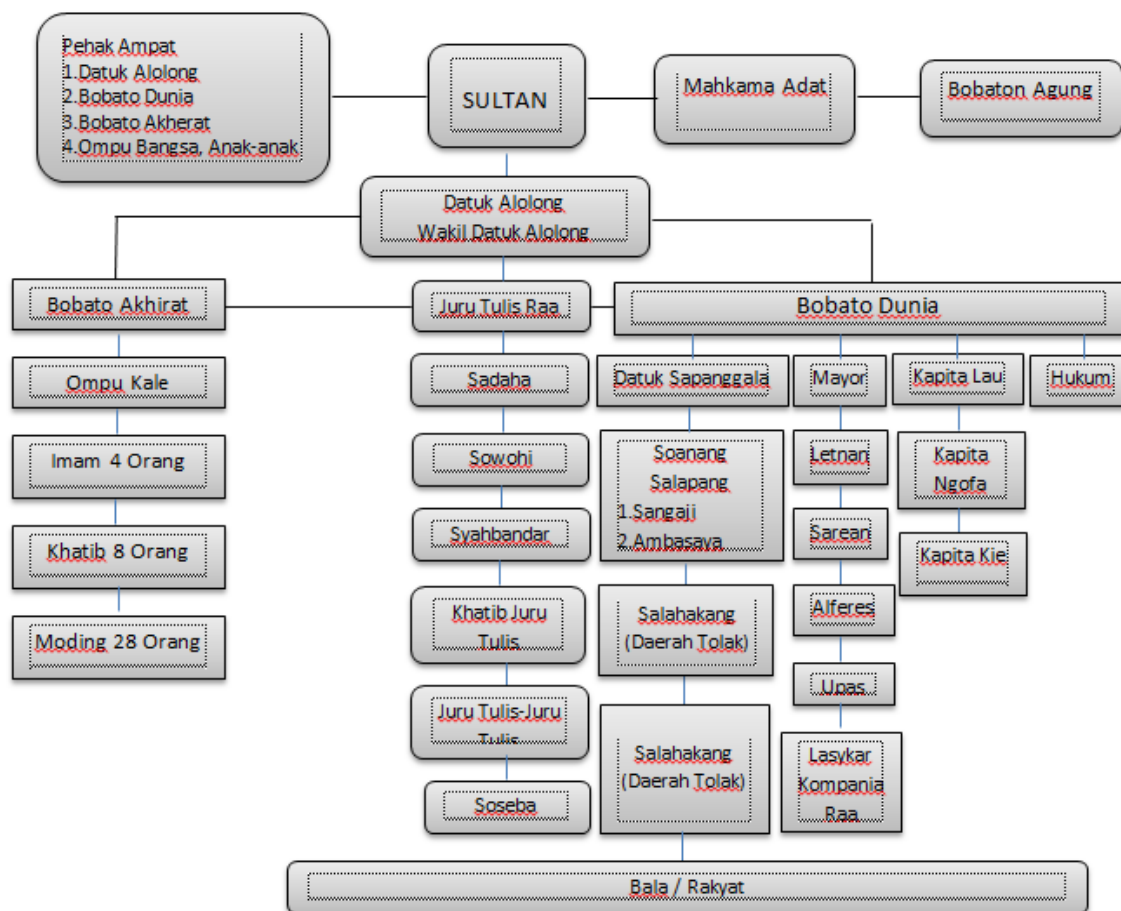


Figure 1 Structure of the Sultanate of Bacan

The organisational structure of the Bacan Sultanate, as illustrated in Figure 1, demonstrates that each position carries specific duties and functions. For example, the *Pehak Ampat* (the Four Parties) is responsible for selecting and appointing the Sultan through a process of deliberation. This practice is rooted in Islamic teachings, particularly the principle of deliberation, which is critical for making strategic decisions, including the selection of a leader—in this case, the Sultan. To be chosen, a Sultan must possess a commendable track record and demonstrate four key competencies: obedience to Allah (*ta'ala*), trustworthiness, fairness, and a commitment to deliberation, particularly in consultation with the *Ampat* parties after being appointed.

In carrying out his responsibilities, the Sultan is supervised by the Customary Court and the *Bobato Agung* (Great Council), ensuring that his actions align with the values of the Sultanate. *Datuk Alolong*, who participated in the selection and appointment of the Sultan, assumes a role akin to that of a Prime Minister, assisting the Sultan in implementing the programmes established during the deliberations of the *Ampat* party. Additionally, the *Bobato Akhirat* and *Bobato Dunia* councils guide religious and worldly affairs, respectively. The *Bobato Akhirat* oversees religious leaders such as the *ompu kale* (village elders), *imam* (prayer leaders), and *khatib* (preachers), ensuring they fulfil their duties in advancing the welfare of the *ummah* (Muslim community), centred around the mosques spread throughout the Bacan Sultanate. Consequently, religious matters and disputes within the Sultanate were typically resolved in the mosque,

which served as the focal point of *ummah* activities. The *Bobato Akhirat* role is often filled by individuals with extensive religious knowledge, similar to the *Kyai* (Islamic scholars) in Java, who work closely with imams, preachers, and other religious figures to address societal issues.

The *Bobato Dunia* (Council for Worldly Affairs) is tasked with leading various officials, including the *Sadaha* (tax collectors), *Datok Sapanggala* (district heads), *mayors*, *kapita lao* (naval commanders), and legal officials. Each of these positions is responsible for specific aspects of worldly governance. The *Bobato Dunia* reports to *Datok Alolong* and coordinates with the *Juru Tulis Raa* (royal scribe), while *Datok Alolong* is directly accountable to the Sultan. Authority descends from *Datok Sapanggala* to the *Soanang Slapang* (sub-district leaders), *Sangaji* (village leaders), and *Salahakang* (village heads), who interact directly with the local community in managing the governance of the Bacan Subdistrict (Ahya, Personal Communication, 2019).

Following the election and appointment by the *Ampat* party, which holds the highest authority in the Bacan Sultanate, the chosen Sultan is crowned. An intriguing tradition during the coronation of the Sultan of Bacan is that if the crown does not fit the Sultan's head properly, it is considered a sign that his leadership will not be ideal or long-lasting.

The Sultan's scribe explained that during the coronation, the general public is invited to witness the ceremony. The people can immediately observe whether the crown fits the new Sultan, indicating his leadership's stability. However, in most cases, the selected Sultan fits the prepared crown because the selection process is typically thorough and deliberate (Tufail, Personal Communication, 2019).

The Boundaries of the Territory of the Bacan Sultanate and its Ethnicities

Geographically, the territory of the Bacan Sultanate includes the island of Makean, which served as the initial site for the formation of the Bacan Sultanate following the *Moti Verbon* meeting (Tn Muhlis, interview, 2019). During this meeting, the territorial boundaries of each of the four sultanates were also agreed upon. However, as the power of each Sultanate expanded, both the Jailolo and Bacan Sultanates found their original territories insufficient. Consequently, the Jailolo Sultanate moved from Moti, and the Bacan Sultanate relocated from Makean to its current location. The Bacan Sultanate's territory encompassed Makean Island, Kayoa Island, the Gura Ici islands (such as Moari Island, Laigoma Island, and Lelei Island), West Kasiruta Island, Bacan Island, and the Obi Archipelago. It also extended to parts of Halmahera Island, including the districts of East Gane, Gane Luar, Gane Dalam, and others (Tufail; Ahya, Personal Communication, 2019).

Most of the Bacan Sultanate's territory was coastal, indicating that its inhabitants were primarily engaged in farming and fishing. They typically cultivated land from the coast to the interior, but their homes were situated along the coast. These communities were not accustomed to consuming fresh fish from rivers and lakes within the forests, a pattern of life that has persisted for generations. Since the Bacan Sultanate originated on Makean Island, the *Makean* community constitutes the majority of the Bacan Sultanate's population. In addition to the *Makean* ethnicity, the Bacan Sultanate also includes the *Bacan* ethnicity, particularly in the city of *Labuha*. According to Adelaar (1996), the *Bacan* ethnicity is believed to have originated from Kalimantan, specifically from the Malay ethnicity. This connection is evident in the linguistic similarities between the Bacan language and Malay. The Bacan ethnic group has its own language, known as the Bacan language, which continues to be spoken today. Despite the growth of Labuha into a diverse city with many ethnic groups, Bacan speakers still preserve their language. Although the Bacan community resides in the Old City of Labuha, where the Sultan's palace and the Bacan Sultanate mosque still stand strong, they maintain the Sultanate's culture while living harmoniously with

immigrants from various ethnicities within and outside North Maluku (Muhlis, Personal Communication, 2019).

Over time, with social changes, the Bacan community, once predominantly farmers, has diversified into various professions, including civil servants, soldiers, police officers, sailors, and more. Many have also migrated beyond the Bacan area, both domestically and internationally. The current Sultan, for instance, works in a large company in the United States, having succeeded the late Gahrul Syah (Muhlis, Personal Communication, 2019).

In addition to the *Makean* and *Bacan* ethnicities, a significant ethnic group within the Sultanate is the *Tobelo* and *Galela* ethnicities, commonly referred to as the *Togale* people. This community, in terms of population, nearly rivals the *Makean* community, which is the largest under the Bacan Sultanate. Historically, the *Togale* ethnicity was the first to expand in this region, known for their aggressive expansion practices. They were reputedly fierce and would kill anyone they encountered, as recounted by ancient *Makean* adventurers. When travelling or sailing to the Bacan islands and surrounding areas, these adventurers had to be well-prepared and skilled in self-defence (*kenuragan*) to survive potential encounters with *Togale* adventurers. Many heroic tales from *Makean* adventurers highlight their bravery during these journeys. Numerous relics around *Tawwale* bear witness to the brutality of that era, with many human skeletons scattered across the area, believed to be the remains of *Togale* adventurers who perished in battles with the *Makean* ethnic group. Around 1910, the *Togale* tribe expanded outward to explore several large islands in the North Maluku region, conducting an expansion they referred to as "bacanga" in their language (Tufail and Muhlis, Personal Communication, 2019).

The Life Model of the Archipelagic Islamic Community in the Bacan Sultanate

The relocation of the Sultanate from *Makean* Island to *Bacan* Island was primarily due to the frequent eruptions of Mount *Kie Besi* on *Makean* Island, which disrupted the security of the Sultanate. Historically, Mount *Kie Besi* has erupted frequently, posing significant dangers to the residents of *Makean* Island. Consequently, the migration of residents from *Makean* was not limited to *Bacan* Island; many also relocated to *Halmahera* Island. This is evident in the population distribution on *Halmahera* Island, particularly in the *Oba* sub-district, including *Oba Tengan*, *Oba Timur*, and *Oba Barat*. Additionally, the population spread to the sub-districts of *Western Gane*, *Gane Dalam*, and *Gane Luar*. The residents of *Makean* Island have demonstrated a nomadic mentality, showing a readiness to migrate to any place where they believe they can improve their lives, particularly in farming. Their focus was less on the relocation of the Sultanate to *Bacan* Island and more on how they could better their lives (Tn. Muhlis and Ahya, Personal Communication, 2019).

The lifestyle of the *Makean* population, or *Makean* ethnicity, is centred on achieving independence in terms of the economy and education. This drive manifests in their dedication to two primary professions: successful farming and working as civil servants (*Aparatur Sipil Negara*). Initially, the *Makean* ethnic group was predominantly farmers. If they did not pursue farming, they typically sought careers as civil servants, with a particular emphasis on the teaching profession. This profession dominated the *Makean* ethnic group in the early generations, especially as teachers in basic education (Tn. Tufail, Personal Communication, 2019).

In the chronicles of the Bacan Sultanate, it is noted that the first King to lead was *Said Muhammad Bakir*, also known as *Muhammad Bakir Husen*. According to records, he reigned for over ten years. During the early part of *Muhammad Bakir's* reign, the Sultanate was still located on *Makean* Island. The chronicles recount that, due to the threat of Mount *Kie Besi's* eruption, *Kolano Sida* succeeded his father, *Muhammad*

Bakir Husen, and led the Bacan Sultanate's move to *Bacan* Island. This relocation was not only a response to natural disasters but also a strategic political move, expanding the Sultanate's power and promoting the Islamisation of the region, thereby enhancing the Sultanate's existence and territorial reach (Tufail and Ahya, Personal Communication, 2019).

Thus, the transfer of the Sultanate government to *Bacan* Island was a deliberate political strategy by *Said Muhammad Bakir*, the first king (*kolano*) to embrace Islam. Following his conversion, the people in *Zaziarh* gradually adopted Islam, leading to a significant Muslim presence in the region today (Tufail, Personal Communication, 2019).

The people of the Bacan Sultanate reside along the coast of *Labuha* City, as they do today. As an archipelagic community, their lives are deeply connected to the sea. Their livelihood patterns, mainly as field farmers and fishermen, reflect the lifestyle of island communities living along the coast—a model for the people of *Moloku Kie Raha* or North Maluku today. Even though they live on the relatively large *Bacan* Island, the Bacan Sultanate community does not dwell inland. Even when they cultivate gardens in the hinterlands, they still live along the coast, where their dual professions as field farmers and fishermen are more feasible (Ahya, Personal Communication, 2019).

The life pattern of the archipelagic community is evident in the Bacan Sultanate's society; they cannot live far from the sea. In addition to fishing for their basic needs, the sea serves as a source of water for ablutions before prayer. Their daily routine involves bathing in the sea before using well water. The sea is thus an essential part of their lives, and their existence is intertwined with it. Almost all community members, men and women alike, are proficient swimmers because their daily lives are closely connected to the sea. The life of coastal or island communities is synonymous with the sea; all their needs, particularly food like fish, are drawn from it. Archipelago communities consume only marine fish, not freshwater fish, so even if they hunt far from the coast or inland, they continue to reside along the coast (Muhlis and Ahya, Personal Communication, 2019).

Nearly all the territory of the Bacan Sultanate—over 95%—is coastal. Consequently, the Sultan's activities inevitably involve interaction with the sea, making sea transportation the most dominant form of travel. One of the most well-known sea vessels is the "juanga" boat, often used by the Sultan when making official visits within his territory (Muhlis, Personal Communication, 2019).

The Values Embodied in the Principles of Government Based on Local Wisdom for the Islamic Archipelago Community in the Bacan Sultanate

Before discussing the values inherent in the governance principles based on the local wisdom of the Islamic archipelago community in the Bacan Sultanate, it is essential to first present the principles of the Bacan Sultanate government as discovered through research. Our research has identified at least four guiding principles that the Bacan Sultanate follows in its governance: the principle of *Obedience to De Ompu Allah Taala*, the principle of *Palihara Piling*, the principle of *Kaadilang Nang Kabanaran*, and the principle of *Ayahtikamang*.

Taat de ompu Allah Taala

Obedience de Ompu Allah Taala literally means obedience to Allah Subhanahu Wataala. This principle of obedience to Allah is fundamental to the governance of the Bacan Sultanate. According to Muhammad Abusama (Interview, 2019), the Sultan, as the highest leader in the constitutional system of the Bacan Sultanate, must obey Allah because, by doing so, he will always remember that the true overseer

of all actions is Allah Subhanahu Wataala. This ensures that every action and policy taken by the Sultan is made with consideration of its potential negative aspects.

The study revealed that the Bacan Sultanate governs based on the *Al-Qur'an* and *Hadith*. This principle is embodied in the tradition of *Basandi Sara*, which means that the governance of the Sultanate is based on the teachings of the *Al-Qur'an* and the *Hadith* of Prophet Muhammad. In Islamic teachings, the command to obey is a direct command from Allah, as mentioned in the *Qur'an* (Surah An-Nisa: 59):

"O you who believe, obey Allah and the Messenger (His), and those in authority among you. If you disagree on anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best and fairest resolution." (Surah An-Nisa: 59)

Further in the same Surah, Allah says: "*Whoever obeys the Messenger, indeed he has obeyed Allah.*" (Surah An-Nisa: 80)

Based on these verses, the command to obey Allah and the Messenger is a mandatory directive that must be followed. In the Bacan Sultanate, the primary criterion for choosing a Sultan is his obedience to Allah and His Messenger. A Sultan who adheres to the principles of *Al-Qur'an* and *Hadith* will govern with integrity, guided by divine instructions.

The Islamic archipelago community in the Bacan Sultanate also considers this principle when selecting the head of a *kampong* (village head). They assess the candidates' religious knowledge, piety, and social conduct, favouring those who are devout in worship and maintain good relationships within the community.

A leader who obeys Allah and the Messenger will always exhibit exemplary social behaviour. Additionally, the piety of a leader can often be observed through their authoritative and charismatic presence.

Palihara Piling

The Bacan Sultanate, an Islamic Sultanate that has stood firmly for hundreds of years, continues to exert a significant influence on the Bacan community. The governance of the Bacan Sultanate is deeply rooted in Islamic principles. The Sultan, as the highest leader, is chosen for possessing the quality of *Palihara Piling*.

Palihara Piling epistemologically means "maintaining trust". This concept has two dimensions: maintaining the trust (*amanah*) of *Ompu Allah Taala* (Allah Subhanahu Wata'ala) and safeguarding the trust of *Bala* (the people, as referred to in the Bacan Sultanate tradition). A Sultan who can maintain trust is respected by his people (*Bala*), and failure to do so leads to a loss of prestige and authority.

The local wisdom of *Palihara Piling* extends beyond the Sultan to include his traditional councils, such as *Datuk Alolong*, *Bobato Agung*, *Bobato Dunia*, *Bobato Akhirat*, and *Bala*. In Islamic teachings, maintaining trust is a command directly from Allah Subhanahu Wataala, as stated in the *Qur'an*:

"Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people, judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing." (Surah An-Nisa: 58)

Maintaining trust is a behaviour exemplified by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) from childhood until the end of his life, earning him the title *Al-Amin* (the trustworthy).

The people of the Bacan Sultanate, predominantly residing on islands within the Sultanate's territory, prioritise *Palihara Piling* (maintaining trust) in their daily lives and leadership. A person who is not trustworthy will face social sanctions, such as a loss of trust, making them unreliable in all aspects.

Kaadilang Nan Kabanarang

Kaadilang Nan Kabanarang, when translated epistemologically, means "Justice and Truth." This principle emphasises the importance of upholding justice and truth. In an interview with the traditional leaders of the Bacan Sultanate, it was revealed that certain principles must be adhered to by the Sultan, as well as by the traditional leaders and the people. One of these ancestral messages in the Bacan language is: "The one who *tapat batiking tapat* who *tapat Moyo batiking tapat Moyo*," which, when interpreted, means "the right one says right, and the wrong one says wrong." This message carries broad significance as it pertains to both the relationship between humans and God and social interactions within the community. By adhering to this ancestral message, individuals are welcomed wherever they go.

Justice is essentially about treating individuals or parties according to their rights. In the Bacan Sultanate, the rights of each traditional leader and the people (*Bala*) are recognised and respected according to their dignity, equality, and obligations, without distinction of ethnicity, religion, or descent. The Bacan Sultanate is home to a diverse array of ethnic groups, including the Bacan, Galela, Tobelo, Makeang, Ternate, Tidore, Buton, and Bajo tribes, among others. Despite this diversity, the different ethnic groups live in harmony and peace with one another. The Bacan Sultanate also accommodates two religions, Islam and Christianity, and the people coexist harmoniously, with mutual respect and tolerance.

The importance of justice in the administration of the Sultanate is paramount, even though justice can be challenging to achieve in practice. Islam, as a religion of *rahmatan lil alamin* (mercy to all worlds), introduced the concept of justice 1,400 years ago. In Islamic teachings, justice is defined as placing something in its rightful place, which implies treating others without discrimination.

The Qur'an contains verses that explain the concept of justice, including the following from Surah An-Nahl, verse 90, "*Indeed, Allah commands justice, good conduct, and giving to relatives, and forbids immorality, bad conduct, and oppression. He admonishes you so that you may take heed*" (Surah An-Nahl: 90).

This verse is one of the most comprehensive in the Qur'an, as it outlines the principles of justice, kindness, and avoidance of wrongdoing, which should govern human and social relations. Justice and fairness are foundational to Islamic teachings and Sharia law. Allah does not allow injustice and instructs believers to avoid infringing upon the rights of others. Numerous other verses in the Qur'an similarly instruct Muslims to act justly.

In the constitutional system of the Bacan Sultanate, *Kaadilang Nan Kabanarang* serves as a guiding principle for governance. It has been consistently upheld by the Sultans who have led the Bacan Sultanate, ensuring that the Sultanate remains influential and respected by the indigenous people to this day.

From a legal philosophical perspective, the purpose of law is justice. Ethical theory posits that law should aim to achieve the maximum possible justice in society. Justice is also a fundamental principle of the Indonesian state, enshrined in the fifth precept of Pancasila: "social justice for all Indonesian people."

According to H. Muhammad Abusama (Interview, 2019), the principle of justice in *Nan Kabanarang* is rooted in Islamic teachings, as the Bacan Sultanate is an Islamic state. From an Islamic philosophical perspective, as articulated by Murtadha Muthahari in Sukarno Aburaera (Aburaera, 2013), justice encompasses four key aspects. Justice, in its essence, requires a delicate balance within society, ensuring that all elements are placed appropriately rather than uniformly to maintain harmony and stability. It is not about making everything the same but rather about ensuring that each part of society functions in its rightful place. Furthermore, justice embodies the principle of equality, where the rights of individuals are upheld equally, recognising that fairness demands equal treatment when rights are the same. This commitment to equality is a cornerstone of social justice, which must be honoured and upheld within the

framework of human law. Beyond equality, justice also entails the protection of individual rights, safeguarding each person's entitlement to what is rightfully theirs. This protection is vital for the realisation of social justice, as it ensures that everyone receives what they deserve in a balanced and fair manner. Lastly, justice serves as the guardian of existence itself, maintaining the right to life and the continuation of one's being. In this way, justice not only preserves individual rights but also ensures the survival and sustainability of society as a whole.

Sukarno Aburaera (Aburaera, 2013) concludes that the Islamic conception of justice involves placing things in their proper place, assigning responsibilities according to one's capabilities, and providing rights in a balanced manner. According to the author, the local wisdom of *Kaadilang Nan Kabanarang* aligns with religious values, similar to how J.J.H. Bruggink (2011) classified values into four groups. Religious values are closely related to moral and aesthetic values but in a different order. Values derive their form from the perspective of a particular religion, within which people feel included.

Sociologically, the Bacan people have a deep respect for the traditional values that prevail in their region, often viewing these values as more powerful and deterrent than positivistic legislation or criminal laws. In this context, it would be logical to accommodate the local wisdom of *Kaadilang Nan Kabanarang* within regional regulations. However, the research indicates that this local wisdom has not yet been formally integrated into any regional regulations in South Halmahera Regency or North Maluku Province.

The incorporation of *Kaadilang Nan Kabanarang* into regional regulations is a logical step, though it is unlikely to be implemented nationally due to the diverse nature of local wisdom. However, internalising the values of *Nan Kabanarang* in regional regulations would be highly beneficial. This perspective aligns with Pesurnay (2018) and Sumartias (2020) views that wisdom values exert a unique influence, potentially altering actions among various alternatives. Values are believed to influence attitudes, behaviour, and decisions, even when multiple beneficial alternatives are available. Values are considered to have the power to shape human behaviour.

Bapatikamang

The term *Bapatikamang* translates directly to "deliberation." This principle is rooted in the Qur'anic command to engage in deliberation as a fundamental decision-making process that believers must uphold. The Qur'an uses the term *Shura* to describe this concept of mutual consultation and decision-making. Prominent scholar Qardhawi further emphasises that deliberation is a fundamental aspect of the Muslim community's political, social, and economic policies (Setowara, 2020). Deliberation is viewed as essential for maintaining justice and fairness in governance, reflecting its central role in Islamic thought and practice.

Deliberation is also highlighted as a key policy principle in the Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet used the term *syrah* to refer to this process. Islamic scholar An-Nabhani explains that *Shura* involves exchanging opinions without necessarily being obliged to implement the outcomes, whereas *masyurah* refers to deliberation where the outcomes are binding and must be followed (Al-utsaimin, 2009). This distinction is illustrated in a Hadith where the Prophet Muhammad said to Abu Bakr and Umar, "If you both agree on a view during a discussion"—referring to the technical deliberation process—"I will not go against it."

Theoretically, the theoretical basis of the principle of Deliberation in the Islamic constitutional system is the word *syura* contained in the Al-Quran Surah Ass-Syurah verse 38. The word *Shurah* is mental *masdar* from the word *aware*, which means asking for the opinion of others. Furthermore, Qadrawi stated that *Shura* is a socio-political principle that is global. Islam does not specify the *sura* in detail. Continued

Qardhawi (in Setowara, 2020), syura was made by Islam as a temporal system related to situations and conditions, even though in the Qur'an, it is mentioned in a row with prayer, the rules of which are permanent.

The majority of Islamic communities are scattered in the islands of the Bacan sultanate. In solving a problem or discussing issues related to people or family issues, the *Ayahtikamang* principle is always put forward because, with this principle, small and large problems can be resolved properly.

In the Bacan Sultanate, the Sultan did not immediately decide on his own as the highest leader in the territory of the Sultanate. The Sultan always consulted first with his conventional apparatus because in the conventional apparatus in the Bacan Sultanate, there were representatives of villages and areas under the authority of the Bacan Sultanate. In the constitutional system of the Bacan Sultanate, the heads of the villages and regions are called Sangaji, Ambasaya, and Salahakang, each of which has a territory of power.

In making policies related to reinforcements, the Sultan always puts the principle of Deliberation first. *Bala* can always accept any of these policies because the conventional apparatus in the Bacan Sultanate also represents *Bala*. They participate in the deliberations of making a Sultan's policy.

The concept of Deliberation is one of the messages of the shari'a, which is highly emphasized in the Qur'an, its existence in various forms of patterns of human life, both in a small house, namely a household consisting of small family members, and in the form of a large house, namely a country that is consisting of leaders and people, the concept of Deliberation is a basis for upholding equal rights and obligations in human life, where between leaders and the people have the same rights to make binding rules within the scope of social life.

In the Qur'an Surah Ali Imran verse 159 Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala says:

"So it was because of the mercy of Allah that you were gentle with them. They will distance themselves from those around you if you are hard-hearted and harsh-hearted. Therefore forgive them, ask forgiveness for them, and consult with them. When you have made up your mind, put your Trust in Allah. Verily, Allah loves those who put their Trust in Him" (Surat Ali-'Imraan verse 159).

The *Bapatikamang* principle is practised daily by the Islamic Community in the Bacan Sultanate Region, including in the marriage process, land disputes in the village, family disputes, and so on. By prioritizing the *bapatikamang* principle, the priority is to resolve the problem properly with a family attitude.

DISCUSSION

This research identifies and examines the governance model of the Bacan Sultanate, which is based on four key Islamic principles: obedience to Allah (*Taat de Ompu Allah Taala*), maintenance of trust (*Palihara Piling*), justice and truth (*Kaadilang Nan Kabanarang*), and deliberation (*Bapatikamang*). These principles are deeply rooted in Islamic teachings and local wisdom, shaping the governance practices of the Sultanate. The study reveals that these principles have guided the Sultanate in promoting social harmony and ensuring the sustainability of governance. The structure of the Sultanate, including its unique succession process and emphasis on moral integrity, further supports effective leadership.

The findings of this research align with previous studies that emphasize the integration of religious values and local cultural wisdom in governance models to foster peaceful coexistence and address religious diversity. As noted by Huda et al. (2020), practical wisdom and religious awareness are crucial

for promoting harmony, supported by theological and educational infrastructures. This approach mirrors the Bacan Sultanate's emphasis on moral integrity and the Sultan's dual role as both a religious and political leader. Marshall (2008) also highlights the significant role of religious actors in improving governance by engaging in public discourse and collaborating with development institutions, addressing issues like corruption and accountability.

Islamic governance models in the Bacan Sultanate share similarities with historical examples of inclusive governance, such as those practiced in Madinah and the Ottoman Empire's *millet* system, which foster pluralism and peaceful coexistence, as noted by Mushtaq and Mahmood (2020). The Sultanate's principles of justice (*Kaadilang Nang Kabanarang*) and deliberation (*Bapatikamang*) reflect this inclusive and moral governance. Additionally, the Bacan Sultanate's inclusion of diverse ethnic and religious groups, unlike the narrower focus of state-interfaith governance models in Germany (Körs & Nagel, 2018), promotes a more integrated and equitable approach. Similar to Taiwan's traditional governance networks (Tso, 2022), the Sultanate's reliance on local wisdom, such as *Palihara Piling*, demonstrates the effective integration of cultural practices into modern governance for stability and social harmony.

The findings of this study suggest that the Bacan Sultanate's model of governance offers valuable insights into how Islamic principles, when combined with local wisdom, can sustain a government and foster social cohesion. In a broader context, this model presents an alternative to modern state governance, where the integration of ethical and moral principles from religion plays a crucial role in leadership and governance. The absence of internal family disputes and the effective leadership transition in the Bacan Sultanate reflect the broader Islamic principle of justice and fairness, which can serve as a model for regions facing challenges in leadership and governance transitions.

The integration of Islamic principles and local wisdom in governance, as demonstrated by the Bacan Sultanate, offers a viable model for other regions with diverse populations and religious backgrounds. This model shows that governance based on moral integrity and fairness can reduce internal conflicts and promote social harmony. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of deliberation (*Bapatikamang*) as a key governance principle, which could be applied to other governance systems to foster inclusivity and collective decision-making. The study implies that modern governance models, especially in regions with rich cultural and religious traditions, could benefit from adopting a similar framework that prioritises moral and ethical governance.

The research results reflect the unique historical and socio-cultural context of the Bacan Sultanate, where Islamic teachings have been institutionalised for centuries. The Sultanate's governance model is shaped by the Sultan's role as both a religious and political leader, which is a common feature in many traditional Islamic states. Additionally, the preservation of local wisdom, such as *Palihara Piling* and *Kaadilang Nan Kabanarang*, reflects the community's deep respect for traditional values, which are seen as equally important as Islamic teachings. The Bacan Sultanate's success in avoiding internal conflicts can also be attributed to its well-established succession process, which is based on merit and moral integrity rather than political competition.

Based on the findings, there are several potential actions that can be taken. First, the Bacan Sultanate's governance model can be used as a case study for other regions looking to integrate religious principles and local wisdom into their governance systems. Second, policymakers in regions with diverse populations should consider adopting deliberation and ethical leadership as central tenets of governance to foster social cohesion and reduce conflict. Lastly, further research should explore the application of the Bacan Sultanate's principles in contemporary governance models, particularly in areas facing challenges

related to leadership transitions and social fragmentation. This research opens the door for broader discussions on the role of religion and local wisdom in shaping modern governance systems.

CONCLUSION

This research identifies the governance model of the Bacan Sultanate, which is based on the integration of Islamic principles and local wisdom. The study highlights four fundamental principles: obedience to Allah (*Taat de Ompu Allah Taala*), maintenance of trust (*Palihara Piling*), justice and truth (*Kaadilang Nan Kabanarang*), and deliberation (*Bapatikamang*). These principles are deeply embedded in the Sultanate's governance structure and have been instrumental in promoting social harmony, sustaining leadership, and avoiding internal conflicts. A unique aspect of the Bacan Sultanate is the seamless transition of power, which is managed with an emphasis on moral integrity and the absence of political competition, setting it apart from many contemporary governance systems.

This research provides a model of governance that can serve as an alternative for regions facing leadership and governance challenges. By integrating religious principles with local wisdom, the Bacan Sultanate demonstrates how ethical governance can be sustained over long periods. The study contributes to the broader understanding of how Islamic teachings and traditional values can be incorporated into modern governance frameworks, offering valuable insights for regions with diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. The principles of deliberation and ethical leadership, which are central to the Bacan Sultanate's governance model, can inspire other regions to adopt similar approaches to enhance social cohesion and reduce conflict.

The research is limited in scope to the Bacan Sultanate, which may not fully reflect the governance practices of other sultanates or regions. Additionally, the study is primarily based on qualitative data, which, while rich in detail, may benefit from further quantitative analysis. Future research could explore the application of the Bacan Sultanate's governance principles in different sociopolitical contexts, particularly in regions experiencing leadership transitions or governance challenges. Comparative studies between the Bacan Sultanate and other traditional governance systems could also provide deeper insights into the adaptability of these principles in modern governance frameworks.

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Conflicts of Interest: This research found that the existence of the Bacan Sultanate significantly contributed to shaping Islamic civilization, especially in the Eastern region of Indonesia, one of the four Sultanates that once triumphed. This can be proven by the charisma of the Sultan of Bacan, who is still highly recognized and respected. by various parties. The success of the Bacan Sultanate in building Islamic civilization was felt by the Bacan community and all Muslims in the eastern archipelago, even in the Malay region spread across Southeast Asia.

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