

Fathanah Responsive Leadership: As a Supplement in the Satellite Model

Fadjar Setiyo Anggraeni,  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0612-5763>

Student, Doctoral Program in Management Science, Sultan Agung Islamic University Semarang, Indonesia
Bambang Widarno,

Student, Doctoral Program in Management Science, Sultan Agung Islamic University Semarang, Indonesia

Corresponding author: Fadjar Setiyo Anggraeni, fadjarsetiyo@std.unissula.ac.id

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Abstract: *This paper provides the main points of argument and counterarguments in scientific controversies on the issue of organizational learning and leadership practices. This paper aims to reveal organizational learning practices in modern times marked by Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity (VUCA), especially for those who study Islamic values. In addition, it also provides an overview of how organizations learn to sharpen sensitivity, respond and be agile in dealing with any changes. The paper analyzed the previous research literature on organizational learning, especially leadership, which contributes to the successful functioning of the organization in VUCA conditions. The paper integrated the results of previous studies with the Islamic worldview, one of the characteristics of prophethood, namely fathana (intelligence). This made it possible to develop a new concept of organization management, which is called as "fathanah responsive leadership". The basis of this study is the understanding of fathana – not as an ordinary intelligence that everyone possesses, but a special intelligence, namely leadership, which is secretly formed through the basis of one's faith in God. The results of previous studies formed the basis for determining six hypotheses of this research: first, VUCA has a negative impact on competitiveness. Second, VUCA has a negative impact on financial performance. Third, competition has a positive effect on financial performance. Fourth, fathanah's responsive leadership weakens the influence of VUCA on competitiveness. Fifth, fathanah responsive leadership weakens the influence of VUCA on financial performance. Sixth, fathanah responsive leadership strengthens the competitive influence on financial performance. The article presents the results of an empirical analysis of the features of ensuring responsible leadership, which proved that for the high-quality organization of the company's activities, not only fathana and the sensitive character of the leader are needed, which is only an addition to this process and does not consider such characteristics as shiddik, amana and tabligh. However, the results of future research should be aimed at analyzing whether organizational learning and VUCA leadership practices can contribute to increasing the competitiveness of an organization and improving its financial performance.*

Keywords: competitiveness, fathanah responsive leadership, financial performance, organizational learning, VUCA.

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1. Introduction

Responding to conditions of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014), organizations require learning leadership that encourages institutional reflexivity and high organizational agility (Antonacopoulou et al., 2019). Sensuous Organizational Learning (Antonacopoulou et al., 2019) describes how attention, alertness, awareness, appreciation, anticipation, alignment, activation, and agility are integral to New OL. The unique contribution of Sensuous Organizational Learning by Antonacopoulou et al. (2019) is how the three principles of Institutional Reflexivity, High Agility Organizing, and Learning Leadership can be operationalized to serve the common good. Antonacopoulou et al. (2019) introduce new learning theories and inject new perspectives to revive Learning Organizations beyond ideology as a practical approach to responding to the conditions of VUCA and how its role and impact in the workplace.

The antecedents built by the three previous studies have the same common thread in a form of derivation, namely from the context of the application of knowledge management (KM) (Games & Rendi, 2019), through the human resource development (HRD) approach (Baker, 2019), and more specific to intellectual capital management (Henri et al., 2017). The similarity of the three studies above each uses a consequent variable of financial performance.



Figure 1. Derivation of the Antecedents of Knowledge Management

Source: Author's synthesis of thoughts Henri et al. (2017)

Even a recent idea by Todericiu & Beca (2022) states that applying knowledge management in an extensive business context is likely to increase the productivity of knowledge workers. The general idea that has emerged is that agility at the individual, team and organizational levels is necessary for effective VUCA management. At the individual level, agility involves “adaptive performance”, which includes competencies such as dealing with emergencies or crises, learning new tools or technologies, and coping effectively with stress (Baran & Woznyj, 2021). While at the leader level emphasizes agility, flexibility, and resilience to navigate the VUCA environment, often transferring their skills and advantages through the organizational and resource mobility typically found in startups (Millar et al., 2018). Kaya (2022) offers them to build their organizational structure to compete by achieving success on three platforms called human resources, knowledge, and technology.

According to Hitt et al. (1994), strategic leadership is important in several ways: making change decisions, correctly interpreting the issues that drive those decisions, and (a) relating to those issues and (b) being internally coherent, (c) choosing to act by organizational policies; long term strategy. This research temporarily equates competitiveness with innovation performance due to high innovation and creativity in company management to create company competitiveness. The effectiveness of innovation and the strength of competitiveness will be seen from how much the company achieves financial performance. Hitt et al. (1994) also said that effective strategic leadership requires the executive team to stay aligned and committed to this evolving vision. Change must be understood as a continuum, not a one-time event. Effective strategic leadership is about maintaining consistency among the elements of an evolving vision, communicating continuously with all organization members, and demonstrating members' ongoing commitment to the vision (ideal identity). It is a dynamic process that requires continuous effort to maintain it.

In contrast to conventional leadership, leadership in Islam is determined by leadership rules that must be carried out by the Qur'an and Hadith¹. (Charis et al., 2020). The basic nature of *shiddiq*, *amanah*, and *tabligh*

¹A collection of traditions containing sayings of the prophet Muhammad which, with accounts of his daily practice (the Sunna), constitute the major source of guidance for Muslims apart from the Koran.

is already owned by many leaders. The high *fathanah* nature is more needed by leaders to deal with uncertainty and environmental changes. The nature of *shiddiq* and *amanah* is a leader's basic or intrinsic nature. Wherever a person is, the intrinsic nature will always appear. Only with the strength of external influences and motivation of faith changes someone who has the intrinsic nature of *shiddiq* and *Amanah* will turn away.

Kasim et al. (2020) concluded that the practice of noble character carried out by leaders has a high sociological impact on employees and the organization, which will then positively influence the community and its surroundings. The nature of *tabligh* and *fathanah* is more relevant when it comes to the discussion of knowledge management. Furthermore, which one to choose between *tabligh* and *fathanah*, if the organizational environment is in a VUCA condition? Someone with *fathanah* capital will be more confident in carrying out the *tabligh* function, but not vice versa. Therefore, in our opinion, the *fathanah* character is more needed in the context of KM, HRD, and intellectual capital than *tabligh*.

This article attempts to spice up the new concept of Antonacopoulou *et al.* (2018) with Islamic values into a new proposition which is then operationalized. Operational basis based on the results of the study by Baker (2019), Games & Rendi (2019), and Henri et al. (2017), thus opening the insight of academics and practitioners about the antecedent and consequent variables of organizational learning as well as drawing the relationship between each variable to form a satellite model. This research brings optimism that the most important thing in realizing the goodness of an organization that can bring about change has a driving leader.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Prophet's Leadership and Agency Conflict. Agency theory has been studied empirically in fields such as economics, political science, sociology, and management (Baker, 2019). The agency *problem* is a possible conflict of interest that may occur between the principal and the agent. The agent acts in the interests of the principal. In the case of a company, an example is a relationship between shareholders (principals) and management (agents). In an agency relationship, an agent performs tasks on behalf of the principal. The principal usually involves them because they are considered capable and have characteristics that align with the principal's expectations. In the case of corporations, problems may arise because the agent is not acting in the principal's best interests. Whereas it should (at least in theory), management should make decisions that will maximize shareholder wealth even though it is in managers' best interest to maximize their wealth. In a situation VUCA will find it easier to trigger agency problems. Agents can use VUCA's assumptions and alibis as justification for covering up the company's low financial performance.

Allah says, "Indeed, you have in the Messenger of Allah a good role model for you, namely for those who hope for Allah's mercy and the coming of the Day of Judgment and he often mentions Allah", (Surah Al Ahzab: 21). Rasulullah Saw. gave an example, of at least four things that must be present and attached to a leader, namely: *siddiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathanah*. First, *Siddiq* requires a leader to act correctly and in favor of truth, honesty, and justice. Second, *Amanah* means truly trustworthy. The Messenger of Allah was nicknamed the title '*Al-Amin*' because he always did the best of what was his responsibility. Third, *Tabligh* means to convey. Deliver everything that has been entrusted to him. A leader must convey to those he leads something true and good, although sometimes bitter. Fourth, *Fathanah* means intelligent, forward-looking, highly motivated, always innovating for progress, and having bright thoughts to advance and prosper the people he leads.

A leader (agent) with the leadership qualities of the Prophet is guaranteed not to question the source of agency conflict around the issue of incentives and flexibility in carrying out tasks (<https://cerdasco.com/problems-agency>, 2020). Besides reducing agency conflict, the presence of the Prophet's model's leadership trait will also reduce agency conflict's negative influence on financial performance. It is proved by how he can implement an effective shura decision-making process and hisbah institution in a business control structure that has proven effective in overcoming conflicts of interest between parties (Zainuldin et al., 2018). Various findings then lead to the claim that Islam is far beyond being a political religion that essentially determines the rules of worship, morality, and belief but covers all areas of life, including binding provisions in the political, social, and economic fields (Kalkan & NAR, 2020).

2.2. Organizational Leadership and Performance. Leadership is the ability to influence others (Astuti et al., 2020) which is a significant predictor of creativity and innovation of employees, teams, and organizations (Hughes et al., 2018; Guzmán et al., 2020a). Although most current perspectives recognize leadership as a relational characteristic within a group (i.e., leaders because they have followers and

followers because they have leaders), no leadership analysis explains how leadership emerges (Hogg, 2001). Evidence from relationships within groups related to leadership is found in the research of Paais & Pattiruhu (2020), which states that the composition of motivation as a factor influencing the increase in efficiency and employee satisfaction is inseparable from the leadership's role in optimizing and professionalizing the organizational atmosphere. Organizations must develop core transformational leadership competencies such as communication skills in conveying a vision, presenting appropriate role models, empowering followers, and building good interpersonal skills (Astuty & Udin (2020)), and can even be operationalized to serve their interests together (Antonacopoulou et al., 2019). Thus, it can be understood that leadership has a big role in achieving organizational performance.

Strategic leadership and hospital performance indicate that higher levels of strategic leadership lead to better hospital performance, even if the mediated dynamic capacity is high (Najmi et al., 2018). In addition, it was also revealed that there is a relationship between authentic leadership and employee creativity which is mediated by employee creativity and empowerment (Mubarak & Noor, 2018), even TQM practices empirically suppress the relationship between management leadership and organizational performance (Dawabsheh et al., 2019) From many descriptions of previous findings that discuss leadership and organizational performance, an understanding can be drawn that, either directly or indirectly, leadership in organizations affects organizational performance.

2.3. Fathanah Responsive Leadership Concept. One of the characteristics of Industry 4.0 leadership is responsive leadership that can respond to situations in an adaptive way (Guzmán et al., 2020a). Responsive leadership involving culture is a type of activism that focuses on pedagogy, civil rights, justice for marginalized and oppressed people, and inclusiveness, which emphasizes empowerment (Khalifa et al., 2016). Therefore, leaders need to prepare themselves, update their knowledge and skills, and further understand which characteristics can contribute to their work in a digital and responsive environment, as expected by I4.0. (Guzmán et al., 2020b). That way, no external actors will be needed to facilitate technology transfer. Because if leaders are smart, they can take advantage of encouragement from suppliers, customers, and consultants (Massa & Testa, 2008).

The intelligence in Islam is called *fathanah* is a professional leader who prioritizes expertise, intelligence, wisdom, and competence in completing the tasks assigned to him (Charis et al., 2020) and must always be ready to face and overcome problems that arise as quickly as possible. (Astuti et al., 2020). Intelligence is one of the requirements of an ideal leader. The intelligence of the Prophet, which was framed by the policy was able to attract the sympathy of the Arab community. With his *fathanah* nature, the Prophet managed conflicts and problems faced by the people at that time. History records how the Prophet was very intelligent, even though he was said to be ummi (not reading and writing). Even Ignaz Golziher, an orientalist from Hungary, once said that the Prophet Muhammad was indeed intelligent; he was able to enrich conceptions and was able to transform previous values into the Islamic teaching system (Hakim, 2007).

Position leadership as an integral aspect of the vision and journey of becoming a Learning Organization (Senge et al., 1994; Marsick & Watkins, 1999). This leadership dimension reflects courage, commitment, trust, and curiosity to persevere while navigating the unknown (Antonacopoulou et al., 2019). They describe the dynamic, collective, relational and reflexive nature of leadership (Alvesson & Skeldeberg, 2017) that is situated and defined socially, and in which practice receives special consideration given an orientation to learning to drive goal attainment.

3. Proposed Proposition

3.1. Relationship Between VUCA and Competitiveness. The current rate of change is faster than ever, and even shortly, players will dominate even unknown competitive segments (Prange & Hennig, 2019). VUCA, if not responded well, will be a threat. Like many case studies of companies that went bankrupt because they felt better trapped in their core business in the past (Arif Satria, 2020). It is different if it is treated as a necessity. Then someone will anticipate by preparing themselves more maturely, aligning every element involved, and activating the steps that have been prepared. Logically and in a business sense, in a VUCA situation, entrepreneurs will try to survive. To current evidence, executives and managers are more concerned with creating a sustainable competitive advantage than a competitive advantage in general (Hamadamin & Atan, 2019; Hitka et al., 2019; Pearse, 2017; Saridakis et al., 2017).

PI: VUCA has a negative effect on competitiveness

3.2. Relationship Between VUCA and Financial Performance. Organizational resilience is defined as a firm's capacity to survive, adapt, and grow in turbulent changes or unexpected situations. Since organizational resilience is a latent pathway-dependent construct, it can be evaluated through long-term outcomes in an integrated perspective (Palmi et al., 2018), and organizational resilience can benefit financial performance (McCann et al., 2009; Beuren et al., 2022). The financial performance itself refers to the performance that can be expressed in monetary terms, which is generally an achievement that can be confirmed by financial reports and refers to indicator and index items that can be calculated by reports (Kim & Kim, 2021).

This focus on practical critique and assessment promotes readiness and resilience, but also seeks and seeks back as an integral part of renewing ways of knowing and acting as approaches to individual and collective learning (Antonacopoulou, 2018). Organizational Learning Sensitivity is positioned as a strategic response to VUCA conditions. The results of the research by Henri et al. (2017) point out the importance of conscious and systematic management of organizational knowledge for organizational benefit. To strengthen this, the subconcepts for each future-ready mindset have been mapped and matched to the characteristics of each VUCA (Azman et al., 2020).P2

P2: VUCA has a negative effect on financial performance

3.3. Relationship Between Competitiveness and Financial Performance. Competitiveness and financial performance represent two main aspects of organizational performance. Competitiveness with competitors is indicated by high financial performance (Kianto et al., 2017). Meanwhile, Karadağ (2018) research results also show a powerful positive correlation between financial performance and business competitiveness. However, in this article, this study attempts to shift competitiveness as an antecedent of financial performance factors. The competitiveness indicators used are indicators of innovation results. To succeed in today's competitive environment, companies must pursue a coherent technology strategy and have clear plans for developing, acquiring, and using technology assets to achieve superior financial performance (Zahra, 1996). Meanwhile, the research results by De Castro & Chrisman (1995) show a significant relationship between order entry and competitive strategy. Furthermore, this relationship has a significant influence on the company's financial performance.

P3: Competitiveness has a positive effect on financial performance

3.4. The Influence of Fathanah Responsive Leadership on the Relationship Between VUCA and Competitiveness. The main themes of modern VUCA management are agility (handling volatility), information and knowledge management (handling uncertainty), restructuring (handling complexity), and experimentation (handling ambiguity) (Kaivo-oja & Lauraeus, 2018). Therefore, the main challenge for leaders is to turn the threats of the competitive environment into opportunities. In this case, the role of mindset is very important. The presence of *fathanah* responsive leadership is expected to reduce the negative impact of VUCA on the company's competitiveness. The characteristics of intelligent and responsive leaders will be able to bring their institutions out of the crisis.

P4: Fathanah Responsive Leadership weakens VUCA's influence on Competitiveness

3.5. The influence of Fathanah Responsive Leadership on the Relationship Between VUCA and Financial Performance. With the presence of *fathanah* responsive leadership, it is expected to reduce the negative impact of VUCA on the company's financial performance. The conclusion from researchers through a discussion of the managerial qualities and organizational skills required for responsible leadership in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment (VUCA) will depend on how leaders manage these forces. Their leadership can be a positive or negative force of disruption, innovation, and value destruction. It highlights the importance of responsible leadership (Miska et al., 2020). Through breakthrough innovation and creativity, intelligent and responsive leaders can bring their institutions to achieve high financial performance. The study of Henri et al. (2017) indeed shows that financial performance can be achieved through the indirect influence of intellectual capital management after going through competitiveness. Almost the same as what was stated by Games & Rendi (2019) that the financial performance of SMEs cannot be generated from Negative Innovation Outcomes.

P5: Fathanah Responsive Leadership weakens the influence of VUCA on Financial Performance

3.6. The influence of Fathanah Responsive Leadership on the Relationship Between Competitiveness and Financial Performance. Research (Kago et al., 2018) recommends that companies focus on

implementing competitive strategies to improve performance by expanding their customer base, asset quality, service quality, and market share. An organization must work effectively concerning financial performance. A clear strategy should be developed to guide operations and provide guidance to all relevant departments to avoid compromise. Organizations also need effective strategies that adapt to customer needs, business goals, and changing environments. Ali & Anwar's (2021) findings show that the dimensions of Strategic Competitiveness Skills & Competence have a significant and positive impact on competitive advantage. With the presence of *fathanah* responsive leadership, it is expected to increase competitiveness efforts to achieve high financial performance. Competitiveness must be appropriately managed, maintained, and maintained to produce sustainable financial performance.

P6: Fathanah Responsive Leadership strengthens the influence of Competitiveness on Financial Performance

4. Conceptual Framework

After reviewing the relevant literature and formulating research propositions, it is supported by the Learning Organization theory and Leadership Theory integrated with the Islamic Worldview which then gave birth to the concept of Fathanah's Responsive Leadership as a moderating variable for independent variables (VUCA) and dependent (competitiveness and financial performance). Figure 2 shows the proposed conceptual framework for this study.

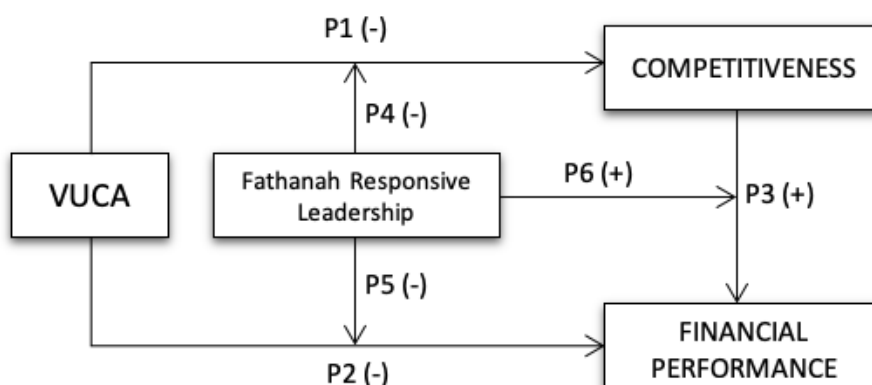


Figure 2. Research Conceptual Framework

Source: Authors' synthesis

5. Methodology

This article adopts a conceptual modeling methodology approach. It proposes a new framework that can combine two important organizational strategic factors, namely leadership, and responsiveness, which then become fathanah-responsive leadership variables after being integrated with the Islamic Worldview in the form of the prophetic nature of Muhammad Saw. Given the complexity, innovation, and unstudied nature of research topics and conflict and leadership, in-depth qualitative studies that generate lots of data are the most appropriate research methods. Baseline information for this study was collected through interviews based on a questionnaire. The program's formal structure shapes data collection; relevant coordinating bodies and authorities, NGOs, and private organizations were asked to respond to the survey. Other sources of information are scientific articles published in scientific journals, books written by experts, official government publications, NGOs, and mass media everywhere.

6. Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

New discourses in organizational learning must be presented to encourage discussion. The VUCA situation is a necessity that a leader must respond to for his organization to survive. This article challenges those who are steeped in Islamic values that exist in modern times to do this practice of organizational learning. How companies learn to hone sensitivity, respond, and be agile in the face of every change. Figure 2 shows how the responsive leadership *fathanah* design is at the satellite model's core for improving organizations' general situation. It can strengthen competitiveness to face VUCA. It also strengthens competitiveness as well as hinders VUCA from improving financial performance.



Figure 2. Satellite Model of Using *Fathanah* Responsive Leadership

Source: Authors' synthesis

Wrapped in Islamic values and the leadership traits of the Prophet *Fathanah* Responsive Leadership This is expected to be a solution. There needs to be more than the *fathanah* and responsive nature of a leader who only acts as a supplement to make the company superior without being based on the nature of *shiddiq*, *amanah*, and *tabligh*. It is necessary to prove whether the character of a leader who is *fathanah* and responsive to the VUCA situation is considered more capable of creating competitiveness and achieving high financial performance. The results of the review of articles and the synthesis of Islamic values raised many questions and ideas for the development of further research. First, to prove whether the leadership of the Prophet can reduce or even eliminate agency conflict. Second, among the leadership traits of Rasulullah *Siddiq*, *Amanah*, *Tabligh*, and *Fathanah*, what are the dominant traits needed in the current VUCA condition? It also tests the proposition of the *Fathanah* Responsive Leadership variable. Alternatively, precisely because these characteristics are revelations from Allah SWT, they are an inseparable unit, attached to the absolute integral nature of the Prophet. Third, proof and testing of the proposition of the role of the *fathanah* responsive leadership satellite in controlling VUCA to create competitiveness and achieve good financial performance is still needed.

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List of Abbreviations:

HRD: human resource development.

KM: knowledge management.

OL: organizational learning.

SMEs: small and medium-sized enterprises.

TQM: total quality management.

VUCA: volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.

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