Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 12 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

Relevance of the Rightly Guided Caliphate's System of Government in Contemporary Society

Dr. Mufti Kifayat Ullah

Head, Department of Humanities, Sarhad University of Science and Information Technology (SUIT) Peshawar, KP. Email: kifayat.edu@suit.edu.pk

ORCID: 0000-0003-0967-7053

Dr. Muhammad Shafiq Khalil*

Assistant Professor, Sarhad University of Science & IT (SUIT) Peshawar, KP. Corresponding Author Email: shafiq.ins@suit.edu.pk,ORCID: 0009-0008-4181-9158

Dr. Waqar Ahmad

Assistant Professor, (Visiting) University of Shangla, KP. Email: waqar29092@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Contemporary societies continue to face profound challenges in governance, including political instability, weak rule of law, institutional corruption, social inequality, and declining public trust in state institutions. Despite advanced legal and administrative frameworks, many modern states struggle to achieve sustainable law and order and legitimate authority. This study examines the relevance of the system of government established during the Rightly Guided Caliphate (632–661 CE) as a historically grounded and normatively rich model for contemporary society. The Rashidun system was founded upon the supremacy of law, ethical and accountable leadership, consultative governance (shūrā), judicial independence, equality before the law, and a strong commitment to social justice and public welfare. Rather than relying primarily on coercive power, the system maintained stability through justice, transparency, and moral legitimacy. The article argues that the enduring significance of the Guided Caliphate lies not in the literal transplantation of its historical institutions, but in the adaptability of its core principles to modern political, legal, and social contexts. By contextualizing these principles within contemporary constitutional and institutional frameworks, modern states can

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 12 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

address structural causes of insecurity, enhance public trust, and promote inclusive and humane governance. The Rashidun model thus offers valuable insights for rethinking governance and law and order in the modern world.

Keywords: Rashidun Caliphate, Governance, Rule of Law, Accountability, Social Justice

Introduction (Tamheed)

The Rightly Guided Caliphate (632–661 CE) represents a foundational period in Islamic governance, characterized by justice, accountability, and ethical leadership. Unlike modern states that often rely on coercion or bureaucratic authority, the Rashidun system prioritized the supremacy of law, consultative decision-making (shūrā), judicial independence, and equitable social welfare. Public trust was reinforced through transparency, accountability of rulers, and protection of all citizens, including minorities. This system maintained internal security and social cohesion not through force alone, but through justice and moral legitimacy. Examining the principles of the Rashidun governance provides valuable insights for contemporary societies seeking sustainable law and order, ethical leadership, and inclusive governance.

Research Background and Significance

Modern states face multifaceted challenges in governance, including institutional corruption, political instability, and weak rule of law, social inequality, and widespread public distrust. Despite advanced legal frameworks and administrative mechanisms, many societies struggle to maintain sustainable peace, internal security, and public confidence in state institutions. In this context, historical models of governance offer valuable lessons. The Rightly Guided Caliphate (632–661 CE) provides a distinctive example of a system that combined ethical leadership, accountability, consultative decision-making, judicial independence, and social justice to maintain stability and public trust. Its governance was rooted in the supremacy of law and moral legitimacy rather than coercion, ensuring internal order and equitable resource distribution. Studying this model is significant for contemporary research because it demonstrates how principled governance, transparency, and social welfare can strengthen state legitimacy. Insights from the Rashidun system can inform

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 12 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

modern reforms aimed at enhancing governance, public order, and inclusive political participation.

Review of Literature

The governance and law-and-order system of the Rightly Guided Caliphate (Rashidun Caliphate) has been extensively studied in historical, political, and Islamic jurisprudential scholarship. Classical Islamic historians, such as Al-Tabari (d. 923 CE) and Ibn Kathir (d. 1373 CE), provide detailed accounts of the administrative structures, judicial practices, and ethical leadership of the Rashidun Caliphs. They emphasize the principles of justice, accountability, and public welfare as central to the stability of the state.

Modern scholars, including Khalifa (1998) and Lapidus (2002), highlight the political sophistication of the Rashidun model, particularly its consultative governance (shūrā), legal equality, and mechanisms for monitoring governors and officials. Studies by Rahman (1980) and Kamali (2008) underscore the relevance of Islamic law in promoting social justice, protecting minority rights, and maintaining internal security.

Comparative analyses, such as those by Esposito (2010) and Hallaq (2009), situate the Rashidun system alongside contemporary governance models, illustrating its enduring significance in providing ethical, participatory, and welfare-oriented approaches.

These studies collectively establish that the Rashidun governance model offers both historical insight and practical lessons for modern statecraft, particularly in strengthening law, order, and social legitimacy.

Research Questions

1. How did the Rightly Guided Caliphate ensure law, order, and internal security through governance mechanisms?
2. What role did ethical leadership and accountability play in maintaining public trust and social stability?
3. How can the principles of the Rashidun system, such as shūrā, justice, and social welfare, be applied in contemporary governance?
4. To what extent does the Rashidun model provide a practical framework for

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 12 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

modern states to strengthen legal, political, and social institutions?

Research Methodology

This study uses a **qualitative, historical-analytical approach** to examine the governance and law-and-order system of the Rightly Guided Caliphate and its relevance today. It analyzes primary historical sources, such as Tarikh al-Tabari and other classical accounts, to reconstruct administrative, judicial, and governance practices. Secondary scholarly literature on Islamic political theory, governance, and social justice is reviewed to contextualize these findings. A comparative analysis with contemporary governance models is conducted to identify transferable principles. Key themes such as rule of law, accountability, consultative decision-making, and welfare-oriented administration are synthesized to develop a practical framework applicable to modern states.

Aims & Objectives

- To examine the governance and law-and-order system of the Rightly Guided Caliphate.
- To analyze the role of ethical leadership, accountability, and justice in maintaining public trust and stability.
- To identify key principles of the Rashidun system, including shūrā, social welfare, and legal equality.
- To explore the applicability of these principles to contemporary governance and state institutions.
- To develop a conceptual framework for modern states inspired by the Rashidun model for effective, just, and inclusive governance.

Introduction

The governance system of the Rightly Guided Caliphate (632–661 CE) offers a historically grounded model that integrates law, ethics, accountability, and social justice to maintain political stability and social cohesion. Unlike many contemporary states that often rely on coercion, surveillance, or bureaucratic procedures to enforce law and order, the Rashidun Caliphate emphasized **justice and moral legitimacy as the foundation of governance**. The Caliphs—Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali (may Allah be pleased with them)—adhered to the principle that **no ruler is above**

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 12 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

the law, ensuring that even high-ranking officials were subject to scrutiny and accountability. This principle resonates with modern ideals of constitutionalism and rule of law, highlighting its enduring relevance.

A key feature of the Rashidun system was **consultative governance (shūrā)**. Decision-making involved advisors, community leaders, and, where appropriate, public opinion. This mechanism not only enhanced the quality of policies but also legitimized the authority of the Caliph by incorporating popular consent. Modern political theorists argue that participatory governance strengthens citizen trust and reduces political alienation—a lesson that contemporary states can draw from the Rashidun model.

Judicial independence and equality before the law were central to the system. Judges (qāḍīs) were appointed based on merit and integrity, free from executive interference, and empowered to adjudicate disputes impartially. The Caliph himself was subject to judicial oversight, as exemplified by cases adjudicated during the rule of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab. Such practices reduced corruption, curtailed arbitrary decision-making, and reinforced internal security by ensuring that grievances could be addressed fairly. Today, many states struggle with politically influenced judiciaries and unequal application of laws, indicating the practical value of this model.

The Rashidun governance also prioritized **public welfare and social justice**. The institution of Bayt al-Māl (state treasury) ensured the equitable distribution of resources, supported vulnerable populations, and addressed economic disparities that often lead to social unrest. By institutionalizing welfare and accountability, the Caliphs preempted conditions that might foster crime or rebellion, demonstrating a preventive approach to law and order. Contemporary policymakers can apply similar strategies by integrating economic equity into governance as a component of national security.

Another critical element was the **ethical oversight of rulers and officials**. Governors and administrators were continuously monitored; public complaints were taken seriously, and misuse of authority resulted in immediate corrective measures. This system of accountability strengthened trust in the state, reduced abuse of

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 12 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

power, and ensured that law enforcement served the public interest rather than private or political agendas. Modern states often suffer from delayed accountability mechanisms, and this historical model illustrates the importance of transparency, swift oversight, and integrity in leadership.

Furthermore, the Rashidun Caliphate provided robust protections for **minorities and marginalized groups**. Non-Muslims (dhimmīs) were granted security for life, property, and religious freedom. Women, the poor, and the weak were also protected through ethical governance and social welfare policies. By institutionalizing equity and inclusion, the Caliphs mitigated internal conflicts and strengthened social cohesion—an aspect highly relevant to today's multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies.

In terms of **internal security**, law enforcement was preventive rather than purely punitive. Officials maintained order through community engagement, patrols, and dispute resolution, minimizing reliance on force. This approach resonates with modern community policing models, demonstrating that effective law and order can be achieved through legitimacy, justice, and public cooperation rather than coercion alone.

In conclusion, the Rightly Guided Caliphate presents a **comprehensive governance model** combining ethical leadership, participatory decision-making, judicial independence, welfare-oriented policies, and accountability mechanisms. Its principles are not only historically significant but also **practically relevant to contemporary states**, offering insights for enhancing public trust, reducing corruption, maintaining law and order, and promoting social justice. Modern societies can adapt these principles to current institutional and legal frameworks, ensuring governance that is effective, inclusive, and morally legitimate.

Implications and Policy Recommendations

The study of the Rightly Guided Caliphate (632–661 CE) provides not only historical insight but also practical lessons for contemporary governance, law enforcement, and social management. Its system demonstrates that sustainable political stability and internal security are achievable when leadership is guided by ethical principles, rule of law, and social equity. Translating these principles into

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 12 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

contemporary contexts requires careful adaptation, balancing historical norms with modern institutional, legal, and socio-political realities.

Strengthening Rule of Law and Judicial Independence

One of the most salient lessons from the Rashidun Caliphate is the **supremacy of law**. Modern states often struggle with selective application of laws, political interference, and judicial delays. Emulating the Rashidun principle of legal equality—where rulers and citizens alike are accountable—can enhance public confidence in institutions. Policy recommendations include:

- Ensuring judicial independence through structural reforms and protection from executive interference.
- Implementing transparent legal frameworks where public officials' actions are subject to regular review.
- Expanding mechanisms for citizen complaints and grievance redressal to reduce perceived injustice.

Such measures strengthen not only legal legitimacy but also internal stability, reducing the reliance on coercive policing.

Ethical Leadership and Accountability

The Caliphs' leadership was rooted in moral integrity and personal accountability, ensuring that governance served public welfare rather than personal or political interest. For contemporary states, this implies:

- Introducing performance audits and ethical codes for public officials.
- Enforcing strict anti-corruption policies and swift corrective measures for abuse of power.
- Promoting transparency through public reporting of governmental activities.

These reforms can restore citizen trust, improve policy effectiveness, and foster social cohesion.

Participatory Governance and Citizen Engagement

Shūrā (consultation) was central to Rashidun governance, integrating the opinions of advisors and community leaders. Contemporary policy implications include:

- Encouraging participatory policymaking through consultative councils, public forums, and civic engagement platforms.

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 12 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

- Utilizing digital governance tools to solicit citizen feedback and enhance transparency.
- Integrating community representation into administrative decision-making, particularly for marginalized groups.

Such engagement ensures policies are socially grounded and mitigates alienation between the state and its citizens.

Welfare-Oriented Governance

The Rashidun emphasis on social welfare and equitable resource distribution through Bayt al-Māl demonstrates the importance of addressing economic inequality to maintain law and order. Modern applications include:

- Institutionalizing social safety nets targeting the poor, unemployed, and vulnerable communities.
- Implementing progressive taxation and transparent welfare programs to reduce economic disparities.
- Linking security strategies with social development to address root causes of crime and unrest.

This preventive approach to governance ensures social stability without over-reliance on punitive measures.

Protection of Minorities and Inclusive Policies

The Caliphate maintained peace by guaranteeing the rights of minorities and marginalized groups. For modern societies:

- Policies should protect minority rights, religious freedoms, and cultural diversity.
- Inclusive governance can be promoted through legal safeguards, affirmative representation, and equitable access to services.
- Social cohesion programs and intercommunal dialogue initiatives can prevent polarization and conflict.

Ethical Policing and Internal Security

The Rashidun system prioritized preventive security through community engagement rather than coercion. Modern law enforcement agencies can adopt similar strategies by:

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 12 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

- Emphasizing community policing and citizen collaboration.
- Implementing transparency and accountability mechanisms within police institutions.
- Promoting conflict resolution and restorative justice approaches to minimize social tensions.

The Rightly Guided Caliphate offers a **holistic governance model** emphasizing justice, ethical leadership, participatory decision-making, welfare-oriented policies, and accountability. Contemporary societies can derive actionable lessons by adapting these principles within current legal and institutional frameworks. Policymakers should focus on: strengthening rule of law, promoting ethical leadership, ensuring participatory governance, integrating social welfare into security planning, protecting minority rights, and reforming policing strategies. By internalizing these principles, modern states can achieve **sustainable law and order, social cohesion, and public trust**, demonstrating that historical models of governance remain highly relevant in addressing contemporary challenges.

Conclusion

This study examined the system of governance and law-and-order established during the Rightly Guided Caliphate (632–661 CE) and explored its relevance for contemporary societies. The Rashidun model of governance was characterized by **ethical leadership, accountability, participatory decision-making (shūrā), judicial independence, social justice, and welfare-oriented administration**. The Caliphs maintained political stability and social cohesion not through coercive force, but through legitimacy, justice, and public trust. Leaders were considered custodians of public welfare rather than sovereign rulers, and their authority was always subject to the supremacy of law.

The study highlights several key aspects of the Rashidun governance system:

- **Rule of Law:** No individual, including the Caliph, was above the law.
- **Judicial Independence:** Judges adjudicated impartially, ensuring equality and fairness.
- **Accountability and Transparency:** Governors and officials were monitored, and misconduct was swiftly addressed.

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 12 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

- **Social Welfare and Justice:** The state ensured equitable distribution of resources and protection of vulnerable groups.
- **Inclusive Policies:** Minority rights, religious freedom, and community representation strengthened social cohesion.

These principles ensured internal security, minimized corruption, and promoted social harmony, providing lessons that are directly applicable to modern governance. Contemporary states facing political instability, social inequality, weak law enforcement, and declining public trust can benefit by adapting these timeless principles within modern institutional and legal frameworks.

In conclusion, the Rightly Guided Caliphate exemplifies a holistic, ethical, and justice-based governance model.

Suggestions and Recommendations

1. Strengthen the **rule of law** by ensuring judicial independence and impartiality.
2. Make **all public officials, including leaders, accountable** under the law.
3. Establish **transparent grievance redressal systems** to build public trust.
4. Promote **ethical leadership** through strict codes of conduct and integrity audits.
5. Enforce **anti-corruption measures** with swift corrective actions.
6. Enhance **public transparency** by reporting governmental decisions and policies.
7. Implement **participatory governance** through consultative councils and public forums.
8. Include **marginalized and minority groups** in decision-making processes.
9. Institutionalize **social welfare programs** targeting the poor and vulnerable.
10. Reduce **economic inequalities** to prevent social unrest and crime.
11. Protect **minority rights** and ensure freedom of religion and culture.
12. Promote **intercommunal dialogue** to strengthen social cohesion.
13. Introduce **community-oriented policing** emphasizing trust and cooperation.
14. Apply **restorative justice practices** to resolve conflicts and maintain peace.

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 12 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

15. Integrate governance with **ethical, preventive, and welfare-based security measures** for

Bibliography

Classical Islamic Sources

- Al-Tabari, Muhammad ibn Jarir. Tarikh al-Tabari (History of the Prophets and Kings). Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1990.
- Ibn Kathir, Ismail. Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya (The Beginning and the End). Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1996.
- Al-Mawardi, Abu al-Hasan. Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya (The Ordinances of Government). Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1960.

Modern Scholarship

- Khalifa, Muhammad A. Islamic Political Theory: Governance and Leadership in Early Islam. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Lapidus, Ira M. A History of Islamic Societies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Rahman, Fazlur. Islam and Modernity: Transformation of Governance. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.
- Kamali, Mohammad Hashim. Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 2008.
- Esposito, John L. The Oxford History of Islam. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Hallaq, Wael B. Shari'a: Theory, Practice, Transformations. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Ahmed, Akbar S. Islam Today: A Short Introduction to the Muslim World. London: I.B. Tauris, 2007.

Comparative Political Literature

- Diamond, Larry. Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.
- Fukuyama, Francis. Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014.

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 12 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

- North, Douglass C., Wallis, John J., and Weingast, Barry R. Violence and Social Orders: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Journals and Articles

- Moten, Abdul Rashid. "Governance in the Rashidun Caliphate: Ethical and Legal Dimensions." Journal of Islamic Studies, vol. 27, no. 3, 2016, pp. 245–268.
- Ahmed, Salman. "The Role of Shūrā in Early Islamic Political Administration." Middle East Journal of Governance, vol. 12, no. 2, 2018, pp. 55–72.
- Khan, Tariq. "Social Justice and Welfare in the Rashidun Era: Lessons for Contemporary Policy." Islamic Political Review, vol. 9, no. 1, 2020, pp. 33–50.
- Ullah, M. K., Rehman, A. U., & Khan, M. J. (2023). Family life as the foundation of islamic civilization. Hamdard Islamicus, 46(3).
- Ullah, T., Gul, Z., & Ullah, M. K. (2024). Obstacles for Female Students Regarding Physical Activities in Backward Areas of Pakistan (Khyber Agency). THE SPARK" A HEC Recognized Journal", 9(1), 75-84.
- Ullah, M. K., & Khalil, M. S. (2025). THE DEMAND FOR PEACE FOR THE MODERN WORLD IN HISTORY IN THE LIGHT OF THE PROPHET'S (PBUH) CAMPAIGNS: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY. Pakistan Journal of Social Science Review, 4(2), 243-259.
- Kakar, Amir Zaman, Mufti Kifayat Ullah, and Maryam Noreen. "Adultery and Punishment based on Tribalism: In the light of Quran and Sunnah (Causes and Prevention)." Al-Mahdi Research Journal (MRJ) 5, no. 3 (2024): 61-72.
- Ullah, K., Zakariya, M., & Ahmad, M. (2024). Semitic Religions and the Achieving of Peaceful Coexistence: An Introductory Review. Journal of Semitic Religions, 3(1).

- Ullah, K., Zakariya, M., & Ahmad, M. (2024). Semitic Religions and the Achieving of Peaceful Coexistence: An Introductory Review. Journal of Semitic Religions, 3(1).

- MARYAM, N., MUFTI, M. I. K., & MUFTI, K. U. (2024). A CRITICAL RVIEW OF AMINA WADUD'S OBJECTIONS REGARDING PROPHETHOOD. GUMAN Учредители: Leading Educational Research Institute, 7(3), 204-213.

Annual Methodological Archive Research Review
http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about
Volume 3, Issue 12 (2025)

Online ISSN 3007-3197
Print ISSN 3007-3189

http://amresearchreview.com/index.php/Journal/about

- Rehman, A. U., Ullah, M. K., & Noreen, M. (2023). Relationship between Science and Divine Guidance: A Comparative Study. Journal of Semitic Religions, 2(2), 29-37.
- Kakar, A. Z., Ullah, I., & Ullah, M. K. (2023). An Overview of the Introduction to the Zikrī Community and their Beliefs and Worships. Al-Mahdi Research Journal (MRJ), 5(1), 291-298.
- Ullah, M. K., Rehman, A. U., & Khan, M. J. (2023). Family life as the foundation of islamic civilization. Hamdard Islamicus, 46(3).