

Female Competencies from the Narratives of the Qur'an: Queen of Sheba's Crisis Management Style as a Leadership Model

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Abstract

This article examines the skills and competency of women in managing crises as narrated in the Holy Qur'an. The various kinds of crises (social, cultural, religious, and political crises) that exist in societies are illustrated in the Qur'an. It also gives different stories showing women's ability to manage and find solutions to crises. Among the different crises portrayed in the Qur'an, this article explicitly addresses the political crisis encountered by the Queen of Sheba (Bilqis) in her kingdom with Prophet Sulaiman (PBUH) as an example and how she managed it. It explains how the Queen managed the crisis with minimum loss through her leadership skills. A qualitative method is applied to analyze data derived from various sources such as theses, journals, and articles related to the principles of crisis management from an Islamic perspective and followed by exploring the crisis

management models by being directed to the Al-Qur'an (the primary sources of Islam) and its interpretation. In this study, the political crisis, its management strategies, and its recovery results are analyzed. The study results show that women can be successful leaders with leadership characteristics, management, and personal skills.

Keywords: Crisis Management, Political Crisis, Bilqis, Women

A. INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that throughout history, women have been active and effective contributors to all aspects of life, such as education, health, economics, management, and politics. They have also played leading roles in scientific and real-life experiences at all levels. When faced with diverse problems and challenges, women can provide solutions and solve complex crises. Women of different races have challenged their states and religions to increase their social and political competence, power, and agency (Pakdil, 2016). This contribution has made women an exceptional part of human existence.

In the early days of Islam, women were allowed to exercise their rights by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). They were given inheritance rights, property ownership, divorce, and education. Several Muslim women were influential in the development of their society, such as Aisha bint Abi Bakr, the wife of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). She was a scholar in jurisprudence and hadith. Islam ensured that women were not denied the above rights; they were empowered by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to contribute to Muslim societies (Aquil, 2011).

The Holy Qur'an pays special attention to women as

active members of society in organizing state affairs and governance policies and managing state affairs, especially on the political front. The Noble Qur'an verses are full of exceptional women who have been cherished and admired for their noble contributions to human civilization, knowledge, and good management. This contribution has notably affected young generations, as these women exemplify wisdom and responsible leadership. Some crucial women mentioned in the Qur'an are the mother of Moses, Mary, and Bilqis, who was the Queen of Sheba. These women demonstrate a specific role of women from the Qur'an perspective. They portray leadership traits and good management skills (Stack, 2020).

The wise "Queen of Sheba," Bilqis is among the most prominent women who have set a model for leadership, state management, and crisis resolution. She is famous for being able to manage and resolve a crisis that affected her land without any losses (Jeenah, 2004). It is written in the Holy Qur'an, Surah An-Naml (Q.S. 27), how the Queen made policies, formulated good strategies, consistently organized external relations, and handled the crisis that affected her land. Bilqis is a precise model of an experienced woman of politics who outran many leaders by being able to resolve grave external dilemmas (Bakhtyar & Rezaei, 2012). She resolved a political dilemma with a religious undertone with the world's greatest king at that time- Prophet Sulaiman.

1. Crisis Management

Nowadays, the concept of crisis management is widespread in contemporary societies, where it, in one way or the other, affects all aspects of life, ranging from the

crises that face the individual to the crises experienced by groups, governments, institutions, and finally the international scenes (Yaziji, 2011). This widespread is due to the many crises and problems facing modern societies at all levels of life. The art of managing crises and reducing losses has become an important area and an essential need that must be taken seriously by various individuals, institutions, and states. According to Al-Utaibi & Al-Khelewi (2018), crisis management is a system used to confront emergency cases, intending to control their results. It can be defined as “a method built on good prediction, defining roles and tasks, and rapid mobilization during the crisis stages.” It is concerned with addressing an emergency, which is characterized by a high level of pressure, rapid changes, successive events, losses, and system collapse, by defining the original goals it was created to achieve.

“Crisis Management” is a modern term involving high efficiency and total energy to overcome real problems and obstacles, especially suddenness and surprise, with minimum losses. Al-Ghoul (2016) defined “Crisis Management” as a practical, interactive methodology implemented to tackle some unexpected event or a series of events that has/had a direct, threatening, and negative impact on individuals, groups, or institutions. Crisis management refers to anticipating, identifying, preventing, and managing potential disasters by implementing plans to deal with them (Ronez, 2014). On the other hand, a *crisis* is defined as any partial or total disruption of critical operations due

to damage to property or equipment, harm to people, destroyed relationships, environmental destruction, or stakeholders' negative perception and influence, among other factors (Vardarlier, 2016).

Frameworks for a crisis's various stages/phases have been developed. The more familiar frameworks emerged in the 1990s and generally followed a three-, four-, and five-stage approach to analyzing the life of a crisis (Crandall, Parnell, & Spillan, 2013). Richardson (1994) offered a three-step framework: the pre-crisis/disaster phase, the crisis impact/rescue stage, and the recovery/demise stage. At the same time, Myers (1993) offered a four-stage approach that begins with the normal operations stage, followed by emergency response and intermediate phase, and ends with restoration. For the five-stage framework, Pearson & Mitroff (1993) provide an even more comprehensive approach to understanding the stages of a crisis. These stages include signal detection, preparation/prevention, containment/damage limitation, recovery, and learning.

A vital player in crisis management is the crisis leader(s) due to their understanding of the needs and their role in surviving the crisis. Their skills and knowledge are necessary for ensuring that their followers contribute to their organization's sustainability by participating in the crisis management process. Crisis management is one of the areas of management in which leaders are expected to participate to ensure that what is needed is done in a crisis. Leadership capabilities and resilience are emphasized as effective crisis management

(Manole, Alpopi, & Colesca, 2011). In other words, leaders should identify when and how to activate a crisis plan, communicate across their organization, set strategies, and formulate teams to ensure effective management before, during, and after a crisis.

2. Crisis Management in Islam

Crisis management is a modern concept in the science of management, but crises and dealing with them are as old as humankind is. Islam, since its beginning, laid the scientific and practical foundations for crisis management (Al-Eid & Arnout, 2020). The Holy Qur'an, full of knowledge, secrets, and miracles, has addressed many humanitarian crises and shown us how to resolve and deal with them. The comprehensiveness of the Holy Qur'an is evident in its mention of several examples of women's life crises. Crisis management in Islam can at least be explored from stories written in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Examples include the flood disaster during the time of Prophet Noah (PBUH) (Q.S. 26:117–119, Q.S.11: 25–26), the catastrophic rain of stones at the time of Prophet Lut (PBUH) (Q.S. 11: 82-83), the famine which lasts for seven consecutive years during Prophet Yusuf's times (PBUH) (Q.S. 12: 47–49) (Suyadi, Zalik Nuryana, & Fauzi, 2020).

The Holy Qur'an reported an Islamic perspective on crisis management in the story of Prophet Yusuf by defining its different phases. The phases of crisis management of the Prophet Yusuf regarding the seven lean years started with a warning. The second phase

was choosing a leader, then short-term, medium-term, and long-term planning, implementation, providing organizational elements, finding balance, and finally, the feedback phase to learn lessons from the process Al-Ghoul (2016). Al-Eid & Arnout (2020) proposed a model that shows the phases of crisis management in Islam, including preparing for crises before they occur, verifying the validity of information, and strength in facing crises, strategic planning for crises, working in teams to face crises and strategies to face crises. Alqahtani (2019) developed a crisis management model from the Holy Qur'an to provide divine solutions to humanity to mitigate the spread of crises by examining and analyzing the concept of crisis management models in the Holy Qur'an based on the story of Adam. Al-Otaibi & Al-Khlaiwi (2018) reported that the Islamic approach to crisis management is an accumulated intellectual approach and offers robust solutions to the crises plaguing the Muslim world, as the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah inspire it. The term crisis is not mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, even in a derivative manner. Nevertheless, several synonyms indicate the conventional meaning of crisis. We find that the Holy Qur'an refers to crises in different terms and places, which all indicate the conventional meaning of crisis, such as "sedition," "affliction," "calamity," "misfortune," and "scrutiny" (Alqahtani, 2019).

On the Sunnah side, many studies analyzed the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s approach to crisis management. To mention a case, Al-Dhaher & Al-Abadleh (2009) demonstrated the Prophet's crisis management

approach through the Battle of Badr lessons. The Battle of Badr is a practical application of contemporary administrative thought in crisis management. They introduced an integrated crisis management model that includes four crisis stages: the pre-crisis phase, the crisis exacerbation phase, the crisis management phase, and the post-crisis phase. On the side of Islamic history in crisis management, the 'Amwas plague is one of the most memorable events in preventing plague risk in Muslim history. Hilmy & Niam (2020) reported that in case of the risk of plague, there are three Islamic principles upon which most Muslims base their response to a plague. These include a plague being a heavenly blessing, and when Muslims die due to a plague, they are considered martyrs, while a plague is a punishment for non-Muslims. Muslims shall not enter a plague-affected land or leave plague-infested regions; a plague cannot be contagious since all diseases come from Allah.

3. Women's Leadership in Crisis Management

In various ways, women are trying to support participating in political life in many places worldwide. However, some researchers claim they are given few reasons to believe in their potential as visionaries and leaders. The rationale for limiting women's opportunities in the political sphere is often rooted in religion (Pakdil, 2016). Bakhtyar & Rezaei (Bakhtyar & Rezaei, 2012) argued that men and women have been equal in political and social rights, and gender differences have lost their values. Their leadership has no problems; they can be religious, political, or social heads. The Qur'an

gives us an archetypal female figure in the struggle for Muslim women's rights and gender justice – particularly regarding female leadership (Jeenah, 2004). Women have access to reach the highest administrative position in society and take people's responsibility in the area of leadership. In other words, if women's potential talents are nurtured and cultivated correctly, they can achieve such an excellent position that Qur'an approves (Bakhtyar & Rezaei, 2012). While many people continue to praise male Muslim leadership, a few appreciate the equivalent examples and success of Muslim women leaders. No one doubts that the Muslim world needs wise leaders of both sexes to guide the Ummah in the 21st Century. However, to do this, Muslims must overcome cultural barriers and challenge the limited vision of women's role in their societies (Hilal, 2015). The significance of verse (Q.S. 4:34) is that it does not regard males or females but the ability to be a leader regardless of gender. The verse uses the word 'rijāl,' not 'žakar,' to indicate that leadership is an aid to professionalism (Muttaqin, 2020). Although some Muslims question the issue of leadership for women, the Qur'an uses no terms that imply that the position of the ruler is inappropriate for a woman. On the contrary, the Quranic story of Bilqis celebrates both her political and religious practices (Wadud, 1992).

Crisis management, according to Fenera & Cevikb (2015), requires a leader who has wisdom, farsightedness, and can logically analyze events with specific skills: the ability to sense the signals of crisis, prepare for and prevent crises, make efficient decisions, use power,

plan, organize, and supervise the process of managing crises and ensure communication and coordination. Such a leader must have a sense of initiative, strength, and bravery to influence others, and he must have the enthusiasm and profound desire to put any crisis under control. The leadership virtue behavior, as well as the spiritual intelligence skill of a leader, shows the leader can act with wisdom, discernment, passion, gratitude, and tolerance for himself and others, whatever the working conditions are (Al-Eid & Arnout, 2020).

The Qur'an mentioned many types of crises involving women, among which the most important are:

- a. Social Crisis: This type of crisis is presented in Q.S. 24:11- 20, which says: "Indeed, those who came up with that 'outrageous' slander are a group of you. "The family of the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslim society ultimately experienced great hardship when the Prophet's wife, Aisha, was accused of adultery. The Virgin Mary also experienced a similar social crisis when her people accused her of adultery. This crisis is seen in Q.S. 19:24-51 and Q.S. 3:16-35.
- b. Moral Crisis: This crisis relates to the Egyptian ruler's wife, who tried to seduce the Prophet Yusuf (PBUH). This crisis is written in Q.S.12: 23-34.
- c. Thought and Religious Crisis: This is seen in the story of Pharaoh's wife through her adherence to her faith and bearing on the harm inflicted on her by her husband. It is also revealed in the stories of the wives of the Prophets Noah and Lot, who disbelieved the messages of the noble Prophets and supported their husbands' enemies against them.

- d. Emotional Crisis: This was revealed through the story of Moses's mother when she threw her infant child (Moses) in the river. Her heart was filled with grief, and she could only think about her child. This story is written in Q.S. 20: 38-41 and Q.S. 28:7-13.
- e. Cultural Crisis: This was represented by the story of the marriage between Zaynab Bint Jahsh and Zayd ibn Haritha named Zaid bin Muhammad. The verses of the Quran came to abolish the traditions of the pre-Islamic Arabs, such as adoption, and the Quran legislated new laws that maintained family rights. This crisis is written in Q.S. 33:36-37.
- f. Political Crisis: This crisis was revealed by the story of the Queen of Sheba with Prophet Sulaiman. It will be addressed in detail in this study.

This article attempts to shed light on the role of women in crisis management as portrayed in the Qur'an by the story of the "Queen of Sheba." It explains the political crisis that arose between her and Prophet Sulaiman. The article's problem is formulated through understanding the elements Bilqis used in handling and resolving the political crisis and the results of Bilqis' management of the crisis. This article aims to illustrate women's abilities to resolve the most severe and complex of crises with minimum losses and highlight the main results and effects of women's good crisis management. This work is vital as it provides a model of an exceptional woman who was able to resolve the greatest of all political crises that could face any authority or country. The article is also important as it illustrates the degree to which the Holy

Qur'an celebrates women and commends their ability to handle crises, personal or public.

B. METHOD

A qualitative analysis approach based on secondary data was performed to analyze the data collected from secondary sources in the literature. The sources include the thesis, journals, and articles related to the concept of Islamic crisis management, followed by exploring the crisis management models by referring to the primary sources of Islam (Al-Qur'an and its interpretation). The research methodology was based on answering a set of questions: What are the components of Bilqis' management of the political crisis? How was Bilqis able to solve the political crisis? What was the consequence of Bilqis' management of the political crisis? The qualitative approach is found to be suitable to be used to detect the skills and competencies of women in managing crises as narrated in the Holy Qur'an. The approach determines the factors that impact political crises and learn about the effects of certain management styles for women to be successful leaders if they have specific leadership characteristics, management, and personal skills.

The story of Bilqis is about an impressive female queen who has been praised in Quran and acknowledged as a distinguished leader. This celebrated Queen is a counter-example that challenges all notorious fundamental arguments against female public leadership (Hasan, 2016). The Qur'anic story of Bilqis is a strong case for female public leadership. To the authors' knowledge, and after numerous searches, no specialized studies address the aspect related to Bilqis'

management of the political crisis. Most previous studies theoretically addressed crisis management and resolution, whereas this article offers an additional perspective. It uses Quranic stories to explain women's roles in crisis management and demonstrates women's distinction in politics. Thus, a gap has not been touched by many previous research works. Therefore, an article on crisis management focusing on the role of women's leadership from the perspective of Islamic knowledge is expected to fill this gap.

This article presents the general elements used by Bilqis in handling the political crisis she encountered, as presented in the Qur'anic story. The study attempts to define the term "crisis" and examines its characteristics and how to manage it by adhering to divine revelations. The Holy Qur'an has set the art of managing political crises through its stories and shows how Bilqis could use such art to successfully manage her political crisis with the greatest Prophet Sulaiman (PBUH). This work aims to develop and make us understand administrative concepts that can be used to improve how we face and manage crises. For Islamic feminists, the story of Bilqis can be a valuable tool to promote Muslim women's involvement in the public domain – even to the extent of holding various leadership positions and becoming heads of state (Jeenah, 2004).

The crisis started when Prophet Sulaiman was notified about a queen who worshipped the sun as a God, including her people. The verse said ["Indeed, I found [there] a woman ruling them, and she has been given of all things, and she has a great throne"] (Surah An-Naml, Q.S. 27:24).

Prophet Sulaiman then sends her a letter “Take this letter of mine and deliver it to them. Then leave them and see what [answer] they will return” (Q.S. 27:28). Based on the verse of the Qur’an (Q.S. 27:31). The central message of the letter is to invite her to submit to the true religion “Be not haughty with me but come to me in submission [as Muslims].” As soon as Bilqis received the warning letter, she felt the threat. Al-Ghoul (2016) mentioned that the critical characteristics of a crisis are the following: sudden and intense surprise, complication, increased sense of fear, working in an atmosphere of doubt and uncertainty, time constraints, working under threat, and the collapse of the reputation of the decision-maker who caused the crisis. All these crisis characteristics apply to the crisis between Bilqis and Prophet Sulaiman (PBUH).

In this article, the crisis that faced Bilqis is addressed. The analysis of the article will be divided into four parts. The first is related to her excellent leadership qualities during the crisis. The analysis of this part includes the characteristics of Bilqis, which are power and control, wisdom, insight and intelligence, building trust, knowledge and experience, charisma and personality, and bold decision-making. The second part is related to the crisis analysis: its detection, accurate estimation, and determination of its impact. At the same time, the third part will explain the crisis management strategies in terms of forming a crisis management team, sending a valuable gift, and consulting and exchanging ideas (the principle of Shura). The fourth part will focus on the crisis recovery results, which entail saving the land from the awes of war and realizing the truth.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Characteristics of Good Leadership During Crises

The excellent leadership characteristics portrayed by Bilqis in dealing with uncertainties or crises can be grouped into six stages: 1) Power and Control, 2) Wisdom, Insight, and Intelligence, 3) Building Trust, 4) Knowledge and Experience, 5) Charisma and Personality, and 6) Bold Decision-Making.

Power and Control

Queen Bilqis acquired power and control elements, allowing her to become fully sovereign over her kingdom. Her complete control and authority were the basis for her ability to manage the crisis she encountered. The Holy Qur'an exclusively presented Queen Bilqis as no other text has. It attributed to her specific characteristics, which described her capability to be in power and control. She was described in the Holy Quran as "Indeed, I found [there] a woman ruling them, and she has been given of all things, and she has a great throne" (Q.S. 27: 23).

The expression "ruling over them" indicates that she had full power and control over all of her state's institutions and people. She has been endowed with the characteristics of kings, their treasures, their number, their armies, the wealth and decoration of their kingdom, and the like of praises and good deeds (Ibn Ashur, 1984, 19/263). It also indicates that she had absolute guardianship in enforcing economic, political, and military decisions as her word was heard and her

orders were obeyed. She was able to secure all of her state's needs and build her kingdom based on justice. A distinguished leader must also bear the consequences of his decision, as was the case with the Queen of Sheba, who took complete control without hesitation or prolonged thought. She acted swiftly after consulting her people and sent her messengers to Prophet Sulaiman directly.

The Holy Qur'an mentioned this by saying, "who has been given everything," including all the pleasures and delights of life and everything needed by monarchs. Tabataba'i (1974, p355) says, "this is a description of the size and greatness of her rule; "everything" mentioned in verse refers to all the requirements of a great kingdom such as firmness, determination and supremacy, and a vast kingdom, treasures, soldiers and obedient people. This Woman was given the pleasures of life worthy of her beauty, indicating that the kingdom of Sheba in her time was powerful, rich, and prosperous (Ibn Kathir, 1984, p. 130).

Meanwhile, Ibn Ashur (1984) said, "the meaning of the verse "she was given everything" is that she acquired all good things related to monarchical affairs. She has given the characteristics of monarchs, such as weaponry and armies, as well as the ornaments and wealth of a kingdom and other bounties. Some of those treasures were inherited from monarchs who preceded her. Others were acquired and owned by her, while God granted some to her, such as the fertility of her land's soil and the abundance of water in her kingdom. "The most valuable of her treasures were her throne which was magnificent

to the extent that Prophet Sulaiman had nothing like it" (Ibn Ashur, 1984). This great throne was proof of the greatness of her kingdom and the size and high status of this kingdom, among others.

The Queen acquired the pillars of rule, the reins of power, which made the Qur'an mention her throne specifically and even pointed out its greatness, "who has a magnificent throne." Ibn Attia (1422 AH, 4/265) wrote, "the verse states that she is a queen whose sovereignty covered all cities in Yemen and her surrounding area and that she had great power." As proof of the greatness of this throne, Prophet Sulaiman (PBUH) chose it to defy the Queen of Sheba and her people by saying, "O assembly [of jinn], which of you will bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?" (Q.S. 27: 38).

Wisdom, Insight, and Intelligence

Turning to women's leadership in Islam, the Qur'an presents two examples. One is related to the story of Queen Asiah, Pharaoh's wife who successfully saved the life of Moses, and the second one is the Queen of Sheba, a positive, non-monotheistic model of political leadership. Her prosperous people, wisdom and power, and pragmatic, diplomatic, and consultative leadership are highlighted (Pakdil, 2016). Through her tactful wisdom in all she said and did, the Queen of Sheba has been revealed as a model ruler in the Holy Qur'an. The Queen's wisdom is exhibited during her crisis management with Prophet Sulaiman (Ali, 2020). A piece of evidence from the Qur'an is seen in verse Q.S. 27: 33. By relegating the

decision to Bilqis, her advisors show their confidence in her wisdom and willingness to submit to her decision-making: “We are men of strength and of great military might, but the command is yours, so see what you will command.” In addition, another evidence is the test made by Prophet Sulaiman to know whether she has the wisdom to recognize her throne: “Disguise for her throne; we will see whether she will be guided [to truth] or will be of those who are not guided.” (Q.S. 27: 41).

Abbas (2010) wrote, “Her idea indicated her caution, deep thought, and wisdom. Nations, which do not have an opinion and cannot act when events happen, are truly lost. Nations that are deprived of such ideas and allow an individual or group of people to take charge of their affairs are truly lost”. However, according to the Quran, her wisdom is not limited to political and military matters but extends to temporal matters. Her wisdom serves her as well when it comes to recognizing and embracing the truth of the monotheistic message (Jeenah, 2004). This type of wisdom leads to the conclusion that if Bilqis in the Holy Qur’an is compared to other historical figures in the Qur’an, such as Pharaoh and Nimrod, who both, out of pride and conceit, declared themselves as two gods, Bilqis’s character would be matchless in her tactful wisdom, modesty, and far-sightedness (Ali, 2020).

Crisis management requires a leader with wisdom, farsightedness, and the ability to analyze events logically. Such a leader must have a sense of initiative, strength, and bravery to be able to affect others, and he must have the enthusiasm and profound desire to put any

crisis under control. The Holy Qur'an illustrated how the Queen of Sheba successfully managed her political crisis with Prophet Sulaiman (PBUH). The Queen's wisdom, insight, and intelligence, as well as God's grace, were the reasons for her being guided to the path of God. The Queen's sound mind and wisdom led her to the outcome of believing in God. She witnessed the extraordinary miracles at the hands of Prophet Sulaiman and realized the falsehood of her people and her own self's worship of the sun. She stood amazed before these wonders, which an ordinary man could not have done. She returned to God, acknowledging her unjust worship of anything other than Him.

Building Trust

Hasan (2016) reported that trust in the leader is shown when she includes her people in making decisions. Even the way the court responded to her request suggests an explicit acknowledgment of complete trust and submission to her ability to make decisions, "We are men of strength and of great military might, but the command is yours, so see what you will command." (Q.S. 27: 23). The fact that they gave her their opinions but allowed her to decide on a matter as serious as war, a matter of life and death for the nation indicates the complete respect and trust they have vested in her (Jeenah, 2004).

The Queen of Sheba builds a trust that will make her people support her in any decision related to the crisis. She showed great intelligence when she consulted her people and engaged them in the matter. She advised

them that wars are sometimes won and sometimes lost and that both outcomes are possible. Consulting her people and urging them to give her advice shows her respect and honor for them. She also intended from this to test their willingness to trust her decisions in resisting their enemy, maintaining the order of their kingdom, and maintaining their obedience to her. She knows that the sacrifices of their lives, money, and blood for her would give her the means to fight her enemy.

Knowledge and Experience

In today's information era, data and information are crucial to any form of management because all actions or decisions can only be made when data are accurate, relevant, and timely (Kunaefi & Yalina, 2016), have informed a manager. The wise decisions and actions that Bilqis have made were inseparable from the concept of good practice of knowledge and information in crisis management. Kunaefi & Yalina (2016) mentioned that after the letter was received by Bilqis and analyzed based on her knowledge, she understood the message in the letter that asked her not to be arrogant.

Among the most important priorities of a successful leader is to save his/her country from the prospect of war. Through such a necessary effort, he/she can provide the most critical elements for any state: security and protection. The Queen of Sheba demonstrated her knowledge in her explanation of the disadvantages of war by saying, as mentioned in the Quran (Q.S. 27:34),

“Indeed when kings invade a land, they ruin it and debase its nobles. They do so!” Kings destroy buildings, change contours, destroy properties, and separate families upon an invasion. They also debased nobles and lowered their status by humiliating them. They do such acts to gain power and control and create fear in the hearts of their enemies. Her words were intended to warn her people of Prophet Sulaiman’s advancement towards them in order to invade their land. She explained that war has its awes and, therefore, they should not be hasty in declaring it, and they should try to avoid it as much as possible through peaceful means by showing affection and gentleness. She was a woman of thought and experience in dealing with kings, and she knew their inner thoughts well. She realized this by experiencing the effect of gifts and how they capture hearts and remove resentment, changing war into peace and drawing closer to a treaty.

Shehabuddin (2020) reported that Bilqis’ worldly knowledge of peaceful politics and her spiritual knowledge of the unique message of Prophet Sulaiman together on the same footing indicate her independent ability to govern with knowledge and experience. It is noticed that the Queen of Sheba estimated and viewed that nonviolence was better than resistance in this case and that using a tender approach with Prophet Sulaiman was better than facing him through force. She justified her approach by saying that whenever kings invade any land through war, they not only spread catastrophe, ruin, and destruction but also debase its nobles and humiliate

its elite and leaders to use them as an example for others. She affirmed this by saying, “they do so,” indicating that this is always their habit.

Charisma and Personality

Qutb (1967, 5/2640) wrote: “Here, we see women’s character through the charisma of a woman queen who hates wars and destruction and uses the weapons of tricks and tenderness before using the weapons of force and toughness.” “This undoubtedly indicates that this Woman is an eloquent speaker who can debate and convince others with her sound logic and deep thought. She tried skillfully to avoid the prospects of war and lean towards peace by showing the initiative of goodness. Despite pressures from all sides, a leader must be calm by not succumbing to pressures or escaping from them. Great losses and threats to people’s lives constitute a stern test for a leader, leading in most cases to the deployment of leadership skills and capabilities much needed in times of confrontation. A leader must also use the skills available to him such as creativity and flexibility to benefit from other people’s opinions and advice” (Hilal, 2004, p. 143). The power of charisma that belonged to those religious leaders then has significant meaning for society in which religious leaders are present (Ubaidillah, 2014).

Part of her personality is confidence. Instead of taking offensive action, Bilqis decides to go to Prophet Sulaiman herself. As she is a ruler, such a decision carries importance. It means that she has determined something unique and particular about this unusual

circumstance, which warrants her attention and not just that of ambassadors (Shehabuddin, 2020). Ending the story by her admitting her wrong religious belief after losing the challenge with Prophet Sulaiman indicates that the Queen of Sheba must have been a woman with a strong personality so hard to be tricked and so hard to think of herself as a woman who can be easily deceived (Hasan, 2016). Bilqis consulted her people to help her make the best decision. This type of personality is a sign of a successful, exceptional leader who strives to attract powers and gather the elite around her making them feel that she is one of them and that their role in decision-making is no less important than hers. This act is politically skillful and cunning and reflects the Queen's tactful personality as she did not monopolize power to herself and did not bear the whole burden of rule. She was able, through her conduct, to reflect the craft and strategy of flexible authority" (Al-Haj Hassan, 2003).

Bold Decision-Making

A *decision* can be defined as a strong opinion issued by a person of power and influence to overcome a problem, reach a specific goal, and achieve sound results. No doubt, making decisions, especially on the official level, requires multiple mental and thinking processes, insight into the situation, a view towards reaching results, an article of alternatives, and an analysis of results and outcomes. At times in crises, the importance of boldness and courage in making decisive decisions is evident. Therefore, courage and stern decision-making are among the foundations

of good management. Al-Eid & Arnout (2020) reported that leadership mindfulness skills include the ability of a leader to make critical and practical work decisions, manage his feelings and control the feelings of others in the work environment, be optimistic and positive in facing work challenges, view previous similar work, and have future thinking.

Bilqis's ability to make independent decisions and her political tactfulness are noticeable. When she asks her advisors for their opinion, she does so not because she is incapable of formulating a decision (she has already articulated her appreciation of the letter) but because she follows the norms of diplomacy and protocol (Shehabuddin, 2020). Bilqis' habit of consulting others before deciding on vital issues, her wisdom, sound judgment, and her readiness to accept Islam at once rather than persisting in disbelief have found special mention in the Qur'an (Elius, 2011). This scene portrays her as a wise democratic leader who insists on including her people in making decisions. Ali (2020) reported an example of her bold decision-making characteristics, which is the case after Prophet Sulaiman refused their presence and told them they would be mistaken if they tried to buy him gold. However, Bilqis, as a tactful and broad-minded woman, did not take offense and decided to visit Prophet Sulaiman. Bilqis' bold decision-making characteristic is evident in her court. She had absolute power in her country's decisions, and even though her ministers demanded war, Prophet Sulaiman sought her submission to his faith and sovereignty.

2. Crisis Analysis

The recovery process after a crisis requires extensive knowledge and practical strategies to ensure that the situation can regain its old status before the crisis, if possible. This behavior is done by analyzing a crisis to determine how a crisis affects a business or a country. Accurate analysis helps establish a mechanism for understanding crisis signals and estimating the severity level and impact. The crisis analysis that Bilqis performed focused on three main parts, i.e., 1) crisis detection, 2) accurate estimation of crisis, and 3) determination of the crisis impact.

Crisis Detection

The crisis detection began when Bilqis received the letter. At the beginning of the crisis, a moment sends a series of early warning signs to predicate the possibility of a crisis. One of these is when prophet Sulaiman asked Bilqis through the letter to submit to his sovereignty or else he would declare war against her state (Ali, 2020). The Queen of Sheba said (when she received the letter): "O eminent ones, indeed, to me has been delivered a noble letter." (Q.S. 27:29). Q.S. 27: 30-31 states the content of the letter as follows: "Indeed, it is from Solomon, and indeed, it reads: 'In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful,' 'Be not haughty with me but come to me in submission [as Muslims].'" Her reaction reveals Bilqis' ability to make independent decisions and her political tactfulness. Although the letter asks her to make

her nation abandon its religion, its wording does not provoke a negative reaction in her; in fact, she describes it as “noble.”

Accurate Estimation of Crises

Bilqis’ wit and good management led her to adopt a reconciliatory option suitable for the special status of Prophet Sulaiman as an above-normal character who combines prophecy and power. Sulaiman had the means of power, righteousness, and support from God, enabling him to suppress any other power in the world during his times without difficulty. Bilqis’ ministers hinted at their preparedness to escalate and counter the attack by saying, “We are a people of strength and great ‘military’ might” (Q.S. 27: 33). This position undoubtedly reveals the Queen’s logic and estimation of things. A clever leader knows that the first step to resolving a crisis is to estimate the situation correctly and to know the enemy he is dealing with. Then, a leader must know how to solve the problem and the things that could arise afterward. Misestimating the situation could lead to downgrading the opponent’s power, overplaying one’s power, exceeding one’s self-confidence, and having lousy planning (Kelane, 2009).

Bilqis used logic and did not take the advice of her advisors to engage in a war that would have destructive implications on her land and civilization. She knew that by nature, kings if they enter a country, spread corruption in it, damage it, violate its sanctities, and destroy the force defending it. On top of that, they humiliate any resistance

element, which is their practice and what they usually do (Qutb, 1967, 5/2640).

The experienced Queen thought about her issue with Prophet Sulaiman and reached an accurate and correct estimation of the situation. She compared her power and that of Prophet Sulaiman, who was granted more than any other human being, as stated in the Qur'an: "My Lord, forgive me and grant me a kingdom such as will not belong to anyone after me. Indeed, You are the Bestower." So We subjected to him the wind blowing by his command, gently, wherever he directed, And the devils [of jinn] - every builder and diver. Moreover, others are bound together in shackles. [We said], "This is Our gift, so grant or withhold without an account" (Q.S. 38: 35-39). She found she was no match for him. Therefore, she realized through her sharp mind and long experience that she and her people could not face Prophet Sulaiman and his army. Her throne and power did not fool her. The achievements accomplished by Bilqis in civilization, architecture, military power, economic prosperity, and stable authority made her people, especially her inner circle, not make any decision she objected to. This belief was due to their awareness of her insight, accurate estimation of situations, and correct reading of events and their implications.

Determination of Crisis Impact

The Queen of Sheba illustrated the impact of war by saying, as mentioned in the Qur'an (Q.S. 27: 34), "Indeed, when kings invade a land, they ruin it and debase its

nobles. They do so!" Kings destroy buildings, change contours, destroy properties, and separate families upon an invasion. They also debased nobles and lowered their status by humiliating them. They do such acts to gain power and control and create fear in the hearts of their opponents. She explained that war has its awes and, therefore, they should not be hasty in declaring it. She hoped that through her approach, she could free herself and her people from kings entering their land with their troops and the calamities resulting from them doing so.

3. Crisis Management Strategies

Crisis management strategies focus on preventing crises and planning how to mitigate their effects when prevention is not possible Pearson & Mitroff (1993). The crisis management strategies that Bilqis have adopted can be seen in terms of forming a crisis management team, sending a valuable gift, and consulting and exchanging ideas (application of the principle of Shura).

Forming a Crisis Management Team

Forming a crisis management team is considered one of the essential strategies for managing a crisis. When a crisis occurs, there is a need to form a crisis management team to prevent or manage crisis events and formulate plans that lay out general guidelines for managing a crisis and minimizing damage Pearson & Mitroff (1993). Leaders should be able to identify when and how to activate a disaster plan and assemble teams

to ensure safety during and after a crisis (Ronez, 2014). Bilqis was aware of that. After knowing the power on both sides and the significant difference between both, she hastened to find the means to resolve the crisis by forming a “crisis management team.” She began exchanging ideas and consulting the men of her palace as it was clear this was a grave situation that had to be estimated accurately. Jeenah (2004) mentioned that Bilqis’ immediate reaction to the receipt of Prophet Sulaiman’s letter was to call a council of chiefs, the nobility of her land, and to ask them not only to advise her but also to “pronounce” for her what her course of action should be.

Sending a Valuable Gift

Bilqis, through her sharp vision and insight, chose to manage the situation and send Prophet Sulaiman a valuable gift- worthy of his status- with her senior advisors as a sign of truce and to allow her more time until the return of her messengers. She aimed to review the situation, articulate it more accurately and test Prophet Sulaiman’s intentions and expected strategy. Gifts usually soften the heart, declare friendliness, and may succeed in repelling fights and solving the most complex crises (Qutb, 1967, 5/2640). Bilqis was indeed a genius woman when she used the weapon of a gift to change inner feelings to attract the world’s most powerful king at that time. As narrated in the Quran (Q.S. 27: 35), she said, “But I will certainly send him a gift, and see what ‘response’ my envoys will return with.” Bilqis favored diplomacy in dealing with a strong king and used a trick to deal

with this crisis, as she did not want bloodshed. She was fearful for her civilization and costly kingdom. She was not prepared to leave her kingdom to kings who would exploit and destroy it. There came the idea of the gift (Ehab, 2015).

Hawwa (2004, 7/684) mentioned in his tafsir, "There is no doubt that the idea of the gift is a wonderful political idea, as though Bilqis could learn through her messengers about Prophet Sulaiman's position and power. Because on the pretext of the gift they could spy and feel, just as a great gift has the effect of softening the souls of kings, so it is a bribe that may do its work". Bilqis estimated that if she succeeded in convincing Prophet Sulaiman with her gift, she would be able to fight and defeat him with her army. Therefore, she resorted to the tactic of maneuvering and bargaining by sending a great gift to Prophet Sulaiman (Abbas, 2010). Bilqis' diplomatic behavior of choosing to send "a gift rather than to show brute strength" when Prophet Sulaiman invited her to become Muslim and her reaction after the gift was rejected implies God is saying that Bilqis had better "judgment" than other male rulers. She used it wisely (Stack, 2020). Instead of declaring war against Prophet Sulaiman and causing bloodshed, she resorts to pacifist diplomacy and tries to appease him by sending him a gift (Shehabuddin, 2020).

Application of the Principle of Shura

Shura, which means dialogue and exchanging opinions, is all human virtues, a demonstration of

equality, free expression of opinion and criticism, and ways of finding the truth. It tests different opinions and viewpoints of people on a case until they make the right decisions to achieve the best results (Abu Faris, 1986, p79). Adopting the norm of consultation in the management of state affairs and taking the opinions of specialists and people of experience, especially in these difficult times, international relations, foreign policy, and national security is a sign of a leader's wisdom and good political behavior. Undoubtedly, an authority that is founded on Shura is much better and lasts longer than that based on tyranny.

One of the strategies used by Bilqis is the principle of Shura, which refers to engaging people in expressing their opinions. Individual decisions can indicate self-centeredness and underestimate others, whereas consultation protects a ruler from self-admiration and vanity. Bilqis used the principle of Shura to manage the crisis by seeking the advice and opinions of her people. She told them that she would not make a decision based on her opinion alone, as mentioned in the Qur'an (Q.S. 27: 32): "O eminent ones, advise me in my affair. I would not decide a matter until you witness [for] me". The consultation means that she would not decide about her kingdom's affairs unless they were consulted (Al-Haj Hassan, 2003).

Bilqis was neither tempted by her remarkable power nor by the absolute authorization given to her by her people when they responded: "We are men of strength and of great military might, but the command

is yours, so see what you will command” (Q.S. 27: 33). Their response did not push her to make a hasty final decision that would burden her and her people with unbearable hardships. On the contrary, she decided to avoid military confrontation and resort to a method of diplomatic negotiation to resolve the political crisis. Through negotiations, she made the right decision as she expressed that her main concern was the safety and good of her people, whom she did not want to be harmed through a destructive war.

The Holy Qur’an and the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) urged consultation as mentioned in the Quran (Q.S. 3:159): “And consult with them in ‘conducting’ matters. Once you make a decision, put your trust in Allah. Surely Allah loves those who trust in Him.” In addition, in Q.S.42:38: “Conduct their affairs by mutual consultation.” Scholars of the Quran said: “Shura should be a strategy applied in war and when confronting the enemy; it should be used to comfort believers, raise their status and strengthen their faith.” (Al Qurtubi, 1964). Ibn Ashur (1984) mentions that the phrase “for I would never make any decision without you” in Q.S. 27:32 indicates it is her usual conduct with them. She is a wise, thoughtful, and consulting woman who would not risk compromising the interests of her people or subjecting her kingdom to the awes of tyranny. This act was proof of her excellent policy and sound mind as she gathered the chiefs of her kingdom and consulted them on the matter.

4. Result of Good Crises Management

Undoubtedly, the Queen of Sheba could contain and overcome this crisis with great intelligence and distinguished skills. She also gained a lot from it personally and for her state. Crisis mitigation results can be explained through two significant results, i.e., saving the land from the awes of war and realizing the truth.

Saving the land from the awes of war

The ability to resolve crises with no or few losses is one of the necessary characteristics any ruler or official must have. Such crisis resolution requires choosing the most suitable method, as was the case with Bilqis, who chose the best solution to the problem she encountered. Bilqis managed the crisis of confronting Prophet Sulaiman. It entails analyzing the Queen's crucial situation: losing her sovereignty, power, and kingdom.

Realizing the Truth

The Queen realized that Prophet Sulaiman had great status and that he was undoubtedly a noble Prophet and not an ordinary king. She also realized that he was a man of strong faith who was prepared to utilize all of his power and energy to support his faith, which she believed in and called for. Therefore, Bilqis, keen on protecting her people and her kingdom, made the right decision to believe in him and his God. Her high status and great power did not prevent her from realizing the truth. Her good instinct and wisdom allowed her to think about the evidence of monotheism and realize her error

of practicing polytheism and, therefore, acknowledge the oneness of God. She realized that she was wrong for not believing in God and that Prophet Sulaiman was a righteous prophet. Her heart was guided to Islam, and her soul was enlightened with belief in God. She realized that Islam involved no submission to any being, including Prophet Sulaiman, the great Prophet with amazing miracles other than God. This belief drove her to pray to her Lord and declared, "My Lord! I have certainly wronged my soul. Now I 'fully' submit myself along with Sulaiman to Allah, the Lord of all worlds." (Q.S.27: 44).

Prophet Sulaiman (PBUH) was aware of this fact and explained to the Queen that she was prevented from seeing the truth because of her surroundings, which affected her badly. The Qur'an narrates this: "But she had been hindered by what she used to worship instead of Allah, for she was indeed from a disbelieving people" (Q.S. 27: 43). She was hindered from following the truth through her worshipping of the sun due to her upbringing among unbelieving people. Had those people used their minds and allowed themselves to think about God's creation, they would have felt true faith in their hearts. The story of the Queen of Sheba was concluded with a cheerful ending by a denial of her old religion and belief in the one and only God. She became a divine example and a model for all women throughout history, like the wife of Pharaoh. The latter was mentioned and praised in the Qur'an, the pure Virgin Mary, Lady Khadija, the wife of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and other women. Such mentioning of women in the Qur'an is proof of God

raising the status of righteous faithful women wherever and anywhere they may be. Such women will remain a shining light and a source of inspiration for all humankind until God inherits the earth.

C. Conclusions

The Qur'anic treatment of the Queen of Sheba is a way to convince people of the ability of women to govern wisely, accept female leadership, and encourage women to pursue their interests in politics. The story of the Queen of Sheba (Bilqis) proves that women can be successful leaders if they have sound opinions, can seek the opinions of others, and have good planning and management skills. They need to be good at making correct and timely decisions and are willing to correct their errors and not insist on them. Therefore, a successful leader must be able to make decisions, as this is a key to wise leadership. The right decision must be taken at the right time and not be delayed. A distinguished leader must bear the consequences of his decision, as with the Queen of Sheba. She acted swiftly after consulting her people and sent her messengers to Prophet Sulaiman directly. After this journey with Bilqis and the crisis she experienced, several conclusions were reached. The Holy Qur'an revealed a woman's ability to manage the greatest of all problems and crises. The Qur'anic story presented the Queen of Sheba as an exceptional model of women's abilities to overcome the darkest crises with minimum loss.

Bilqis was able to invest in the best strategies and find the best solutions to the crisis she experienced. Through her

several characteristics (power and control, wisdom, insight and intelligence, building trust, knowledge and experience, charisma and personality, and bold decision-making), she was able to save her country from the prospect of war. The Holy Qur'an used the form of a story to describe a political crisis any country could encounter, addressed several humanitarian crises, and mentioned ways of dealing with them. This research article has contributed to the literature on women's competencies in managing crises. An informed theory about crisis management implementation under women's leadership is a topic that has previously been addressed in the literature.

Moreover, this article can have profound social and political implications and contributions. One of them is that women in political or social leadership positions can use the research findings and the six-stage approach for leadership, state management, and crisis resolution by combining a cohesive array of progressive approaches. Implementing such an approach will assure their people's success, achieve the expected results and enhance their faith in their leadership competencies. In addition, the study findings support the cultural argument regarding whether women can be successful leaders and must have equal political and social rights if they have leadership characteristics, management, and personal skills.

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