



# Meritocracy with soul: Islamic spirituality and Leuit wisdom as middle path for community-base food security

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** The Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) shows fundamental irony regarding global food scarcity; the increase of hunger from 7.9% to 9.2% since 2019, whereas green investment coordinated by SDG strengthens corporate hegemony over locals. The reductionistic approach based on quantitative indicators has covered long-term qualitative objectives and marginalized local knowledge, wisdom, and spiritual meaning. **Method:** This study asks how to build a food security governance paradigm that bridges spiritual values and local practices. This article operates on the literature review method utilizing three-step framework by Paul and Lim (Assembling-Arranging-Assessing). Several data sources are: the interpretation of Qur'anic verses following Abd al-Hayy al-Farmawi's thematic approach, the Sundanese Leuit ethnographic in literature during 2019-2025, and SDGs food security documents. Thematic analysis was organized through three-step codification by Braun and Clarke, and also verified sources through a triangulation audit. **Finding:** This study established the Islamic Meritocracy framework grounded in transcendent pillars: *amanah* (vertical-horizontal accountability), *ibtala'* (cosmic-social competency test), *futuwwah* (chivalry ethos), and strong integrity from *qawiyyun amin*, *hafizun 'alim*, and *bastatan fi al-'ilm wa al-jism*. Islamic Meritocracy is compatible with Sundanese Leuit system, in which Leuit is triadic harmony (God-human-nature) of socio-cultural institution and organic solidarity through Jekat. **Conclusion:** The convergence of Islamic Meritocracy and Leuit offers an alternative food security governance that transcends technocratic dichotomy by restoring spiritual dimension and local wisdom as the policy core. **Novelty/originality of this article:** This model integrates right man in the right place and right soul and spirit in the right position, ensuring accountability born from transcendent awareness and collective social control—a novelty distinguish the framework from neoliberal meritocracy and reductionist SDG.

**KEYWORDS:** islamic meritocracy; Leuit; transcendence.

## 1. Introduction

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) demonstrated an ironic inconsistency in their solution to food scarcity in 2023. It indicates jeopardic simplification due to the statement Urgent coordinated action and policy being the solution arranged by SDGs, which becomes contradictory while hunger reality grows from 7.9% to 9.2% since 2019 (SDG Report, 2023). Those coordinations also prove the naivety of SDGs themselves while facing the financialization of the food system reality worldwide. Several projects based on sustainable narration are semantic deceptions through the constitution and reordering of public policies and the grabbing of resources (Larsen et al., 2022). Around 4,449 mergers and acquisitions have occurred over two decades, concentrated in a few corporations (Keenan et al., 2023). It shows coordinating investment, as SDGs claim, it could encourage corporate

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hegemony such as neoliberal trends (Larsen et al., 2022) and at the same time marginalize local farmers. It also perpetuates the logic of capitalism to gain profit, a paradigm that fundamentally has no suitable due to this planet's environment (Jäger & Dziwok, 2024) unwittingly.

The palpable result of this problematic paradigm is Inclusive Green Growth becoming a boulevard of green colonialism indeed. Claar (2022) captured the European Green Deal, which tried to import hydrogen from African states, including the irony inside: the winners of the tender are several transnational corporations that are accessible to the financial sector, while African corporations and knowledge have no role in implementing this project, and deepening African dependencies on the global North. The project also shifts 4,000 km<sup>2</sup> of national park land in Namibia to extract the hydrogen (Altenburg & Kantel, 2024) without addressing the acute water issue among North African countries (Mukelabai et al., 2022), a conspicuous contradiction for technology that needs tons of water.

The European Green Deal agenda to import such hydrogen perfectly demonstrates Goodhart's Law: When a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure. The Goodhart's law lens has been used to diagnose the disease from all of the above; they lie on a separate solution within a quantitative indicator, which becomes the target (e.g., hunger percentage) while ignoring the long-term qualitative aims. In the case of African hydrogen, the main measurement is no longer inclusive sustainable energy or encouraging local capacity; it is merely about the fulfillment of green investment targets. However, the prescription remains elusive due to the academical antithesis between achieving a technocratic solution and criticizing the system. Something still absent is the alternative framework, including identifying the measure distortion, and also proposing systematic evaluation to immunize against those distortions, a system that inherently leaves the logical structure that yields problems.

The SDG's inclination to ignore local wisdom and spiritual dimensions exacerbates the tension between universal approach of global agenda and local diversity. The sustainable term itself is vague, vacuous, and detached from human being if it cannot be described and defended with reference to culture (O'Sullivan, 2023). It also marginalizes community-based systems such as local food barns in the shade of modern narration. Bridging global policy and local implementation is required in which integration both rejects reductionism; this approach embraces rather than reduces local and global complexity. This article proposes three main questions to converge the divergence of global and local. (1) How can the concept of meritocracy in Islam be constructed as an integrative governance paradigm that combines transcendental accountability with administrative efficiency?; (2) In what ways does the local wisdom of the Sundanese Leuit system empirically embody these principles of meritocracy?; (3) How can an integrative model between Islamic meritocracy and Leuit be operationalized in contemporary food security policies? The Leuit System, Sundanese communal rice barn heritage, recommends a comprehensive approach and saves from the reduction trap that Goodhart warned about. It is an alternative paradigm developed in complexity; it offers evaluation logic immunizing reductionistic approach fundamentally through the pillars of Islamic Meritocracy.

## 2. Methods

The research approach, which is grounded in data structure derived from relevant texts and reports, aims to identify various evidence that meets a certain research topic; allowing this process, the researcher seeks to address some research questions or hypotheses while minimizing potential bias, thus drawing the conclusions and decisions from reliable and valid sources (Snyder, 2019) The exponential advancement of technology provides millions of data points; this makes the process of identifying relevant topics for certain research increasingly challenging (van Dinter et al., 2021); it gives spatial bedrock to the emergence of new ideas and even theories (Elsbach & van Knippenberg, 2020). With the availability of rich and expensive data access to millions of researchers worldwide, this study takes advantage of such a condition by applying and filtering relevant information. This approach

could possibly identify novelty and research gaps in related studies (Lim et al., 2022), particularly within the context of research on Leuit heritage.

Plentiful studies on Leuit published across numbers of academic journal platforms tend to highlight its architectural features (Aulia & Adhitama, 2021), local wisdom background (Tresnasih et al., 2023), functional transformation in agricultural systems (Fathurohmah & Prasetyo, 2020), and various Leuit studies. Yet, the primary research gap, which makes the uniqueness of this study, lies in the endeavor to integrate the Leuit as a manifestation of Sundanese local wisdom with the concept of Islamic meritocracy as its underlying value system that shapes the new existence of the Leuit itself. This approach aims to engender academic recommendations for the government due to the realization of national food security. Since the Islamic meritocracy has not yet been reflected in national policy or regulation explicitly, this research follows a library research to discover thematic relevancies to Leuit and food scarcity to elaborate potential mitigation strategies among them.

Paul et al., (2021) three-step framework is the structure adopted by this study in its methodological approach and involves (1) Assembling, (2) Arranging, and (3) Assessing. These three points have their own strides to implement that are (1) identify and acquire the research domain, relevant topics, and data sources through systematic keyword searches; (2) organize the data found through codifying and purifying them within the research topic; and (3) evaluate those data with thematic analysis and report the result in both numerical and textual form.

This article operationalize framework of Paul et al., to secure traceability and transparency by which specify. First, assembling phase began with choosing data sources purposively to inclusive criterions: (a) the Qur'an verses contain thematic means such as *fadl*, *khair*, *amanah*, *ibtala*, *'adl*, and *futuwwah*; which refer to the thematic interpretation method of the Qur'an by Abd al-Hayy al-Farmawi; (b) ethnographic study in literature exploration of 2019-2025 period by which Leuit Heritage of Sundanese tradition, such as Ciptagelar, a traditional Sundanese community, was explored; and (c) SDG's policy and other documents relevant to food safeguarding. The source that does not meet criteria (e.g., has no direct and relevant theme) is not figured out.

Second, arrange the data by means of thematic coding using Braun & Clarke's (2019) three steps: (a) open coding to identify early concepts such as *qawiy*, *amin*, *hafiz*, and *alim*; (b) axial coding in which those concepts are organized into larger categories (e.g., individual dimensions, social dimensions, and spiritual foundation); and (c) selective coding, purposed to synthesize those categories to be the whole Islamic Meritocracy. Third, the assessing phase utilizes thematic analysis to extract meaning patterns and reports the result in narrative structure. To ensure validity and trustworthiness, this article applied source triangulation, an audit trail through all analyzing steps, and researcher reflectivity through a reflective journal in anticipation of interpretation bias. This was related to Lincoln and Guba's standard of qualitative research (Nowell et al., 2017).

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Leuit: Communal food security and philosophy

The Leuit is an exceptional embodiment of Sundanese tradition that has arisen from communal philosophy; it is construed upon the principle of harmony between humans, nature, and God. Those triadic harmonies are reflected in the architectural design of the Leuit: the lower part, made of flat stones, symbolizes the earth; the middle section, functional as storage, is made from wood and bamboo, which symbolize the human being and its spiritual journey to the God; and the roof, a combination of coconut fiber and leaves, represents the divine supreme (Asegap & Putra, 2021). It also has a unique function as a socio-cultural mechanism to safeguard the community from food scarcity for centuries. There are two different types of Leuit recognized within the Sundanese traditional community: private Leuit that serve certain household needs and the other type that serve

community needs in a responsible manner, particularly during crisis accidents (Priangani & Achmad, 2023), such as natural disasters or discomfiting harvest seasons. This study focuses on the communal Leuit as a socio-cultural system (not as a rice barn only) contributing to the strength of community-based food security.

Communal Leuit in Ciptagelar Society named as *Si Jimat*, which provides and serves to sustain community needs for several upcoming years. Based on the rice type cultivated in Ciptagelar and the architectural structure of Leuit itself, such durability is possible since the Ciptagelar community members cultivate huma, a type of rice cultivated in upland that requires less water than the rice field type (Wulangsih et al., 2022), and structure Leuit based on natural material like woven bamboo, ascertain proper air circulation, and prevent the rice stored from excessive moisture. The function of Leuit itself aligns with the Ciptagelar community philosophy of life, while they regard rice as a life companion (Nugraha, 2020). Such a life companion must be preserved and cared for with responsibility. Further, some members also conceptualize Leuit as a feminine or maternal figure who enables the birth of human life, just like Leuit, who ensures the sustainability of the community food supply.

The existence of Leuit and its continuity are also sustained by cosmological value adherence in the Sundanese indigenous community. The five composed principal elements in Leuit architecture, *umpak*, *kolong*, *beuteung*, *paparaan*, and *hateup*, have thoughtful meaning wherein each part represents interconnectedness between humans and the universe, humans as microcosms. This is also called *opat kalima pancer*; *opat* means four and *kalima* means five. The former represents four nature elements (air, water, fire and earth) while the latter is the accumulation and the integral essence of those four; it is humanity (Nugraha, 2020).

Several cultural rites and traditions escort the existence of Leuit in Sundanese ethnic society; the *seren taun* and *mapag sri* traditions are examples. In Ciptagelar tradition, rice is planted once each year; thus, repair of soil substance could improve harvest results. These traditional intents, such as thanksgiving, eating food properly, and keeping some harvest results in Leuit, result in community food stocks being available for the next season or even years. Keeping some harvest results was regulated in ethnic law named *jekat*, in which 10% of harvest results must be kept at the communal food barn as an act of gratitude and self-purification; it also means social solidarity, particularly when food scarcity attacks community members (Rusdiansyah et al., 2025).

### 3.2 Islamic meritocracy: Transcendent epistemology value

Meritocracy was adopted by the Indonesian government through Ordinance Number 5, 2014, and it was revised in Ordinance Number 20, 2023, which has roots in the Thatcher-Reagan neoliberal paradigm (Owens & de St Croix, 2020), is bound to the logic instrument right man in the right place, genuinely, and fails to integrate a transcendent dimension into that recruitment architecture. As a result, this system is often reduced to mere administrative policy; it is not as fine as soul avocation followed with pleasure.

Responding to that occurrence, this study introduces a construct, Islamic Meritocracy, a methodological endeavor, agreeing with Kuntowijoyo's da'wah transformation framework from ideological to scientific (Rozi & Fauzi, 2023), giving spiritual bedrock harmonious to the *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* principle. This construct, examined through thematic interpretation of the Qur'an by Abdul Hayy Al-Farmawi's approach in *al-Bidayah fi tafsir al-Maudhu'i* (Sadiyah, 2024), is not intended to be a basic doctrine; it is an interpretation combining divine revelation with public reason. In metaphor, Islamic meritocracy could be viewed as a V-twin machine, where double pistons, representing vertical relation between human and God (*hablun min Allah*) and horizontal relation between human-human and human-nature (*hablun min an-Nas*, *hablun min al-Alam*), synchronously move to yield transformative kinetic energy. These machine components, such as *amanah* (transcendent accountability) and *ibtala'* (cosmic examination), do not

merely have a mechanistic character; they are inspired by embodied values to the entire Islamic meritocracy structure and mechanism.

### 3.2.1 *Spiritual foundation, a theocentric foundation: Faith and piety as epistemic principles*

Differing from the secular meritocratic framework is the axis to economic utility, with Islamic meritocracy placing faith and devotion as a transcendent epistemological foundation. It is comprehending faith as dynamic vigor that motivates accountability and public service through integrity. This approach adopts scaffold *manhaj ilahi* (divine curriculum), emphasizing the phase of introduce before encumbrance (*ta'rif qabla taklif*) (Mar'atusshifa & Istikomah, 2022). This particular phase was reflected in the history of Abraham's youthhood (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [6] : 75-82) The early stage of meritocracy building begins with self-reformation through strengthening intelligence (*tafakkur*) to perform rational and tenacious faith (Nufus et al., 2023), which is a dispensable prerequisite for the nascent of excellent intellectual and spiritual individuals.

The next phase after shaping individual foundation, this framework shift to reform society in operationalize inculcated faith through scientific methodology and logic advocacy. The Prophet Abraham's history in deconstruct his society belief system functioned is a systematic and rational paradigm due to criticize and repair broken system. This comprehensive stages, from individual enlightmen to social transformation, arrange to establish meritocratic ecosystem organically spawn capable and responsible society member and leader. Realize holistic social prosperity is the ultimate goals of the entire process, where every single individu could sense the peace and safe, it also represents divine promise to success of integrating between merit with spiritual and justice society.

### 3.2.2 *Individual dimention*

#### 3.2.2.1 *Agency and striving: The ethos of futuwwah in spiritual meritocracy*

Islam builds meritocracy in firmly acknowledging individual attempts (*jihad*), which is an appropriate mechanism for attaining merit excellently; it also contributes to social transformation through optimizing self-potential. It is because the attempt itself must be known as benefactive competition (*fastabiq al-khairat*) (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [2] :148, [5]: 48). However, the semantic load of *jihad* bears a negative connotation to contemporary global discussion in which *jihad* is often equated with radical movement and violence; thus, the application of this term is complicated in social and economic contexts. Therefore, this study boosts an alternative term of paradigm named *futuwwah*. This alternative term was derived from Sufistic tradition and the history of *Ashab al-Kahfi*, (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [18]:13-14), a group of young people representing noble youthhood enthusiasm next to integrity, with audacity in facing tyranny and firmness of conviction/faith, and is also defined with chivalry (Nurani, 2023), assuring honor (*siyanah*), honesty (*sidq*), brotherhood (*ukhuwwah*), and kindness (*islah as-sarirah*) (As-Sullami, 2005) as the highest expression of individual attempt. The shift of this term cleans Islamic work ethos from stigmatic speech around *jihad*, not merely discursive strategy; it is repositioning those ethos as major catalysts in the meritocratic society.

The concept of *futuwwah* transforming a rigid religious paradigm, to contextual individual life has a role to transform a broader societal life (Zenrif et al., 2024). In this context, *futuwwah* has become a foundation for consciousness of change (Al-Hamdi, 2022), in which is necessary for Muslims facing complex industrial and post-industrial age reality. The *futuwwah* spirit at the individual level could drive individual desire as a foundation for prophetic leadership; it is a social capital configuring the collective structure of society. *Futuwwah* also founds its main character; it is *Fityah* (youthhood/chivalry), by which the human state is between dual weaknesses (*marhalah al-quwwah baina dha'fain*): childhood and decrepitude (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [30]:54), which has peak performance of physical and intellectual abilities, and also the major agents of this process. Their personal excellency

is supposed to vanguard systemic changes through the precedent of *Ashab al-Kahfi*, responding to contemporary challenges as social capital strengthens community cohesion.

*Futuwwah* and *Marhalah* are strategic synergies where the former is the driver of change and the latter is the developmental framework. The integral framework between *futuwwah* and *marhalah* births (1) a development-based meritocratic model where every *marhalah* develops a specific *futuwwah* character pathway and evaluates the human development phase in which intergenerational mentoring is mechanized; and (2) a transformation-oriented understanding of *futuwwah* as an engine of change, synergizing individual capacity and social structure, as shown by the economic and education sectors (e.g., reframing working ethics in sharia banks).

### 3.2.2.2 Prophetic leadership: The balance of empathic concern and responsibility

An epic history close to the death of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) sums up the prophet's long struggles since, hinting at valuable elements of Islamic meritocracy: a leadership axis to integration between empathy, responsibility, and holistic vision. This verse came at the end of the prophetic phase; it is not merely fragmentary or part of the Qur'an, it is a great epilogue firming the entire endeavor of the Prophet. The suffering he felt during the da'wah period in Mecca until building Islamic civilization at Madina (Istiqomah & Fakhirullah, 2022) founds an acknowledgement through divine assertion in this verse. Furthermore, this historical context gives deepened operational quality to leadership character; thus, prophetic leadership in that verse was born from approved long journeys, sacrifice, and effectiveness in building civilization; it captures the Prophet figure who experiences people's suffering (*'azizun 'alaihi ma anittum*), yearns for people's prosperity (*harisun 'alaikum*), and shows affection and love (*ra'ufun rahim*) (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [9]:128).

These criteria shift the leadership focus from merely about technical competencies to relational moral responsibilities. The character of *azizun 'alaihi ma anittum* construes a leader to strive for having such high empathy wherein quantitative performance is not the main measurement of success; it is also feeling his/her people's pulse. Moreover, *harisun 'alaikum* provides leadership direction to positive obsession in delivering people to the optimal condition, whether in intellectual, spiritual, or material matters. These characters, manifested through *ra'ufun rahim* functioned as an ethical brake, assuring the leadership does not shift to abuse of power or indeed authoritarianism. Simultaneously, the prophetic leadership framework plays a role as transformative power in guiding, safeguarding, and humanizing (Qasim et al., 2025). This also differs from the leadership in Islam to secular leadership due to its comprehensive vision encompassing this world and the hereafter (Alazmi & Bush, 2024).

In demand to crystallize and operationalize those prophetic leadership models, this study suggests an epistemological framework named *tauhidi* paradigm, an integral of thinking, feeling, and acting. This paradigm runs in the foundation of the integral aspects of human life, including leadership, and should begin and be centered on spiritual consciousness (*tawheed*), in which every decision and policy does not miss consideration of divine values and hereafter responsibility (Adriyanto et al., 2025). Functionally, this framework acts as self-governance, preventing delegitimization of power.

The combination of transcendent belief and principles of syariah (*iman, syari'ah-'alaniyah*) possibly made vertical (towards Allah) and horizontal accountability systems (Remiswal et al., 2021); thus, strategic decisions and implementing responsibility are not always based on rational instruments. This vertical-horizontal accountability shapes an accountability circle where the leader has a consciousness of always being monitored by Allah (Al Karofi, 2023) and is responsible to his/her people. In this condition, instrumental logic, where every decision and policy is taken regardless of ethical steps, is no longer relevant. The *tauhidi* paradigm in this case becomes a moral compass preventing injustice, arbitrariness, and neglect of occurrence to humanity's values. Further, the authority runs in empowering, not dominating; in public service, not compulsion. It is always tested by a

moral compass, thus assuring the authority runs in love, justice, and responsibility for comprehensive benefit.

### 3.2.2.3 *Competent integrity: A synthesis of capability and moral rectitude*

The Islamic meritocracy framework does not build in a dichotomy between capability and morality; it is built through an organic synthesis between them. This synthesis illustrates symbiotic relation wherein high intellectual and technical competency discovers its true purpose through moral guidance. Yet, morality with inadequate competency has no leverage in invented social change. In the Islamic perspective, human excellency has always been viewed as a whole (Hayat & Ramzan, 2019) character and competence united. Therefore, capability and morality are inseparable, integral. This was invented through distinct theological precedent in the Quran narration, deciding on a double paradigm to assess the candidate. The history of Prophet Musa (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [28]:23-29) construes *qawiyun amin* (physical, technical, integrity, and trust character), where His intervention in lifting a big rock to help Madyans lady illustrates His physical endurance and social sensitivity and polite norm respect. Prophet Yusuf (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [12]:55-56) provides *hafizun alim* (preserveness-management capacity and deep knowledge), and Thalut (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [2]:247) *bastatan fi al-ilm wa al-jism* (consolidating knowledge and physical endurance). These narrations collectively affirm that technical excellence and intellectual ability are inherently accompanied by morality and responsibility.

Beyond the specified criteria, it is important to contextualize the divine revelation in contemporary dynamic labor relationships. The eternal values conceived in those prophets history have strong relevance; they contextualize either spiritual purpose or universal principles, which become guidelines in shaping productive and equitable working environments. The universal principles themselves could establish a virtuous cycle: The institution achieves optimal performance while the worker earns both living and safe. Thus, revelation is not an archaic document; it is a living blueprint for shaping a humane working environment. Prophet Musa's history could be understood as a blueprint to create a mutual working environment. He shows integrity proceeding (e.g., helping without altruistic reason and respecting norm) is known and offered for work and safety. The reciprocal relation where employee trustworthiness and dedication are replied to by the employer with the provision of safety. Delivering safe and secure, as Prophet Musa gets, is a catalyst to maximize functionary productivity and dedication; it would turn to create eco-synergy in the work environment. Managing the national treasury as Prophet Yusuf did reflects the transition from individual achievement to public service ethos; his saving and high conversant capacity safeguard the whole nation; it illustrates the true servant leader in which his vision is beyond personal interest and public-oriented. It is proven during the nation's facing the crisis while Prophet Yusuf's capacity secures collective benefit among people. Individual inner consolidation of intellectual and physical capacity as construed by Thalut is fundamental prerequisite in the formation of multidimensional competencies in a specified working environment and individual safeguard in this VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous) era. Thus, legitimate leadership standards should align strategic competency and self-commitment to social welfare.

### 3.2.2.4 *Economic capital as a divine trust: From private possession to social benefit*

An economic capital understood and construed as a real manifest of God's benediction (*fadl*) and His substantive kindness (*khair*). This theological understanding shapes the ontological foundation, which affirms the dynamic character of wealth as trustworthiness, not absolute ownership. The concept of *Fadl* inclines to external abundance of matter, yet *Khair* emphasizes intrinsic value adherence in the asset. These two major points were narrated in the Quran in several constructions and are also articulated and connotated in theological warnings (to the stingy) (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [3]:180, [4]:37, [9]:75), which

play a role as a normative mechanism assuring the dynamic of capital and historical cases (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [2]:268). The regulative function of those verses corrects the stagnancy of capital accumulation; the Qur'an also espouses economic activity through explaining the universe as an arena of *fadlullah* (gifts from Allah) exploration; it represents through convenience maritime access (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [45]:12, [30]:46, [16]:14, [35]:12), legitimization of commercial activities (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [62]:10), and beneficial resources (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [10]:60), and it also facilitates social institutions such as marriage (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [24]:32). This is also transforming private capital into productive social capital.

The transcendence of the ownership concept has had it prove itself across history. In the early and contemporary phases of Islam, capital accumulation has become a fundamental catalyst in the spread of the high value of Islam and intellectual and institutional boosting. Historical validation of the paradigm of ownership as trustworthiness is traceable in the Islamic civilization continuum. In the formative age, capital accumulation of the Prophet and His companion (Santosa, 2023), functioned as strategic instrument to political stability and the sustainability of Islamic movements. Usman bin Affan's intervention in water resource acquisition solves the hydrologic crisis in Madina, and Abdurrahman bin Auf's contribution during the Tabuk war represents private capital conversion to public confidence and power.

In the Abbasite era, capital-based intellectual investment through *Bait al-Hikmah* assured the continuity of ownership as trustworthiness, The Caliphs, Harun Ar-Rasyid and his Sons, allocates a huge amount of capital, ensuring the development of scientific civilization (Haqparast & Salangi, 2024). Muslims' trade relationship also takes a role as a catalyst for spreading Islam to Nusantara (Farid, 2021) through resource exchange. It attracts local leader interest in polite trader religion, as captured in epistolary communication between Indrawarman, King of Srivijaya, and Caliph Umar bin Abdul Aziz (Ichsan, 2022). Capital accumulation as a material prerequisite for civilization improvement is a confirmed proposition by those historical funding patterns. In this contemporary era, strategic asset holdings phenomena by Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) (Taufani, 2024), represent continuity of the former paradigm; also continuing the legacy of predecessor management in productive waqf wherein Al-Azhar (Egypt) governs 3.3 billion meter square lands (Azmi, 2020) for muslim community needs, particularly in education endowment. In further, Islamic framework in wealth and capital offers unique paradigm, individual ownership bridging distributive justice, reflected across the empowering historical spectrum. They were representing the crystallization of the Islamic paradigm through productive waqf and using assets efficiently in building human resources and the Muslim community sustainably.

### 3.2.3 Socio-cultural dimension

#### 3.2.3.1 The islamic human rights framework: *Maqasid al-Shariah* as the guardian of fundamental rights

Islam offers a distinctive paradigm around human rights; it grounds the basic rights of humans in the context of a transcendent source, not temporal human societal constructs. This transcendent bedrock gives imperative character and absolute universality to those rights; it takes its source from divine will, which is not changeable as social consensus. Therefore, Islamic human rights are not granted by the state or society (Mukharrom & Abdi, 2023); they are ontological gifts (*karamah al-insaniyah*) inherent in humanity as God's vicegerent. The Qur'an states universal values of human dignity (*karamah al-insaniyah*) with a set of inherent rights; there is the right of human life (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [5]:32), esteem (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [2]:30), human equality as descendants of Adam (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [17]:70), personal ownership as I noted in the economic part above, and many kinds of human rights. These principles are concretized into a systematic and comprehensive philosophic law named *Maqasid asy-Syari'ah* or *Daruriyat al-khams*. This

framework functioned as an imperative foundation to protect five essential needs of humans: *ad-din* (religion and spirituality), *an-Nafs* (life), *al-mal* (wealth ownership), *'aql* (mind and reason), and *an-nasl* (descent) (Adenan et al., 2023).

These *daruriyat* present the applicative and wide operationalization of human nature. The optimization encompasses physical, spiritual, intellectual, economic, and social aspects, in which it is multidimensional. Every *maqasid* safeguards individual rights, which coincide with constructing civilized social order. *Hifz ad-din* (preservation of religion) prevails both inside and outside, where Islamic doctrine integrity is preserved through verified methodology, as in hadith verification, in which granting doctrine sources and granting freedom to other religious adherents (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [2]:256). also give a mandate to preserve civil and non-Muslim community rights. Preservation of life (*hifz an-nafs*) absolutely warrants the continuity of human life and its intermediaries, such as foods, drinks, security, and also bioethics, while *hifz al-mal* (preservation of wealth ownership) is guaranteed in the Islamic community, including other adherents. The ownership warranty to non-Muslims has strong historic precedent, such as Umar bin Khattab safeguarding Aelian (Jerusalem) people's ownership (El-awaisi & Sidik, 2023) and Muhamad Al-Fatih's guarantee at the time he conquered Constantinople. It emphasize the property ownership as part of universal justice in Islam. The imperative guidance to operationing mind and reason through *tafakkur* and *tadabbur* (reflection and contemplation) guarantees the freedom of thought, education, and academic deliberation. It also includes any kind of safeguarding intellectual capacity from destructive matter and espouses the syura, an environment of scientific discourse. The marriage institution is not merely about uniting man and woman in love; it also distinctively preserves human honor and descent. These rights propose an alternative framework addressing the individual-collectivism dichotomy in contemporary human rights discourse. Absolutism on the right with collective disregard, which libertarians espouse, or collectivism neglecting the individual could be solved by this framework. Further, all of the *maqasid* frameworks articulate a holistic and coherent system rooted in the values of divinity and humanity.

### 3.2.3.2 Organic solidarity: Collectivity and collegiality as social pillars

The Islamic society foundation lies in the collectivity principle and organic solidarity; and the Qur'an imperates unity and avoiding division (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [3]:103, [6]:153, [42]:13). Linguistically, this direction signed with using *fi'il nahyi*, prohibition word, in *wa la tatafaraqu*, in which contains imperative meaning implicitly to congregate in every life aspects, not merely in religious activity. This principle creeps into a comprehensive social paradigm where in economy collectivity positioning strategy to build independence and strengthen the community market, enabling inclusive and equitable distribution of prosperity. In the global context, muslims economic congregation potentially produce significant sovereign wealth (Najib, 2024), enabling the control of global cash-flow and decrease the dependent to exploitative capitalist system. This was realized in the Islamic currency mechanism through *mudarabah*, offering an alternative economic relationship between investor and investee; *mudarabah* as an instrument of equity-based financing emphasize profit sharing and risk-saring principles (Musfiroh et al., 2024), fundamentally differ to capitalistic paradigm which prones to investor. Funding the microeconomic sector over *zakat*, *infaq*, and *sadaqah* instruments, as a safeguard for societal life and an entrepreneurship stimulant. This philanthropy mechanism is not merely about social safety net, it also have a role in stimulate grassrott based economy in which liberating entrepreneur actor from debt interes; and realize distributive justice.

This collective principle also construes collegial ethos in science development over centuries. The ethos reflects inclusive epistemology wherein knowledge viewed as universal heritage of humanity in which beyond geographic and culture limitation. Al-Khawarizmi's framework, such as Algebra and the notion of zero (number 0) (Saputra, 2023), which roots in the Hindustan civilization and has an Islamic tone, became a contemporary main factor in sophisticated technology; Al-Khawarizmi contribution beyond

mathematic innovation, it also upon integrative method uniting empirical, logical, and spiritual, as shown in the preface in his book which begin with praise to Allah and *salawat* to the prophet. It illustrates empirical evidence of collaborative work ethos between different cultures and ideas. Hindustan culture and Islamic framework synthesis in Al-Khawarizmi's work illustrates intercultural dialogue gave birth of transformative science. The integration of theology, economy, and epistemology in collectivity pillar espouse comprehensive framework in facing contemporary issues. Therefore, collectivity acts as epistemology emphasizing integration, dialogue, and continuity in scientific civilization, aiming to benefit human beings as a whole; illustrates *rahmatan li al-'alamin* (divine favor for universe).

### 3.2.3.3 Distributive justice: Zakat as a divine fiscal instrument

Deconstructing the justice concept and its reduction to philosophical abstraction, Islam highlighted the social dimension of human life since the early phase of spread; at the same time, it identified the root of inequality (*akabira al-mujrimin*). In the early phase of spread, Islam criticized the culpable act of Quraisy luminaries hoarding wealth (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [104]:1-7) while hunger disseminates around them. Others criticize the address to trapped people in squandering wealth and their insensitivity to the weak (poor, orphans, etc.) (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [107]:1-7). These cumulative injustices are responded to by Islam through equitable distribution of justice vision based on the tauhid framework and principle; it is an ontological foundation to universal brotherhood (*ukhuwah*). The framework shifting social stratification parameter from quantitative disparity to human egalitarian except devotion (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [49]:13), depriving any form of majority oppression. The operational way to legitimate this equitable distribution of justice is zakat, a justice imperative, which restrains the centralistic ownership of wealth and prosperity among elites (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [59]:7). Beyond the individual rites, *zakat* could be positioned as sophisticated divine fiscal policy. It also represents a comprehensive social welfare framework (Khan, 1997), handling multidimensional vulnerability: relic from chronic indebtedness, wages for administrative service, diplomatic expenditure, defense, education, health, and communication (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [9]:6). Proportional tariff of *zakat* itself (2.5-10%) assuring continuity contribution without overbear, thus preventing resistance and efficient redistribution; it also balancing life and hereafter (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [28]:77).

### 3.2.3.4 The ontology of *Ibtala'*: Trial as a cosmic and social mechanism

*Ibtala* means exam etymologically (Ibn 'Asyur, 1984); it shapes comprehensive ontologic life where human existential reality is viewed as a sequence of divine evaluation instruments. This concept of exam encompasses duality spectrums: negative manifests similar to fear, hunger, defeat, and loss (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [2]:155, [33]:11), and positive conditions such as wealth abundance, science, knowledge, and leadership (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [3]:186, [6]:165). *Ibtala* also has multidimensional teleology; it acts as a cosmic mechanism differentiating individual intrinsic quality and revealing it (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [5]:48, [67]:2), the other side operating the formative process to forge psychological durability, spiritual maturity, and obedience; it is manifested paradigmatically in Abraham's test (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [2]:124, [37]:106).

*Ibtala* also shapes the social paradigm and anthropological method governing a just society. Divine instruction to test the orphans, assessing their maturity and financial management skill (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [4]:6), giving normative justification to the principle of evaluation, selection, and meritocracy in *muamalah*, the social domain. This could be operationalized in modern social structures, encompassing the development of a competency assessment system in public officer recruitment, an economic audit mechanism to minimize risk, and education curriculum integration with durability values and critical thinking, thus building character and analytical capacity. Therefore, *Ibtala* has evolved from

a theological concept to a sociological paradigm in shaping an excellent, accountable, and competitive society.

### 3.2.4 Node and energy, amanah (trust): The transcendent nexus and animating principle of the system

Rendering trust to whom it is due (The Clear Qur'an, 2015, [4]:58) was a theological foundation and managerial ethic in Islam. The occasional reason (*asbab nuzul*) for this verse narrating the Ka'bah key returning history to Usman bin Talhah (former key holder of Ka'bah who did not accept Islam yet at that time) (Ibn Katsir, 2000), instead of allowing the prophet's family, this illustrates the normative paradigm of refusing nepotism and upholding meritocracy principles. Disregard occurrence to this normative paradigm was warned of, it possibly placing society in damage (Al-Bukhari, 2012), while in macro level collapsing nation and or corporation. *Amanah* (trustworthiness) as a principle must be delivered in all human self and societal life, articulating a professional ethics framework. In the moment people work, they walk in dual benefits: First in fulfill needs while the second giving charity; because spending money for family has significant and attract the greatest reward from Allah. Thus, professional work is no longer a secular imperative; it is transcendent servitude, and establishing an ethical, productive, and sustainable work environment at the same time fortifies corrupt practices.

Table 1. Key concepts of islamic meritocracy

| Dimension                | Component                             | Principle/Key Indicator                                                   | Source (Al-Qur'an/Other Islamic Source)    | Systemic Function                                        |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Spiritual Foundation     | Faith and Piety                       | Belief in Allah as source and bedrock of Accountability                   | Q.S. 49:13; Q.S. 2:124                     | Epistemological Foundation guarantees vertical integrity |
| Individual Dimension     | <i>Futuwwah</i> (Youthhood Etos)      | Moral courage, Truthfulness, solidarity, integrity                        | Q.S. 18:13-14; As-Sullami                  | Spiritual engine for individual action                   |
|                          | Prophetic Leadership                  | Empathy, responsibility, vision for dunya-akhirat ( <i>haris, ra'uf</i> ) | Q.S. 9:128; Q.S. 28:77                     | Compassionate and accountable leadership model           |
|                          | Competent Integrity                   | Capability synthesis ( <i>qawiy, 'alim</i> ) and morality ( <i>amin</i> ) | Q.S. 28:26; Q.S. 12:55; Q.S. 2:247         | Integral selection criteria of leadership                |
|                          | Economic Capital as Divine Trust      | Private ownership as <i>amanah</i> , not absolute right                   | Q.S. 3:180; Q.S. 4:37; Q.S. 2:268          | public welfare-oriented economy                          |
| Socio-Cultural Dimension | Maqashid al-Shariah (HAM Islam)       | Preservation: Religion, life/soul, wealth, reason and mind, descent       | Q.S. 5:32; Q.S. 2:256; Q.S. 17:70          | Transcendental guarantee of fundamental rights           |
|                          | Organic Solidarity                    | Colelctivity and brotherhood ( <i>ukhuwah</i> )                           | Q.S. 3:103; Q.S. 42:13; Hadis about jamaah | Organic solidarity rejecting excessive individualism     |
|                          | Distributive Justice ( <i>Zakat</i> ) | 2.5-10% redistribution; 8 ashnaf/category of recipients                   | Q.S. 9:60; Q.S. 59:7                       | divine fiscal instrument for public welfare              |
|                          | Ontology of <i>Ibtida'</i>            | Trial-based selection and refinements mechanism                           | Q.S. 2:124; Q.S. 4:6; Q.S. 37:106          | Transparent and accountable of selection process         |

|                 |               |                                                     |                      |                                                   |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Node and Energi | <i>Amanah</i> | transcendent accountability as the system's engine. | Q.S. 4:58; Q.S. 8:27 | Catalytic energy connecting all system components |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------|

### 3.2.5 Comparative perspective: Positioning islamic meritocracy in global discourse

Confucianism tradition has *Junzi* (Noble Human) concepts in which it is an ideal personage having intellectual and moral autonomy. The Confucians are willing to define people who are meritorious and fit to their own circle, by which the elite scholars are whom prescribe it as *Junzi*. Naturally, *Junzi* also serves the ruler in the preservation of dignity, mind independence, and commitment to morality (Pines, 2024). This moral-based political theory identifies and chooses public officials through utilising moral excellence as measurement. The *Junzi* concept of noble human seems to be comparable to Islamic meritocracy, in which both emphasise morality and competency. Yet, significant divergence lies in the transcendent dimension by which family hierarchy and cultural ethics are the main determinants of Confucianism.

Table 2. Islamic meritocracy in comparative perspective

| Comparison Dimension     | Islamic Meritocracy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Confusianism                                                                                                                                                               | Buddhism                                                                                                                           | Roman Catholicism                                                                                             | Hinduism                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Foundational value       | Centered on divine revelation and accountability to God ( <i>hablun min Allah</i> ), inherently integrated with social responsibility and humanity ( <i>hablun min an-nas</i> ). Vertical and horizontal worship are simultaneous and mutually reinforcing . | Based on soocial ethic, moral goodness ( <i>ren</i> ), and cosmic harmony ( <i>Tian</i> ), with strong emphasis on social structure, family and hierarchical relationship. | Centered on cultivation of consciousness, compassion, and wisdom as a path to liberate all beings from suffering ( <i>dukkha</i> ) | Grounded on human dignity, common good, and church social teaching emphasizing solidarity and subsidiarity.   | Based on the concept of <i>karma</i> (causality) and <i>dharma</i> (duty/righteousness), with emphasize on act and sacrifice |
| Ideal Criteria of Leader | Integrates <i>Futuwwah</i> (spiritual chivalry), Prophetic Leadership (compassion and accountability), Competent Integrity ( <i>qawiy and amin</i> ), and <i>Amanah</i> (trustworthiness).                                                                   | Prioritizes moral virtue ( <i>ren</i> ), wisdom, and commitment to the moral way ( <i>Dao</i> ). Emphasizes lifelong learning and self-cultivation                         | Cultivates wisdom, compassion, and the six/ten perfections ( <i>paramita</i> ) with a focus on benefiting all beings.              | Prioritizes service, justice, and commitment to the common good, guided by church teaching and pastoral care. | Prioritizes duty-oriented, non-attachment to results, and spiritual equanimity ( <i>samatvam</i> )                           |
| Selection Mechanism      | Based on trial ( <i>Ibtala'</i> ) and integrity track record ( <i>hafiz</i> ). Combining spiritual, moral, and competence-based evaluation.                                                                                                                  | Through education and imperial examination that measure both moral haracter and intellectual capability                                                                    | Through community recognition of spiritual and moral achievement, as well s personal realization                                   | Through hierarchical appointment and consensus with church structures, often combine                          | Traditionall y based on <i>varna</i> (sosial stratificatio n) though karma emphasizes the importance                         |

|                        |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                          |                                                                                          |                                                                                             |                                                                                      |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                        |                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                          |                                                                                          | with theological training                                                                   | of individual action                                                                 |
| Private ownership      | Recognized as <i>amanah</i> (trustworthiness), with social obligation, including <i>zakat</i> , <i>sadaqa</i> , <i>wakaf</i> , and <i>infaq</i> | Recognize in family and social responsibility framework                                                  | Viewed as part of world reality which must wisely managed                                | Recognize, lie on common good                                                               | Recognize, ownership in line to <i>dharma</i>                                        |
| Distribution mechanism | <i>Zakat</i> (2.5-10%) for 8 category of recipients, <i>sadaqa</i> , <i>wakaf</i> , and <i>infaq</i>                                            | Family-based and community-based philanthropy, often tied to social hierarchy and reciprocal obligation. | <i>Dāna</i> (giving) as one of the perfection, emphasizing generosity and non-attachment | Church charity, progressive taxation, and the principle of common good as guiding framework | <i>Dāna</i> (giving) and <i>yajña</i> (sacrifice) as act of duty and spiritual merit |

Asian people also have the ideal leadership through the Bodhisattva personage, the enlightened creature who postpones nirvana to help others. Bodhisattva develops six ways of virtue: generosity, self-control, patience, right effort, meditation, wisdom, and fundamental intention in sharing benefit with others (Tsomo, 2015). The vision of Buddhist leadership concentrates on mind and thought training, precept actualisation, interconnected consciousness, universal responsibility, and actualisation of interdependency. In the institutional field, the monastic Buddhist community works on the principles of self-governance, world government, and Dharma governance; also the system that enforces equality of rights, independence, and refusal of caste. Yet, Buddhism does not recognise private ownership as a legal institution in worldly and mundane fields because worldly leadership is not the main concentration. However, Buddhism is also comparable to Islamic meritocracy in the embodiment of collectivity, spiritual self-control, and mercy.

Other religion that broadly embrace by the people of South Asia articulates the ideal leadership through *Karma-Yoga*, technic of doing and acting in such a way thus the soul has no bound to the effect of those act. In India, morality is conceptualised as *karma-yoga* in three forms of dimension: task-oriented, regardless of desert, and spiritual balance (Mulla & Krishnan, 2014). The concept of karma with main attention to the life task provides the principle of ideal leadership. Another principle in Hinduism is *LokasMgraha* in which emphasises both the leader and its people must act to bring broader goodness for the public.

Slightly different from Hinduism, the social teachings of Catholicism hold the principle of subsidiarity, by which it is affirmed that a bigger and higher community has no right to assume responsibilities that smaller, lesser communities can carry out successfully. This subsidiarity principle must be understood in its connectedness to other principles such as personal dignity, solidarity, and the common good. The principle of subsidiarity also renounces any form of collectivism and restricts state intervention for the purpose of developing harmony between the personal and society. The social teaching of Catholicism emphasises common eminence, solidarity, subsidiarity, and optional preference for the impoverished and vulnerable in its public context (Jones & Waller, 2010).

The comparison between Islamic meritocracy and other religious philosophies of human life provides the exceptionality of Islamic meritocracy around (1) transcendent (to Allah) and horizontal (to public) accountability; (2) restriction to ascriptive hierarchy, such as caste; and (3) private ownership acknowledgement as *amanah* (trustworthiness), not absolute.

### 3.3 Bridging philosophy and practice: *Leuit* and the framework of Islamic meritocracy

Responding to the disruptive global landscape, high index uncertainty, and food scarcity, it needs to implement an operational systematic model and have philosophical integrity. This part elaborates on the strategic implementation framework in applying the Islamic meritocracy model to shape *Leuit* (as a modern communal rice barn), configuring indigenous heritage and modernity with the transcendent value. Planning this framework as a 90-day cycle as a proof of concept, focusing on integrating principles and theories into operational and policy steps. This 90-day framework is presented as an idea scenario, testing the coherence and applicability of the model in logic; bureaucracy and its complexity become the real testing space for Islamic meritocracy principles and their strength.

First, configuring the institution and strategic selection in the first three weeks. This step is assuring the principle of *amanah* and *ibtala'* as core bedrock. The early seven-day focus on forming a National Order Unit through presidential instruction or an equivalent regulator equipped with operational budgeting symbolizes political will and commitment, also a macro manifestation of *amanah*. Within ten days the main pilot project is arranged—securing vision and operational harmony; continue with choosing a representative pilot locus. Cianjur in the West of Indonesia), East Lombok Central part of Indonesia, and Merauke the East Indonesia represent Indonesian diversity, while geographic, cultural, and productivity of farm are clearly different. Thus, electing these regions illustrates the principles of collective-collegial and equitable distribution, which are integrated from an early stage. In 15 days, the region team admission was processed, including integrating layered selection for public verification, integrity tracking, and public service commitment, preventing politicization and distortion (quantitative or qualitative).

Second, a technical and operational scheme appears during 1-4 weeks; it transforms an abstract concept into a technical blueprint ready for implementation, which reflects individual attention and capability principles. A comprehensive SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) blueprint arranged for acceptance, storage, and distribution in a modern *Leuit* design associates the food barn with deliberate space for community. This document is targeted for completion by 30th day; signing the integral technical competencies in vision actualization. Physical construction in three diverse locations carried simultaneously integrating a digital dashboard for national monitoring and information system as its equipment and also an analog dashboard for community access. On day 80, technology integration would finish and represent a resource as God's benediction, which managed accountably and fairly (distributive justice).

Third, network mobilization and social legitimation in a 5-8 week period. The grassroots society and supporting ecosystem depend on collective and collegial principles operationalized; this stage focuses on espousing them. Institutional partnership with Islamic philanthropy. It is important to reach the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with influential charity institutions (LAZNAS, LAZISMU, LAZISNU, dompet dhuafa, etc.) within 40 days, which shapes the continuity of the funding ecosystem and logistics. On day 47, local figures are involved in educating society through a socialization forum attended by several figures: religious, ethnic, local apparatus, and local society members. This initiative is proposed to earn and build trust, cultural legitimation, and brotherhood as an operational foundation. Furthermore, on day 55, mapping local resources consists of farm commodity, ZISWAF (*Zakat, Infak, Sedekah, and Wakaf*) potential, and local regulator budget as a database for the distributive justice plan.

Fourth, concept validation and activate community (weeks 9-12). On day 65, mobilizing resources (food stock), as divine blessing, through the ZISWAF institution and other commitments to fulfill the *Leuit* and view local demography needs. In parallel, recruitment for active participant in which would achieve a 50-100 family quota registered as participants (*zakat donatur*) or receivers. On day 80, this possibly animate collective-collegial cycle and community acceptance sign.

Fifth, reflective monitoring system and evaluation (continuity for all 90 days). The monitoring system is arranged to ascertain a harmonious process to the soul of the system,

reflecting *ibtala* and *amanah* principles. Transparency dashboard implementation is the main focus; there must be three progress reviews in which would conducted in day 30, 55, and 85. This review simultaneously evaluates both the quantitative matrix and the qualitative question, Are we pursuing the soul of the system? On day 87, the main risk and mitigation strategy must be identified, ascertaining system continuity and strength

#### 4. Conclusions

This study provides a comprehensive overview, construing the spiritual meritocracy paradigm, an integral framework that transcends the conventional dichotomy between secular efficiency and transcendence values through principles such as *amanah*, *ibtala*, and competent integrity. Leuit model of Sundanese tradition could be the material base of this philosophical framework. Converging Leuit and Islamic meritocracy through 90 days of implementation reveals eligibility as a proof of concept for more integrity and justice governance; also offering community-based strategic solution for food security reinforced by ZISWAF ecosystem. The synthesis between Islamic Meritocracy and communal food barn represents resacralize public life governance project: an invitation to shape right man in the right place and right soul and spirit for right position. This would shape a foundation where accountability is born from transcendent consciousness and collective social control, thus synergizing material and spiritual development for sustaining civilization.

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