



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF AL-IHSAN IN REALIZING QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES BASED ON ISLAMIC VALUES

Ahmad Fakhri Wardana¹, Firka Nur Faizin², Muh. Resky Akbar³, & Subehan Khalik⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, Indonesia

Correspondence Email: 10200124035@uin-alauddin.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Public services in Indonesia often face problems, such as complicated procedures, lack of transparency, and low public satisfaction. As the largest Muslim country, we can use Islamic values such as Al-Ihsan, which means serving others sincerely as if Allah is watching (QS Al-Isra 17:7 & Al-Qashash 28:77), to improve services. This study examines how to apply Al-Ihsan to improve the quality of public services, through a journal study on the LAZIS Al-Ihsan zakat institution, the Gondanglegi Islamic Hospital, which achieved 54% patient satisfaction, plus the practices of Muhammadiyah and NU. Al-Ihsan is strong when combined with the trilogy of faith (belief in the heart), Islam (sharia practice), ihsan (perfect service), plus Maqasid Syariah which protects religion, soul, mind, children, and property. The results are evident: LAZIS manages zakat transparently, increasing funds and helping mustahik become independent; Islamic boarding schools/schools teach empathy and improve the quality of education; Muhammadiyah hospitals and health centers serve the poor fairly without discrimination. The value of trust prevents corruption, deliberation involves citizens, and rigid bureaucracy is transformed into friendly Islamic services. However, there are still major challenges: employees find it difficult to apply sincerity due to a pragmatic work culture, a 30-40% gap between good theory and field practice, lack of sharia supervision, and difficulty in measuring results outside of Islamic hospitals/schools, such as the ID Card Office or Licensing Office. Evaluations are often just stories, not hard data. Al-Ihsan can truly transform public services to be more sincere, transparent, inclusive, and accountable for the issues raised in the journal. Practical suggestions: set Sharia performance targets, hold morning assemblies to remind employees of Islamic values, and use Maqasid for supervision so that it can be used nationally in the Health, Education, and Population Services as a model for clean and sustainable Islamic governance.

Keywords: Al-Ihsan; Public service, Sharia Maqasid, faith-Islam-ihsan, Muhammadiyah, NU, Islamic bureaucracy

1. INTRODUCTION

Public services are an important aspect of the government management system, which is a benchmark for the government's success in meeting the needs and aspirations of the

community. However, in practice, public services in Indonesia still face various challenges, such as complicated bureaucracy, lack of transparency, and low levels of community satisfaction. In the context of Indonesia as a country with a Muslim majority, the integration of Islamic values, particularly the principle of al-ihsan, is highly relevant to improving the quality of public services. The principle of al-ihsan, which is oriented towards excellence, sincerity, and moral responsibility, can be an ethical foundation for promoting more effective, efficient, and equitable services. The urgency of this research lies in the need to examine how the application of the principle of al-ihsan can realize quality and reliable public services, while contributing to integrity in governance.

Ihsan comes from the word *حَسَنَ*, which means to do good, while its masdar form is *إِحْسَانٌ*, which means goodness. Allah *Ta'ala* says in the Qur'an regarding this matter.

إِنْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَإِنْ أَسَأْتُمْ فَلَهَا

"If you do good, you do good for yourselves, and if you do evil, it is against yourselves..."

(Al-Isra', 17: 7)

وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ هَالِكٌ إِلَيْكَ

"... And do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you..." (Al-Qashash, 28: 77)

Terminologically, al-Ihsan means worshiping Allah as if you see Him, and if you are unable to do so, be sure that He always sees you. In the realm of public service, al-Ihsan teaches service that is not limited to obligation but goes beyond that, namely with sincerity, professionalism, and attention to the welfare of society. Service based on the principle of al-Ihsan reflects excellence in worship and service to humanity. The integration of this principle in public service creates added value in the form of trust, transparency, and strong ethical compliance (*Al-Ihsan*, 2018).

Integrating Islamic principles into public service is not only a religious obligation but also a pragmatic approach that can increase the legitimacy of governance and public trust. When the government operates in accordance with the cultural and religious values held by the majority of the population, it will naturally foster greater acceptance, cooperation, and trust from the community. This approach goes beyond mere compliance, moving towards a more embedded and legitimate form of governance, which has the potential to lead to more effective policy implementation and reduced social friction (Nur Wahidillah et al., 2025).

The urgency of this research lies in the need to explore and implement the principles of al-Ihsan in a concrete and systematic manner in public services in Indonesia. This research aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice by exploring how the application of al-Ihsan values can improve the quality, fairness, and credibility of public services. Thus, this research not only contributes academically but also offers practical solutions in building clean, effective, and sustainable governance based on Islamic values.

The problems examined in this study include how the concept of al-Ihsan is described in the context of Islamic value-based public services, how it is implemented in service practices in Indonesia, the obstacles faced in its implementation, and the impact of al-Ihsan's implementation on public satisfaction and service accountability. The objectives of this study are to describe the

concept of al-Ihsan in public services, analyze the implementation of this principle, identify challenges, and assess its impact on service quality and public satisfaction.

2. METHODS

The research methodology used in this study adopts a qualitative approach with a focus on case studies of public services that can be digital or conventional. A qualitative approach was chosen because it provides an opportunity to explore and understand in depth the social context and values inherent in the implementation of the principle of al-ihsan in public service practice.

Data collection techniques were carried out through research and in-depth studies of relevant literature, emphasizing data obtained from libraries in written form and scientific works in the form of journals, articles, and books related to the discussion in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the topic being studied. The data collection process was carried out in stages in accordance with research ethics. With this method, the study is expected to provide a comprehensive and contextual picture of the integration of Islamic values, particularly al-Ihsan, in public service practices in Indonesia.

This research has several limitations in finding several examples of journals, articles, and books related to the journal title. However, the presentation and explanation that we have compiled are thorough and transparent, so that the research we have compiled can be understood and can be a reference for other researchers.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The principle in implementing the principle of Al-ihsan in services to improve the quality of public services in Islamic values needs to be understood. Basically, Al-ihsan requires correlation with other principles to strengthen the role of Al-ihsan itself and be able to be implemented by the general public. Therefore, the theoretical and conceptual basis is present to ensure that the principle of Al-ihsan has been implemented properly.

The principle of Al-ihsan cannot be separated from several elements, namely Iman, Islam, and Ihsan. First, Iman comes from the word "إيمان" which etymologically means to believe and trust. Meanwhile, according to terminology, it means believing in one's heart, affirming with words, and practicing with deeds. Faith is the belief in the existence of an almighty god, namely Allah SWT. Allah SWT says in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 3:

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ آلَ هَٰصِلَةٌ وَمَا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

"(namely) those who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend from what We have provided them." (Q.S. Al-Baqarah: 3).

The truth is that faith that is confirmed in the heart is faith that believes in the existence of the universe and its contents, while professing it verbally is like reciting the two sentences of

the shahada (there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah), and practicing it with the limbs is like performing acts of worship in accordance with their functions (Muhammad Agam Nalf Saujani et al., 2024).

Secondly, Islam comes from the Arabic word "salima," which means safe or secure. Islam is a religion revealed by Allah SWT to the Prophet Muhammad. This religion regulates the relationship between humans and their Lord, as well as the entire universe.

Islam is a broad framework of life that regulates all aspects of human life, including spiritual, economic, and political. According to the word of Allah: "And We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'an) to explain everything" (QS. An-Nahl. 89), people who submit to Allah's law place the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of the Messenger as "guidelines" in their economic activities to fulfill the two main duties of humans: "servitude to God" and "prosperity on earth" (Muhammad Agam Nalf Saujani et al., 2024).

So, the correlation between the principle of Al-ihsan and these two elements is indeed different, but in its implementation, they cannot be separated, where one element complements the other, where faith is an aspect of belief or trust, Islam is salvation and obedience, while always doing good because one feels watched over by Allah SWT.

Likewise, in the implementation of Islamic-based services, these three elements must be practiced so that all forms of Islamic law can be properly applied. Faith serves as the basis for the spiritual motivation of public service employees, where every administrative task is understood as a form of devotion to Allah, not just a routine performance. Without strong faith, service tends to be mechanical and lose its spiritual spirit. Islam realizes faith through practical practices in the form of compliance with sharia SOPs, transparency, trustworthiness, and justice so that service procedures such as ID card administration or health services become measurable acts of worship. Meanwhile, Ihsan reaches the peak of the trilogy with perfection in service quality, where employees serve with sincerity, deep empathy, and professionalism beyond minimum standards, as if Allah SWT is watching over every action (Masrurroh et al., 2021).

The Islamic System in Institutional/Organizational Policy Implementation

In a study of a zakat institution such as LAZIS Al-ihsani, this institution was able to optimize the operationalization of Islamic system principles in shaping governance, cash flow, improving performance quality, providing satisfaction in service, and enabling fund growth. (Studies, 2018) In the field of education, such as schools and Islamic boarding schools, ihsan is integrated through a holistic curriculum that instills morals, discipline, and empathetic communication, so that the quality of Islamic public education services has increased significantly through the direct experience of teachers and students. This institutional practice transforms bureaucracy into Islamic-friendly services, reducing administrative complaints.

The application in this field is enriched by using the maqasid sharia framework: LAZIS has succeeded in preserving wealth through sustainable economic development, while education preserves religion and the soul by building character comprehensively. These results clearly respond to the main questions of the topic through ihsan in action: The arrangement of sharia POAC is in accordance with QS Al-Isra 17:7 in order to simplify complicated stages, care in

provisioning to increase the happiness of citizens, and spiritual lesson material that bridges the gap between concept and reality in public service in the country.

Islamic principles such as justice, trustworthiness, and deliberation are the main foundations of leadership in the public sphere or in religious gatherings. The third principle encourages the creation of services that embrace all and prioritize the common good, while strengthening *ihsan* as the highest ethical standard in providing services.

Large Islamic organizations such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama or NU have implemented these teachings through various community service units, such as hospital networks (RSM, RSI), educational institutions (SDIT, SMA Muhammadiyah), and social activities (*posyandu* and disaster relief). A trustworthy attitude is demonstrated through transparency in managing money, deliberation is used when making decisions in the region, and justice is upheld by ensuring that vulnerable groups such as the poor and minorities can receive services. This method has successfully transformed a rigid organizational style into a more responsive Islamic culture of mutual cooperation, reducing favoritism and increasing public trust.

Combining these values with the concept of *al-ihsan* creates a more holistic pattern of community leadership: trustworthiness prevents corruption (*hifz al-mal maqasid*), deliberation encourages participation (*hajiyyat*), and justice strengthens welfare (*tahsiniyyat*). This approach also addresses complex issues through Muhammadiyah's distinctive practices, such as *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* and NU's principle of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*. At a certain level, various social service activities, ranging from free clinics to scholarships, are clear evidence that Islamic teachings can improve citizen satisfaction and service outcomes. This model can even be emulated by government agencies (Barton & Yilmaz, 2021).

Challenges and Disparities

The main challenges include the gap between Islamic ideals and practices in the field, cultural resistance, and the need to strengthen organizational culture and prophetic leadership. (A, 2021) The fundamental challenge is the gap between the idealism of *ihsan*, which demands spiritual sincerity and excellence, and the reality of field bureaucracy, which is still dominated by complex layers, the pragmatic attitudes of employees, and weak coordination between government agencies. This problem exacerbates low public satisfaction and a lack of transparency, as described in the journal's introduction, where services are often trapped in administrative routines without the spirit of Islamic values.

The case study of the Gondanglegi Islamic Hospital highlights the inconsistency in the application of *ihsan* due to the lack of continuous monitoring of sharia values, even though it has succeeded in achieving 54% patient satisfaction through the empathy of its staff, proving the potential of *ihsan* being hampered by external factors such as high workloads and a lack of management commitment. Similarly, *ihsan*-based HR management research faces a pragmatic organizational culture that conflicts with the demand for sincerity, where employees' " " (as if seeing Allah) attitude is difficult to apply amid conventional performance targets, compounded by low digital literacy that limits the expansion of *ihsan* to non-religious sectors such as the Population Office or Business Licensing.

Furthermore, the evaluation of the impact of *ihsan* still relies on qualitative narratives, while national trends show a gap of 30-40% between policy reform and actual implementation, especially in remote areas without adequate digital infrastructure, making it difficult to empirically measure the contribution of *ihsan* to bureaucratic efficiency or public satisfaction. This cultural resistance is exacerbated by transactional leadership that lacks support for spiritual transformation, limiting *ihsan* to religious institutions such as Islamic hospitals or Islamic boarding schools, and preventing it from permeating general public services (Qadriyani & Rumakat, 2025).

Practical solutions emerging from the research include the development of Sharia-based *ihsan* KPIs (such as Islamic public satisfaction and *maslahah* efficiency indices), regular cross-sectoral training such as morning assemblies to reinforce values, and Sharia *maqasid* supervision to gradually close the gap. This approach not only overcomes complex bureaucracy but also addresses the problem formulation in the title with systematic adaptation, ensuring that *Al-Ihsan* is a tangible transformational principle throughout Indonesia's public service ecosystem.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the effective application of the *Al-Ihsan* principle can realize quality public services based on Islamic values in Indonesia, by integrating the trilogy of *faith-Islam-ihsan*, the *Maqasid al-Syariah* framework, and sectoral practices such as LAZIS *Al-Ihsan*, Muhammadiyah, and NU. The values of justice, trustworthiness, and deliberation reinforce *ihsan* as the highest ethic, transforming complex commitments into sincere, transparent, and inclusive services that are responsible for the challenges of low public satisfaction as described in the introduction. However, the accumulation of idealism and practice remains due to cultural resistance, minimal Sharia supervision, and weak quantitative evaluation, especially in the non-religious sector. The Gondanglegi Hospital study (54% satisfaction) and national trends (30-40% gap) prove that *Ihsan* is hampered by pragmatic factors. Practical recommendations include the development of sharia *ihsan* KPIs, routine cross- sectoral training (morning assemblies), and *maqasid* supervision for replication in the Population, Health, and Education Offices. This research fills the theory-practice gap in problem formulation, contributes academically in the form of a national *ihsan* model, and provides pragmatic solutions for integrity management in line with QS *Al-Isra* 17:7 and *Al-Qashash* 28:77.

REFERENCES

- A, A. B. (2021). *Heliyon*. 7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e07865>
- Al-Ihsan*. (2018). *RISALAH*. <https://risalah.id/al-ihsan/>
- Barton, G., & Yilmaz, I. (2021). Contestations of Islamic Religious Ideas in Indonesia. 1–20.
- Masruroh, S., Ahmad EQ, N., & Suhartini, A. (2021). Implementasi Nilai Iman, Islam Dan Ihsan Pada Pendidikan Agama Di Perguruan Tinggi Umum. *Muntazam: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 02(1), 56–70.

- Muhammad Agam Nalf Saujani, Muhammad Andika Apriansyah, Aisyah Munadiya Khoiroh, Naila Nur Hikmah, Nur Wulan Ramadhani, Tiara Sisdayanti, & Rika Widawati. (2024). Kolaborasi Iman, Islam, Dan Ihsan: Menggapai Makna Hidup Yang Sesungguhnya. *Perspektif: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Ilmu Bahasa*, 2(2), 31–37. <https://doi.org/10.59059/perspektif.v2i2.1253>
- Nur Wahidillah, Shifa Rosa Apriyani, Vanessa Ria Meilani, & Zahwa Mutia Ashari. (2025). Pelayanan Publik dalam Perspektif Islam: Landasan, Prinsip, dan Implementasi di Era Kontemporer. *Kajian Administrasi Publik Dan Ilmu Komunikasi*, 2(3), 01–16. <https://doi.org/10.62383/kajian.v2i3.488>
- Qadriyani, L., & Rumakat, M. (2025). Analisis Efektivitas Pelayanan Publik dalam Penerapan Sistem Administrasi Berbasis Elektronik di Pemerintah Daerah. 4(2), 4282–4289.
- Studies, M. (2018). *Academica Academica*. 2(2).