



# Administrative Legacy of Ibn Khaldûn

## *A Comparative Study of Historical Influences in Contemporary Governance Practices*

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### Abstract

This research examines the integration of Ibn Khaldûn's administrative principles within contemporary governance, challenging Western-centric narratives in public administration. Utilizing qualitative analysis of governmental reports, historical texts, and policy documents from twenty countries, the study highlights the traces and adaptations of Khaldûnian thought in governance structures. Key findings reveal the diverse interpretations and applications of foundational concepts derived from Khaldûn's work, such as social cohesion ('asabiyyah) and the balance between justice and economic prosperity, within varying political and administrative frameworks. The research underscores how these historical principles continue to resonate in addressing modern governance challenges, including decentralization, stakeholder participation, and the ethical integration of religious and cultural values. By bridging historical insights with contemporary practices, the study contributes to diversifying public administration theories, advocating for culturally resonant governance approaches. The comparative exploration enriches the academic discourse on inclusive and effective governance, offering policymakers practical frameworks for integrating historical insight into modern administrative systems.

### Keywords

Ibn Khaldûn, Public Administration, Governance, Religion, Ethics

### 1 Introduction

This study examines how principles derived from Ibn Khaldûn's work have been adapted and integrated into contemporary governance practices across various Muslim-majority countries. While public administration scholarship has extensively documented Western administrative traditions, the distinct administrative methodologies developed within Islamic contexts, particularly those shaped by Khaldûnian thought, remain underrepresented in mainstream academic discourse. Thus, exploring administrative dynamics through the lens of Khaldûnian thought contributes to developing a more globally inclusive public administration theory.

The paper builds upon existing literature (Alatas, 2006a; Said, 1978; Khan, 2006) that has identified the predominance of Western perspectives in public administration studies while

acknowledging the growing body of work addressing the imbalance. This shift is not merely an academic endeavor but reflects a broader recognition of the diverse intellectual heritage that informs governance structures worldwide. As scholars and practitioners seek to create more effective and contextually relevant administrative practices, the integration of Khaldûnian concepts, such as the importance of ‘asabiyyah (social cohesion) in governance, economic principles, and the cyclical nature of state development and political power, becomes crucial in interpretation, adaptation, and application in contemporary contexts.

Such concepts provide valuable insights for addressing contemporary challenges, such as social fragmentation and economic inequality, and they ultimately enhance the adaptability and resilience of governance frameworks in diverse settings. Rather than assuming direct continuity between Ibn Khaldûn’s fourteenth-century theories and modern governance, the study examines how his key concepts, such as ‘asabiyyah (social cohesion), cyclical theories of state development, and economic principles, have been interpreted, adapted, and applied in contemporary contexts. This inquiry fosters a deeper understanding of how historical thought can still resonate within modern governance tactics, promoting a foundation for a rich dialogue between the past and the present.

## 2 Background and Context

The predominance of Western perspectives in the study of public administration reflects those broader historical and geopolitical influences that have shaped the mainstream academic discourse so far. Scholars such as Alatas (2006a & b), Said (1978), or Khan (2006) have documented the disregard of the non-Western, specifically Khaldûnian, contributions and philosophies. While Ibn Khaldûn’s influence on historical and sociological thought has been widely acknowledged (Baali, 1988; Hodgson, 1974), the specific ways his administrative theories have been incorporated into governance practices deserve closer examination.

The Khaldûnian legacy spans over 600 years, with varying degrees of recognition and application across different periods and regions. While focusing primarily on contemporary practices, drawing on the historical continuum contextualizes the current administrative approaches. Situating current practices within the broader historical context notes the distinctive nature of Khaldûnian administrative principles and their evolving applications.

Contemporary global politics, marked by increasingly multicultural societies and the rising prominence of diverse governance models in international affairs, necessitates a reassessment of traditional public administration narratives (An-Na’im, 2008). The study, therefore, examines the impact of principles derived from Khaldûnian thought across various historical and geographical contexts, drawing on works such as Al-Ghazali (2016), Al-Mawardi (n.d.), Auda (2008), Armstrong (2000), Asad (1961), Black (2011), Böwering (2013), Bouandel (2003), Bowen and Bosworth, (1995). Brown (2009), Bsoul (2008), Charfi et al. (2009), Hashmi (2002), Jordan (2006), Looney (1987), McQuaid (2007), Robinson (2017), Roy (2004), and Esposito and DeLong-Bas (2018) to establish a comprehensive analytical framework.

## 3 Research Gap and Significance

The study addresses a gap in comparative and development administration literature, namely the limited examination of how historical Islamic administrative thought, particularly Khaldûnian

concepts, has been reinterpreted and integrated into modern governance systems. While research on Islamic governance principles exists (Esposito, 2011; Hallaq, 2009), the specific relationship between Ibn Khaldûn's administrative theories and contemporary governance practices requires more systematic investigation. As such, this study attempts to map the diverse ways Khaldûnian principles have been adapted in different administrative contexts, and it also offers some concrete examples of how historical administrative thought can inform contemporary governance challenges. But most of all, this article endeavors to expand the theoretical foundations of public administration with a view to including more diverse cultural and historical perspectives.

The study is guided by two main research questions:

1. How have specific Khaldûnian concepts, particularly 'asabiyyah (social cohesion) and economic governance principles, been interpreted and adapted within the administrative practices of selected contemporary governance systems?
2. What patterns of variation exist in how these concepts are applied across different governance models, and what factors account for these differences?

#### **4 Scope and Methodology**

The study employs a focused qualitative approach to examine a purposefully selected sample of twenty Muslim-majority countries with diverse political systems, governance structures, and administrative approaches. The methodology centers on documentary analysis of three primary data sources. First, the historical texts and scholarly interpretations of Ibn Khaldûn's work, particularly the *Muqaddimah*, focusing on sections dealing with governance, administration, and state development (Khaldûn, 1958; Pišev, 2019). Second, those government documents from the selected countries, including policy papers, administrative guidelines, and constitutional frameworks that reflect governance approaches. And third, the secondary academic literature analyzing administrative practices in those countries, with particular attention to elements that parallel Khaldûnian concepts.

The documentary analysis followed a systematic approach, culminating in four steps. At first, I carried out an initial coding of sources to identify key Khaldûnian administrative concepts. Then, I have cross-referenced these concepts with contemporary administrative practices documented in governmental and academic sources. Third, I delved into a thematic analysis to identify patterns of adaptation and application. Finally, I made a comparative analysis across different governance models to identify variations and their potential causes.

While acknowledging the methodological challenges of establishing direct lines of influence across centuries of administrative development, this approach allows for a systematic examination of how historical principles have been reinterpreted and applied in contemporary contexts.

#### **5 Key Terms and Concepts**

To facilitate cross-cultural dialogue and ensure conceptual clarity, several key terms are to be defined.

By *Khaldûnian principles*, I refer to administrative, legal, and cultural concepts derived from the Muqaddimah and subsequent scholarly interpretations that have informed governance practices within various societies (Hodgson, 1974; Rahman, 1984). These include ‘asabiyyah (social cohesion) as a foundation for effective governance; cyclical theories of state development; economic principles emphasizing balanced taxation and prosperity; and meritocratic administrative structures.

*Administrative practices* encompass the policies, procedures, and organizational behaviors that characterize the operation and governance of public institutions (Olsen, 2007).

*Traditional narratives in public administration* designate theoretical and practical approaches to governance and policy-making that have been predominantly influenced by Western philosophical traditions (Frederickson, 1996).

*Traditional state as opposed to modern governance* acknowledges the evolving nature of governance systems. Traditional states typically feature centralized authority with strong cultural-religious foundations. At the same time, modern governance systems, such as those in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Türkiye, have developed hybrid approaches that integrate historical principles with contemporary democratic and bureaucratic structures (Hefner, 2011; Bernheimer & Rippin, 2005; Jordan, 2006).

Next to these definitions, the understanding of the intricate dynamics between religion and governance necessitates delving deeper into the classification of religious regimes. For this reason, *Table 1* is set to focus on the findings of the study conducted by Ongaro and Tantardini (2023a & b), which categorizes various countries based on their unique relationships with religious institutions, governance, and authorities. This classification of religious regimes is highly significant for several reasons. Firstly, it provides a framework for analyzing how different governmental structures interact with religious groups, influencing policy-making and social norms. By categorizing nations according to their religious governance, researchers identify patterns to indicate how religion shapes public life and law. Secondly, the taxonomy assists in understanding the implications of religious regimes on societal cohesion. Countries with stark divides between religion and state may experience different social dynamics compared to those where religious and political authorities are intertwined, affecting everything from civil liberties to economic development and social justice initiatives. Moreover, the categorization encourages further academic discourse on the evolution of religious influence in governance.

As global trends shift, nations may transition between classifications, reflecting broader changes in societal attitudes towards religion and authority and presenting opportunities for scholars to study the impacts of such transitions and their cascading effects on governance, society, and international relations. Through the exploration of *Table 1* and the subsequent analysis emerges a clearer picture of how these religious regime classifications not only reflect but also shape the realities of the modern world.

**Table 1. Muslim-majority countries by population and political systems**

|    | Country           | Muslim population in millions* | Percentage Muslim Population (%)* | Political System / Secular or Non-secular                                   | Religious Regimes                    | Additional Details  |
|----|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1  | <b>Algeria</b>    | 41.25                          | 99                                | Constitutional semi-presidential republic                                   | Caesarism                            | The constitution declares Islam the state religion and prohibits state institutions from behaving in a manner incompatible with Islam.  |
| 2  | <b>Azerbaijan</b> | 9.9                            | 99.2                              | Secular Republic  | Liberal Religious Regime             | The constitution guarantees freedom of religion and the country has a secular government.   |
| 3  | <b>Bangladesh</b> | 153.7                          | 90.4                              | Secular parliamentary democracy   | Caesarism                            | The constitution declares the country a secular state while affirming Islam as the state religion.                                      |
| 4  | <b>Egypt</b>      | 87.5                           | 92.35                             | Secular Republicanism, with a semi-presidential system of government.       | Caesarism                            | The government officially recognizes Sunni Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.  |
| 5  | <b>Indonesia</b>  | 273.8                          | 88                                | Secular Democracy   | Caesarism / Liberal Religious Regime | The Indonesian constitution guarantees all people in Indonesia the freedom of worship, each according to his or her religion or belief. |
| 6  | <b>Iran</b>       | 83                             | 99.4                              | Islamic Republic  | Theocracy                            | The political structure is a theocratic republic with a supreme leader who holds ultimate authority.                                    |
| 7  | <b>Iraq</b>       | 39.1                           | 99.0                              | Federal Parliamentary Republic  | Caesarism                            | Islam is the state religion, and the country has a complex political system with significant influence from religious groups.           |
| 8  | <b>Jordan</b>     | 10.2                           | 97.2                              | Constitutional, hereditary monarchy with a parliamentary form of government | Caesarism / Theocracy                | Islam is the official religion, and Jordan is declared part of the Arab ummah (“nation”).   |
| 9  | <b>Kuwait</b>     | 4.1                            | 91.7                              | Constitutional Emirate  | Caesarism                            | Kuwait is a constitutional monarchy with Islam as the state religion.   |
| 10 | <b>Kyrgyzstan</b> | 5.1                            | 90.0                              | Secular Republic  | Liberal Religious Regime             | The constitution ensures secular governance, with Islam being the dominant religion among the population.                               |

|    |                     |       |      |  |                          |   |
|----|---------------------|-------|------|--|--------------------------|---|
| 11 | <b>Mali</b>         | 19.1  | 95.1 | Secular Republic   | Liberal Religious Regime | Despite a secular constitution, Islam has a significant impact on the country's social fabric and politics.   |
| 12 | <b>Morocco</b>      | 37.93 | 99   | A parliamentary constitutional monarchy                    | Caesarism                | Islam is a state religion and nominally offers the freedom of religion.   |
| 13 | <b>Pakistan</b>     | 200.4 | 98.9 | Islamic Republic   | Caesarism/<br>Theocracy  | Pakistan is an Islamic republic, with Islam as the religion of the presidency. The Pakistani constitution rejects any amendment in conflict with the Quran and Sunnah.  |
| 14 | <b>Saudi Arabia</b> | 31.9  | 97.1 | Islamic Theocracy  | Theocracy                | Quran and the Sunnah constitute the country's Constitution. Islam is the official religion.   |
| 15 | <b>Senegal</b>      | 15.6  | 95.9 | Secular Republic   | Liberal Religious Regime | The constitution allows for a secular state and guarantees religious freedom, though Islam influences social and political life.  |
| 16 | <b>Tajikistan</b>   | 9.0   | 98.0 | Secular Republic   | Liberal Religious Regime | The government enforces secularism but has been criticized for restrictions on religious expression.  |
| 17 | <b>Tunisia</b>      | 11.2  | 99.8 | Secular, A parliamentary system                            | Caesarism                | Ennahda Movement, also known as Renaissance Party or simply Ennahda, is a moderate Islamist political party and the most extensive and well-organized party in Tunisia. |
| 18 | <b>Turkmenistan</b> | 5.7   | 93.3 | Secular Republic   | Liberal Religious Regime | While the state is officially secular, it controls religious institutions and practices to maintain political stability.  |
| 19 | <b>Türkiye</b>      | 79.8  | 97.8 | Secular, A constitutional republic and presidential system | Caesarism                | In recent years, political Islamists and Islamic democrats, such as the Welfare Party and Justice and Development Party (AKP) gained influence.                         |
| 20 | <b>Uzbekistan</b>   | 30.5  | 96.5 | Secular Republic   | Liberal Religious Regime | The state maintains secular governance, with recent reforms towards increasing religious freedom and reducing restrictions.   |

Source: Britannica <<https://www.britannica.com/>>;  
World Population Review 2024 <<https://tinyurl.com/yeyr6htj>>

Examining the intellectual foundations from which these principles emerged is imperative to establish the historical context for contemporary applications of Khaldûnian tenets. Tracing the development of Islamic governance concepts from the early Islamic period through to Ibn Khaldûn's seminal contributions demonstrates the rich intellectual tradition that informs current administrative practices.

### 5.1 Historical Foundations of Islamic Governance

The foundations of Islamic governance can be traced to the time of Prophet Muhammad and the first Islamic polity in Medina (622–632), establishing precedents for governance that would influence subsequent generations (Watt, 1956). The subsequent Rashidun Caliphate (632–661) further developed these principles, introducing administrative innovations such as the diwan system for managing state finances and military affairs (Al-Buraey, 1986; Lambton, 1981). During this formative period, several key Islamic concepts emerged that would shape future administrative practices. Such is the *suhra* (consultation), a principle emphasized in the Qur'an (42:38) and practiced by the Prophet and early Caliphs, which established a foundation for participatory decision-making (Esposito, 1983). *Adl* (justice), the concept of mandated fair treatment and equitable policies (Kamali, 2002), an idea central to Islamic governance. Or *amanah* (trustworthiness), derived from Qur'anic injunctions (4:58), a principle emphasizing the responsibility of those in positions of authority (Iqbal & Lewis, 2009).

The key Khaldûnian concepts influencing administrative practices include *'asabiyyah* (social cohesion), a concept, central to Ibn Khaldûn's theory of state formation which emphasized the importance of social bonds and group solidarity for effective governance (Khaldûn, 1958). *Cyclical theory of state*, a framework explaining the processes of state formation, maturation, and decline, helping to identify patterns in administrative development (Khaldûn, 1958). And *economic theory*, Ibn Khaldûn's observations on the relationship between economic prosperity and governance remaining particularly relevant for understanding contemporary administrative challenges (Khaldûn, 1958).

The Islamic Golden Age (approximately 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries) saw a remarkable intellectual flourishing that profoundly influenced governance and administrative thought. The translation movement during the Abbasid Caliphate facilitated the integration of Greco-Roman philosophical traditions with Islamic governance concepts, creating a sophisticated intellectual framework (Gutas, 1998). Key figures in the movement included Al-Farabi (870–950), whose work, *The Virtuous City*, presented a Neoplatonic vision of the ideal state guided by philosophical and prophetic wisdom (Mahdi, 2001); Ibn Sina (980–1037), whose *Book of Healing* has some influential sections on governance that emphasized the role of reason in administration (Goodman, 2006); and Al-Ghazali (1058–1111), whose *The Revival of Religious Sciences* significantly influenced Islamic political thought, emphasizing ethical dimensions of governance (Al-Ghazali, 2016; Ormsby, 2008). Also, in this period the intellectual environment of Al-Andalus (Muslim Iberia) made distinctive contributions to Islamic governance thinking. Scholars like Ibn al-Khatib (1313–1374) integrated philosophical traditions with practical governance concerns, often navigating complex political realities (Akhtar, 2015; Fernández-Puertas, 1997).

Ibn Khaldûn's (1332–1406) Muqaddimah represents a culmination of Islamic intellectual achievement in governance and social theory. Writing after centuries of Islamic political development, Ibn Khaldûn synthesized earlier traditions while developing innovative frameworks for understanding state formation, decline, and administrative practices. His concept of *'asabiyyah* (social cohesion) and cyclical theory of civilizational development offer valuable insights into governance and societal dynamics (Khaldûn, 1958).

Next, the Ottoman contribution to Islamic governance ought to be considered. The Ottoman Empire (1299–1922) represents a crucial chapter in developing Islamic governance practices as the Ottomans developed sophisticated administrative systems that balanced Islamic principles with the practical demands of managing a vast, multi-ethnic empire. Key aspects of Ottoman governance were as follows: the millet system, kanun, and the bureaucratic innovations. The millet system demonstrated a pragmatic application of Islamic principles of tolerance while maintaining administrative coherence (Braude & Lewis, 1982) in the course of managing religious diversity. Kanun, from the Greek *kanōn*, designated a secular body of laws alongside Sharia, which exemplified the Ottoman capacity to adapt governance to changing circumstances while maintaining religious legitimacy (Imber, 2002). Finally, by bureaucratic innovations I mean the Ottomans practice of refining earlier administrative systems, creating complex bureaucracies that effectively managed their extensive territories (Goffman, 2002; İnalçık, 2001).

This historical foundation provides essential context for understanding how Khaldûnian principles have been interpreted and adapted in contemporary governance systems (Irwin, 2018; Khaldûn, 2015; Lacoste, 1984; Lapidus, 1975; Wijaya et al., 2013; Zaidi, 1981). The following sections will examine how these historical concepts manifest in modern administrative practices across the selected countries.

## 5.2 Modern Revival and Reinterpretation

The colonial era and subsequent independence movements prompted a reexamination of Islamic governance principles, including Khaldûnian concepts, in response to modern challenges. Several intellectual movements emerged that sought to reconcile Islamic traditions with contemporary governance needs. Such was Islamic Modernism, enumerating figures like Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–1897) and Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905) who attempted to demonstrate the compatibility of Islam with modern science and governance systems (Hourani, 1983). Islamic Constitutionalism, prominent in countries like Iran and Pakistan which incorporated Islamic principles into modern constitutional frameworks, representing attempts to synthesize traditional and contemporary governance concepts (Arjomand, 2009). And Contemporary Islamic Political Thought, with scholars like Fazlur Rahman, Abdolkarim Soroush, and Tariq Ramadan who have offered new interpretations of Islamic political theory that address contemporary challenges (Kurzman, 1998; Sadri & Sadri, 2000; Ramadan, 2012).

As Bano (2020) observes, the resurgence of Islamic rationalism marks a significant development in contemporary Islamic thought, with important implications for governance and administration. The revival, characterized by a renewed focus on logic, metaphysics, and ethics, offers fresh insights into understanding modern Muslim societies and their approaches to governance. The reawakening of Islamic rationalism can be seen as a response to both the challenges posed by modernity and the pressing socio-political issues faced by Muslim-majority countries. Islamic rationalism, when reinterpreted in light of contemporary realities, offers a robust framework for addressing ethical dilemmas in governance, including issues such as justice, accountability, and public welfare (Tan, 2014).

Furthermore, the integration of rationality into Islamic thought has the potential to bridge traditional Islamic principles with contemporary concepts of democracy and human rights. This synergy is evident in various grassroots movements advocating for increased transparency and participatory governance, motivated by Islamic ethical teachings. Moreover, the revival of rationalism encourages dialogue between Islamic and secular philosophies, promoting a pluralistic understanding of governance. In this context, revisiting classical Islamic texts is important, as

they contribute a wealth of knowledge on governance, complementing modern political theories. Overall, the resurgence of Islamic rationalism enriches the intellectual landscape of contemporary Islamic thought as a framework for reconciling faith with reason, thereby contributing to more effective governance models in Muslim societies. The movement invites further scholarly inquiry into its implications for policy-making, legal reform, and civic engagement in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The historical overview demonstrates how Islamic governance principles, particularly those influenced by Ibn Khaldūn, have evolved through different periods. The following sections will examine how these principles manifest in contemporary administrative practices across the selected countries.

## 6 Theoretical Framework

The study employs a theoretical framework that facilitates a nuanced exploration of the intersections between historical Khaldūnian principles and contemporary administrative practices. The framework integrates three complementary perspectives, namely: a comparative administration and religion framework, institutionalism and cultural theory, and the nexus of power, legitimacy, and religious ethics.

The first component draws on the work of Smith (2004) and Rosenbloom et al. (2008) to examine how religious concepts inform governance practices across different cultural contexts, and it focuses specifically on how Islamic ethical and legal principles derived from Khaldūnian thought are integrated into governance structures. It also reviews the institutional manifestations of these principles in contemporary administrative contexts and variations in interpretation and application across different political systems.

The second aspect of the framework relies on institutionalist approaches (March & Olsen, 1989) to understand how religiously shaped institutions influence public administration. It incorporates cultural theory (Douglas, 1982) to examine how interpretations of religious and historical texts impact administrative systems, just to allow for examination of how institutions like Waqf (endowments) and Zakat (obligatory charity) systems shape contemporary administrative structures and practices.

While the third component examines the interplay between power, legitimacy, and religious actors within administrative contexts (Beetham, 1991; Svara, 2014). It addresses questions such as how the governance systems derive legitimacy from religious and historical principles and how the traditional concepts reinterpreted to address contemporary administrative challenges, Central to the theoretical framework is Ibn Khaldūn's Muqaddimah, which serves as a foundational text for understanding governance dynamics. The Muqaddimah offers pioneering insights into several areas relevant to contemporary administration. Such is the bureaucratic function and development, as Ibn Khaldūn critically examines the role of bureaucrats and their impact on state functionality, advocating for merit-based systems where officials' qualifications and moral integrity are paramount (Abdul Aziz, 2015, 4–7; Afsaruddin, 2011, 153–168; Kay, 2023). Social cohesion ('asabiyyah), a concept which is vital for understanding the legitimacy and efficiency of governance. Khaldūn argues that societies possessing strong social cohesion tend to develop effective administrative systems, while those lacking in 'asabiyyah are prone to institutional decay (Alatas, 2006). And the economic and political systems, since most of Ibn Khaldūn's insights into economic dynamics, particularly regarding taxation, labor productivity, and state expenditure prefigure modern economic theories and emphasize the balance between tax policies and citizen welfare, a principle highly relevant in contemporary governance models (Chapra, 2000).

The above theoretical framework acknowledges the spectrum of governance structures in Muslim-majority countries, from strictly secular to distinctly non-secular (Esposito, 2011; Hallaq, 2009), and it recognizes how principles such as Shura (consultation) can be adapted to support participatory decision-making in contemporary administrative contexts (Malik, 2016, 178–195). The aim is to facilitate investigation of how Khaldûnian principles influence administrative decisions and public policies, exploring how ethical teachings from Islamic sources inform modern administrative practices, e.g.: the Hadith, “The best among you are those who have the best manners and character” (al-Bukhari, n.d.), emphasizes the importance of integrity and ethical conduct in governance, a principle that resonates across many contemporary administrative contexts.

In examining the complexities of governance within Islamic contexts, it is essential to recognize the unique framework that guides decision-making and policy implementation. This approach emphasizes the importance of integrating ethical and religious principles, reflecting a commitment to stakeholder engagement and community involvement. The following discussion delves into the essential characteristics of effective governance, highlighting its multifaceted nature and the foundational values that underpin good governance practices.

Effective governance in Islamic contexts is understood as multifaceted, encompassing multi-level decision-making, stakeholder participation, and integration of religious principles and values in policy design and implementation. Good governance is characterized by outcomes that resonate with ethical imperatives derived from Khaldûnian principles, promoting trust, stability, prosperity, and preventing conflicts and corruption, leading to more prosperous and democratic societies (Alibašić, 2023 & 2024; Chafik & Drechsler, 2022; Dawisha, 2013; Khan, 2019; Post, 2006; Ranney & Kendall, 1951; Rose, 2014; Salamon & Elliott, 2002; Smith, 2007; Stoker, 1998; Subramaniam, 2001; Weiss, 2000)

## 7 Research Design and Data Analysis

The study employs a rigorous qualitative research design to examine the relationship between Khaldûnian governance principles and contemporary administration. This methodological approach aligns with what Bowen (2009), Brancati (2018), Bryman (2016), Creswell (2014) and Creswell and Poth (2018) describe as qualitative inquiry and research design, emphasizing systematic procedures for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data. The research follows a comparative case study design (Krippendorff, 2019; Yin, 2018), allowing for an in-depth examination of how historical principles manifest in different contemporary contexts.

### 7.1 Document Selection and Sampling

The study utilizes purposive sampling to select relevant documents from three categories:

- *Historical and theoretical texts*: Original sources on Khaldûnian thought, including the *Muqaddimah* (Khaldûn, 1958) and key interpretive works that form the conceptual foundation for analysis.
- *Government documents*: Policy papers, constitutional frameworks, and administrative guidelines from the 20 selected countries, providing empirical evidence of governance practices.
- *Academic analyses*: Scholarly publications examining administrative practices in the selected countries, offering interpretive perspectives and analytical insights.

The sampling strategy aligns with what Patton (2014) describes as “information-rich cases” that yield insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations. Selecting twenty specific countries with diverse governance systems provides sufficient comparative breadth while maintaining analytical depth, following Stake’s (2006) recommendations for multiple case study research. Document selection continued until reaching theoretical saturation (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Glaser & Strauss, 1967), when additional documents no longer provided substantively new insights.

## 7.2 Analytical Approach

The study employs a systematic analytical process combining several complementary methods:

- *Document coding and categorization*: Using an inductive approach to identify themes related to Khaldûnian principles in administrative contexts (Thomas, 2006), supplemented by NVivo software for organization and retrieval of coded segments, following Saldaña’s (2021) two-cycle coding process, with initial descriptive coding followed by pattern coding to identify higher-level themes.
- *Cross-tabulation and constant comparison*: Comparing the application of identified principles across different governance models to identify patterns of variation, following Miles et al.’s (2020) approach to qualitative data analysis through cross-case displays and matrices.
- *Thematic analysis*: Identifying recurring patterns and themes in how Khaldûnian principles are interpreted and applied (Lindenberg & Korsgaard, 2019), particularly convergent and divergent patterns across governance contexts, incorporating Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-phase framework for thematic analysis.
- *Visual representation*: Developing conceptual models to illustrate relationships between Islamic governance concepts and administrative practices (*Figure 1*), consistent with Maxwell’s (2013) recommendation to use visual displays to develop and communicate conceptual frameworks.

## 7.3 Analytical Framework Application

The theoretical framework was applied to interpret the findings, following Yin’s (2018) approach to pattern matching, which involves comparing empirically based patterns with predicted ones. The framework focused on how Khaldûnian principles are adapted to different political contexts and the institutional mechanisms through which these principles influence administrative practices. The research design incorporates a critical realist perspective (Fletcher, 2017), acknowledging the objective reality of administrative structures and the subjective interpretations of historical principles that inform their development. This approach is particularly suitable for examining how historical concepts are reinterpreted and applied in contemporary settings, recognizing that these applications reflect enduring principles and contextual adaptations. While the methodological approach ensures a comprehensive and rigorous examination of the relationship between Khaldûnian governance principles and contemporary administration. The combination of document analysis, thematic coding, and comparative analysis, grounded in established qualitative research methodologies, provides a solid foundation for identifying patterns in historical principles manifest in modern administrative contexts.

### 7.4 Validity and Reliability Strategies

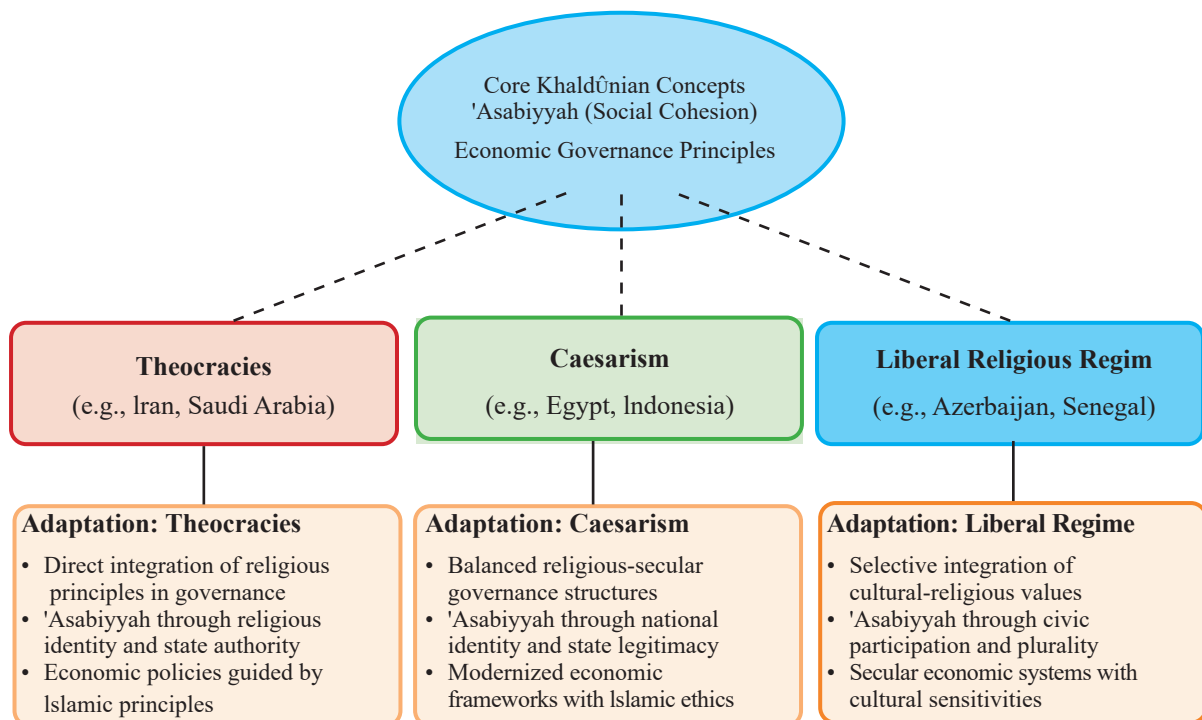
Following Creswell and Miller (2000), several strategies were employed to enhance the validity and trustworthiness of the findings:

- *Triangulation*: Using multiple data sources and analytical approaches to corroborate findings and overcome the limitations of any single approach (Denzin, 1978). The study triangulates data from historical texts, government documents, and scholarly analyses to comprehensively understand how Khaldûnian principles manifest in contemporary contexts.
- *Thick description*: Providing detailed contextual information and evidence for interpretations, allowing readers to evaluate the transferability of findings to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) when analyzing concepts across diverse cultural and political settings.
- *Researcher reflexivity*: Acknowledging the researcher’s positionality and potential biases in interpreting historical Islamic principles in contemporary contexts (Finlay, 2002), involving critical self-reflection throughout the research process, particularly in how Western administrative concepts might influence the interpretation of Islamic governance principles.

### 8 Results and Discussion

The analysis delineates a sophisticated integration of Khaldûnian principles across the selected countries, revealing a spectrum of explicit recognition and adaptation. While few governance frameworks explicitly reference the works of Ibn Khaldûn, many exhibit administrative practices that resonate with the foundational tenets of his scholarship, particularly concerning social cohesion, economic governance, and institutional evolution. These findings are elucidated on *Figure 1* below.

**Figure 1. Islamic Governance and Public Administration: An Intricate Relationship  
Khaldûnian Concepts in Contemporary Governance Systems**



Source: Author’s edit.

The intricate relationship between Islamic governance principles and contemporary public administration is rather apparent, which de concepts on present-day practices. The conceptual model encapsulates five pivotal dimensions monstates the enduring influence of historical that illuminate the intersection between Islamic governance philosophies and public sector administration:

1. *Foundational Principles*: At the core of this framework are ethical concepts that underpin administrative conduct, including principles of consultation (Shura), justice, the welfare of the populace, charitable obligations (Zakat), and systemic accountability.
2. *Historical Legacy*: The intellectual contributions of medieval Islamic scholars, with a particular emphasis on Ibn Khaldûn’s insights into governance, social cohesion, and economic theory, provide a rich and substantive historical backdrop for contemporary governance discussions.
3. *Administrative Influence*: These principles profoundly shape various facets of public administration, informing ethical frameworks, economic policies, and institutional architectures.
4. *Contemporary Implementation*: Modern governance mechanisms endeavor to adapt these historical principles to confront contemporary societal challenges, incorporating them through diverse avenues, from constitutional frameworks to policy design and implementation.
5. *Challenges and Opportunities*: The synthesis of historical principles with modern governance engenders significant challenges and avenues for innovative administrative methodologies, as noted in Schmidtke’s (2016) research. The framework visually represented in this diagram articulates the central tenets of the research, shedding light on how specific Khaldûnian concepts inform and are interpreted within various governance models prevalent in Muslim-majority countries. Furthermore, it provides a nuanced exploration of the adaptive pathways through which these concepts have been manifested in diverse governance contexts, illustrating patterns of variation across distinct governance frameworks.

At the central component of the figure, there lies an ellipse encapsulating the core Khaldûnian principles central to this inquiry. One notable concept, ‘asabiyyah or social cohesion is a cornerstone for effective governance and economic strategy, interlinking theories of balanced taxation, economic vitality, and state development. At the middle tier, there are different governance models being categorized according to Ongaro and Tantardini’s classification of three distinct frameworks, namely: theocracies (left), Caesarism (center), and liberal religious regimes (right). The first governance system is characterized by a framework of religious institutions and principles directly steered by state authority (e.g., Iran, Saudi Arabia). Caesarism is a hybrid system that embraces a balanced interplay between religious influence and secular governance (e.g., Egypt, Indonesia). Whereas liberal religious regimes are predominantly secular frameworks in which religion informs cultural identity while exerting limited direct influence on governance (e.g., Azerbaijan, Senegal).

And at the bottom tier, there are the adaptation patterns which illustrate how each governance model interprets and assimilates Khaldûnian concepts. Caesarism manifests ‘asabiyyah through national identity and state legitimacy, alongside modernized economic frameworks that integrate Islamic ethical considerations. While liberal religious regimes foster ‘asabiyyah through civic engagement and pluralism, while secular economic systems navigate cultural sensitivities.

The framework not only elucidates how Khaldûnian principles have been assimilated across different governance paradigms but also sets the stage for an in-depth comparative analysis that follows, further contextualizing the relevance and applicability of these historical concepts in shaping contemporary governance practices.

### 8.1 Comparative Analysis of Governance Models

The comparative analysis reveals distinct patterns in how Khaldûnian principles manifest across different governance systems. Table 2 presents a systematic comparison of administrative approaches and Islamic governance influences across the sampled countries.

#### Comparative Analysis of Governance Models

**Table 2. Comparative efficiency cross-tabulation of Muslim majority-Sources World Bank. (2023)**

| Country    | Administration Approach  | Islamic Governance Influence   |
|------------|--|--|
| Algeria    | Constitutional semi-presidential republic with Caesarism; centralized power with substantial presidential influence (World Bank, 2019 & 2023). | Constitution declares Islam as the state religion; state institutions must adhere to Islamic principles. |
| Azerbaijan | Secular republic with liberal religious regime; prioritizes secular governance and national development.                                       | Constitution guarantees freedom of religion; secular government with religious plurality.                |
| Bangladesh | Secular parliamentary democracy with Caesarism; strives for secular governance while recognizing Islam as state religion.                      | Constitution affirms Islam as state religion but maintains a secular framework.                          |
| Egypt      | Secular republicanism with a semi-presidential system and Caesarism; central control over religious institutions.                              | Government recognizes Sunni Islam, Christianity, and Judaism officially.                                 |
| Indonesia  | Secular democracy with a blend of Caesarism and liberal religious regime; emphasizes decentralization.   | Constitution guarantees freedom of worship; administrative reforms for participatory governance.         |
| Iran       | Theocratic republic; religious leadership holds supreme authority in governance and administration.  | Islamic jurisprudence directly informs governance and policy-making.                                     |
| Iraq       | Federal parliamentary republic with Caesarism; complex political system with significant religious group influence.                            | Islam is the state religion with a political system influenced by various religious factions.            |
| Jordan     | Constitutional hereditary monarchy with a parliamentary form of government; a mix of Caesarism and theocracy.                                  | Islam is the official religion; monarchy maintains balance between religious and state affairs.          |
| Kuwait     | Constitutional Emirate with Caesarism; a blend of traditional monarchy and parliamentary elements.   | Islam as the state religion with constitutional provisions for religious freedom.                        |
| Kyrgyzstan | Secular Republic with liberal religious regime; emphasis on secular governance with Islam being the dominant religion.                         | Constitution ensures secular governance; Islam influences cultural and social aspects.                   |

|              |  |   |
|--------------|--|---|
| Mali         | Secular Republic with liberal religious regime; Islam significantly impacts the country’s social fabric and politics.          | Constitution is secular, but Islamic practices and beliefs deeply influence societal norms.                         |
| Morocco      | Parliamentary constitutional monarchy with Caesarism; Islam is the state religion with provisions for religious freedom.       | Monarchy holds both religious and political authority; Islamic principles guide governance.                         |
| Pakistan     | Islamic Republic with elements of Caesarism and theocracy; Islam as the religion of the presidency.                            | Constitution integrates Islamic principles with governance; Sharia law influences legal and administrative systems. |
| Saudi Arabia | Islamic Theocracy; Quran and Sunnah as the constitution; Islam is the official religion.                                       | Governance is entirely based on Islamic law and principles; the monarchy upholds religious authority.               |
| Senegal      | Secular Republic with liberal religious regime; the constitution allows for a secular state with religious freedom.            | Islam influences social and political life, but the state remains officially secular.                               |
| Tajikistan   | Secular Republic with liberal religious regime; government enforces secularism with some restrictions on religious expression. | Constitution is secular; however, Islamic traditions influence cultural practices.                                  |
| Tunisia      | Secular parliamentary system with Caesarism; moderate Islamist political parties are momentous.                                | Ennahda Movement indicates an integration of Islamic principles in a secular political framework.                   |
| Turkmenistan | Secular Republic with liberal religious regime; state control of religious institutions to maintain political stability.       | Officially secular, but Islam plays a role in cultural and social norms.  |
| Türkiye      | Secular constitutional republic with Caesarism; recent influence of political Islamists and Islamic democrats.                 | Constitution is secular; however, political parties with Islamic ideologies have gained influence.                  |
| Uzbekistan   | Secular Republic with liberal religious regime; recent reforms aim to increase religious freedom and reduce restrictions.      | The state maintains secular governance, with Islam influencing cultural identity.                                   |

Source: Author’s edit.

The analysis reveals several patterns in how Khaldûnian principles manifest across different administrative contexts:

*Administrative Efficiency and Reform*

Several countries (Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, and Uzbekistan) have implemented administrative reforms that reflect Ibn Khaldûn’s emphasis on the necessity of a competent bureaucracy for state stability. For example, there are Indonesia’s decentralization reforms reflecting Khaldûn’s principles of balanced governance, with power distributed across different levels while maintaining central cohesion (Negara & Hutchinson, 2021). Or there are Uzbekistan’s transparency initiatives aligning with Khaldûnian concepts of administrative accountability and meritocracy (World Bank, 2023).

*Social Cohesion and National Identity*

The Khaldûnian concept of ‘asabiyyah (social cohesion) is evident in the state-building efforts of countries like Algeria, Iran, Jordan, Morocco, and Türkiye. These nations have developed administrative approaches that foster national unity while accommodating diversity. For instance, there is Morocco’s governance model balancing traditional monarchy with modern administrative structures, reinforcing social cohesion through both religious and national

identity (United Nations, 2020; World Bank, 2023). And there is Jordan's administrative approach emphasizing tribal and religious connections as foundations for national unity, reflecting Khaldûn's insights about the role of social bonds in governance (Ryan, 2018).

### *Economic Governance and Development*

Ibn Khaldûn's economic theories, particularly regarding balanced taxation and economic development, are reflected in the policies of countries like Azerbaijan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 initiative incorporates principles of economic diversification that resonate with Khaldûn's warnings against economic monocultures (Saudi Arabia, 2024). While Kuwait's economic reforms reflect a Khaldûnian approach to balancing state revenues with citizen welfare (United Nations, 2020; World Bank, 2023)

### *Institutional Adaptation and Hybrid Governance*

Many countries have developed hybrid governance models that integrate Khaldûnian principles with modern administrative structures. Such is Bangladesh, maintaining a secular administrative framework while acknowledging Islam's role in national identity, creating institutional arrangements that balance religious and secular governance principles (Government of Bangladesh, 2020). And there is Tunisia's post-revolution governance model, as well, incorporating Islamic principles within a broadly secular administrative framework, demonstrating the adaptive potential of Khaldûnian concepts in contemporary contexts.

## **8.2 Country-Specific Insights**

The analysis reveals notable variations in how specific countries interpret and apply Khaldûnian principles.

*Algeria* operates under a constitutional semi-presidential republic characterized by centralized authority with Islamic principles embedded in its constitutional framework. The governance model reflects a complex balance between religious adherence and state authority, resonating with Khaldûn's emphasis on legitimate authority tempered by ethical constraints (Government of Algeria, 2016; Nyadera & Agwanda, 2019).

*Azerbaijan* presents a case where the constitution guarantees religious freedom within a secular governance framework. Despite its predominantly Muslim population, Azerbaijan's public administration prioritizes national development and economic modernization, focusing on efficiency principles that align with Khaldûnian economic theories while maintaining separation between religious institutions and state administration (Hampel-Milagrosa et al., 2020).

*Bangladesh* functions as a secular parliamentary democracy, with Islam as the state religion, navigating the balance between secular governance and religious influence within a framework that strives for religious harmony (Riaz, 2004). The public administration system has undergone numerous reforms to strengthen governance, combat corruption, and improve service delivery. Despite affirming Islam as the state religion, the government strives to maintain a secular legal and administrative framework, promoting religious harmony among its diverse population (Government of Bangladesh, 2020; Suk Kim & Monem, 2009).

*Egypt's* public administration operates under a secular republicanism framework with a semi-presidential system catering to a majority Muslim population. The government officially recognizes Sunni Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, which reflects a Caesarism approach where the state maintains control over religious institutions. Public administration in Egypt has faced

challenges related to bureaucracy, responsiveness, and governance, with ongoing reforms aimed at decentralization and improving public service delivery (Korany, 2011).

*Indonesia's* public administration demonstrates several key Khaldûnian principles, particularly in balancing central authority with local autonomy. The country's administrative reforms have focused on decentralization while maintaining national cohesion, reflecting the Khaldûnian emphasis on balanced governance structures. These reforms have strengthened democracy and public service delivery while preserving Indonesia's distinctive approach to religious pluralism within governance frameworks (Negara & Hutchinson, 2021).

*Iran* has a theocratic governance model, with a supreme leader overseeing a government integrating Islamic jurisprudence directly into its policies and administration (Arjomand, 2009). Various religious and ethnic groups influence Iraq's federal military republic, but Islam is the state religion, creating a complex administrative landscape that strives for cohesion among its diverse population (Dawisha, 2013).

*Jordan's* constitutional monarchy incorporates a blend of Caesarism and theocracy, balancing traditional royal authority with parliamentary governance and Islamic influence (Ryan, 2018).

### 8.3 Patterns of Khaldûnian Influence

The analysis reveals that Khaldûnian principles manifest in contemporary governance across several domains, such as:

- *Administrative Efficiency and Reform:* Countries implementing bureaucratic transparency and service delivery reforms that reflect Khaldûn's emphasis on administrative competence.
- *Decentralization and Local Governance:* Nations pursuing policies that balance central authority with local administration, aligning with Khaldûn's insights about effective governance structures.
- *Economic Policy and Diversification:* Governance approaches that reflect Khaldûn's economic theories, particularly regarding diversification and balanced taxation.
- *State Building and Social Cohesion:* Administrative strategies emphasizing national unity and shared identity, reflecting the Khaldûnian concept of 'asabiyyah as foundational for effective governance.

The patterns demonstrate how Khaldûnian principles resonate in contemporary governance contexts, though often in adapted forms that address modern administrative challenges.

Building upon the foundational themes previously discussed, the analysis reveals that Khaldûnian principles manifest in a variety of contexts, highlighting their relevance and applicability in understanding societal and governmental dynamics. Furthermore, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Türkiye, and Uzbekistan each present unique governance models. These range from secular republics with liberal religious regimes to theocracies with strong Islamic legal influences. These countries incorporate Islamic principles to varying degrees within their administrative frameworks, reflecting the diversity of governance approaches in the Islamic world.

### 8.4 Challenges and Opportunities

The study identifies several challenges and opportunities in the ongoing integration of Khaldûnian principles with contemporary governance needs. These are as follows:

- *Balancing Tradition with Modernization*: The tension between historical principles and modern governance requirements necessitates creative adaptations that preserve core values while embracing innovation.
- *Enhancing Institutional Capacity*: Applying Khaldûnian concepts effectively requires robust institutional frameworks that translate principles into practical administrative mechanisms.
- *Navigating Secularism and Religious Influence*: Countries across the spectrum from secular to non-secular systems face the challenge of determining appropriate relationships between religious principles and administrative structures.
- *Leveraging Historical Wisdom for Contemporary Challenges*: The opportunity to draw on Khaldûnian insights to address modern governance challenges like social fragmentation, economic inequality, and institutional dysfunction.

These challenges and opportunities highlight the dynamic relationship between historical principles and contemporary governance practices.

## 9 Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has elucidated the enduring influence of Khaldûnian principles on administrative practices throughout the Muslim world, manifesting in diverse and often implicit ways. These findings challenge simplistic interpretations of Islamic governance models by revealing the intricate and context-specific interactions between historical principles and contemporary administrative demands.

Several insights emerge from the analysis:

- *Diverse Integration of Khaldûnian Principles*: Rather than a monolithic “Islamic governance model,” we observe a spectrum of approaches to incorporating historical principles into modern administrative frameworks.
- *Adaptive Reinterpretation*: Many regions are actively reinterpreting Khaldûnian governance principles to address contemporary challenges, demonstrating the continued relevance of the historical tradition.
- *Hybrid Institutional Forms*: The interaction between Khaldûnian traditions and modern administrative requirements has produced innovative institutional arrangements that balance historical principles with contemporary needs.
- *Ongoing Evolution*: The influence of Khaldûnian principles on administrative practices represents a dynamic and evolving process rather than a static historical inheritance.

A significant insight derived from this analysis is the recognition of a multifaceted integration of Khaldûnian principles. Rather than conforming to a singular “Islamic governance model”, the findings illustrate a spectrum of approaches that regions employ to incorporate historical principles into modern administrative frameworks. The diversity underscores the adaptive reinterpretation of Khaldûnian governance principles, which are actively being reexamined to address contemporary challenges. Such adaptability demonstrates the ongoing relevance of this historical tradition in shaping present-day governance practices. Moreover, the interaction of Khaldûnian traditions with modern administrative requirements has engendered innovative hybrid institutional forms, reflecting a delicate balance between historical principles and contemporary needs, which highlights the dynamic nature of this influence. Consequently, the

impact of Khaldûnian principles is characterized not as a static inheritance but as an evolving process that responds to the shifting governance landscape.

These findings have substantial implications for public administration theory and practice as well. The diversity in interpretations of Khaldûnian principles across distinct regions emphasizes the necessity for culturally contextualized approaches within public administration discourse, and scholars and practitioners alike must acknowledge the historical dimensions of governance, as the significant role of past principles in contemporary administrative practices necessitates a more explicit consideration of these dimensions within prevailing public administration theories. This coexistence of traditional institutions alongside modern administrative structures further indicates the imperative for theories that accommodate institutional pluralism and hybrid governance forms. And in light of these observations, recommendations for future research and practice emerge. Thus, more in-depth case studies are needed to examine the implementation of specific Khaldûnian principles in localized administrative contexts, and comparative evaluations of different approaches to integrating these principles with modern requirements could yield valuable insights for governance reform.

Furthermore, I believe, public administration education programs should incorporate curricula focused on historical and cultural influences on governance, equipping practitioners with a nuanced understanding of various administrative traditions. And policymakers would benefit from developing frameworks that explicitly integrate relevant Khaldûnian principles with contemporary governance requirements, providing clear administrative practice guidance.

Overall, this study underscores that integrating Khaldûnian traditions into contemporary public administration is a complex and often contested phenomenon, entailing intricate negotiations among historical ideals, practical governance needs, and global administrative norms. By illuminating these dynamics, the research contributes to a more inclusive understanding of public administration, acknowledging the diversity of governance traditions and recognizing the potential of non-Western approaches to inform global administrative practice. As nations grapple with the complexities of modern governance, the insights from this study serve as a foundation for informed policymaking and administrative reform. Moreover, by emphasizing the diversity and adaptability of Khaldûnian governance traditions, this research challenges reductionist narratives regarding historical influences on governance and enriches global discussions surrounding culture and public administration.

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