NURTURING GOOD GOVERNANCE: THE CONFLUENCE OF PATRON-NETWORK, INSTITUTIONAL DYNAMICS, AND TASSAWUF IN A MANNERS OF EXERCISING POLITICAL POWER

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Abstract*: The principle of good governance is linked to the value, norms, and culture of society. As articulated by Ghazali, the contemporary societal malaise finds its roots in the government's descent into corruption, therefore the roles of political leadership significant to form a utopian society. The booming of morality issue relates to the behavior of patrons questions their position whether they work for society or work for their 'pocket', therefore this paper explains, criticized, and advise the political leadership in exercising their power in a manner of mobilizing the state resources.*

Keywords*: Politics, Power, Patronage, Tassawuf*
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The Nature Patron-Network

The policy decision made today is critically embedded with the patron-network as far as it driven by the policy change regarded to the historical (Agyepong and Adjei 2008; Smith 2014; Walt and Gilson 2014; Jessica et al., 2016). The criticism, argument and debate of the patron-network pointed out by the analysts as they were urge the institutions becomes wild and extractive[1]. Subsequently, it led to the state stagnation. Patron network commonly refers to social or political construct characterized by personalized relationships and reciprocal exchanges of favors or resources within a hierarchical structure (Teehankee, 2019;2022; Anastacio, 2023). In this network, individuals in positions of authority, known as patrons, cultivate connections with others, typically referred to as clients, based on trust, loyalty, and mutual benefits. These relationships operate informally, often outside established institutional frameworks, relying on informal agreements rather than formal structures. The patron, positioned at the top of the hierarchy, provides support, protection, or benefits to their clients, who, in turn, offer loyalty and various forms of support to the patron. Decision-making within patron networks may be influenced by personal connections rather than objective criteria, impacting resource allocation, distribution of benefits, and access to opportunities.

The existence and strength of patron networks may also contribute to extortion and favoritism, influencing power dynamics within a given context. As patron networks leverage the allocation of resources through a range of practices that prioritize personal connections and loyalty, it often questions fairness and merit-based distribution. This exploitation is evident in the prevalence of favoritism, where members within the patron network receive preferential treatment in the distribution of resources, such as government contracts, job opportunities, or funding, irrespective of their qualifications. Additionally, nepotism, and cronyism, a common feature of patronage networks, leads to biased resource allocation, as family members or close associates receive benefits based on their personal connections rather than their capabilities. Corruption permeates these networks, with members engaging in bribery, embezzlement, and other illicit activities to secure resources for themselves or the network.

The strategic placement of loyal individuals within key institutional positions allows for the capture of these institutions, enabling network members to influence decisions and direct resources toward their preferred beneficiaries. Furthermore, the manipulation of policies by patrons ensures that resource allocation aligns with the network's goals rather than serving the broader public interest. This informal and often opaque decision-making process within patron networks raises concerns about transparency, fairness, and accountability in the allocation of vital resources, perpetuating an environment where personal connections supersede the principles of meritocracy and equitable distribution.

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[1] (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2001; Alam & Sujarwoto, 2017; Anastacio & Morandarte, 2023; Bearfield, 2009; Brown et al., 2020; Desai, n.d.; Godfrey & Yu, 2014; Orlando & Suffian, 2023; Wilson, 1961)

Institutions, Patrimonialism, and the Trap of Neopatrimonialism,
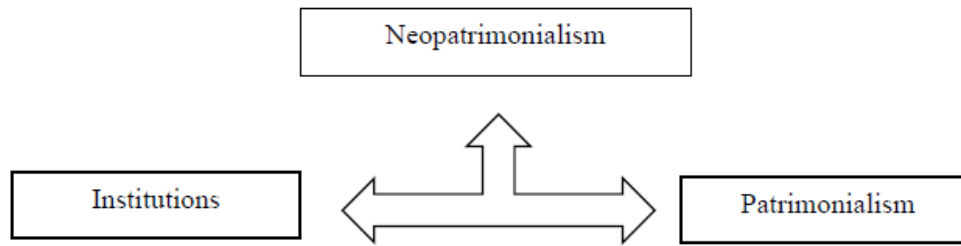
Figure 1 Trap of Patrimonialism

Framework suggested the practices of neopatrimonialism left the state in the extractive and fell into the trap of 'patrimonialism'. This phenomenon is identified as *'reversal of fortune'* or *'proses berbalik'* in which neopatrimonialism, extractive institutions, and patrimonialism are interconnected, and collectively represent deviations from ideal governance structures. Neopatrimonialism serves as a departure from modern governance by introducing informal networks and personalized practices, reversing the principles of transparency and accountability.

From the institutionalism perspective, it goes beyond a focus on formal rules such as policies, constitutions, and laws; it also encompasses broader informal institutional constraints like norms, values, and embedded conventions (Lowndes, 2010 cited Suffian, 2019). To make it clear, Institutions, conceptualized as metarules, encompass the foundational norms, conventions, values, and regulations that govern economic actors within a specific institutional framework (Hollingworth, n.d; Peter, 2005; Peterson, 2013; Hall & Taylor, 1996; Lowndes, 2010). Various neo-institutional approaches, as highlighted by scholars, underscore the profound significance of institutions in shaping social, economic, and political outcomes (Peter, 2005; Hall, 2010; Lowndes, 2010; Hall & Taylor, 1996; Suffian, 2018). In their influential work, Hall & Taylor (1996) categorize three paradigms of new institutionalism: historical institutionalism, sociological institutionalism, and rational choice institutionalism, all recognizing the central role played by institutions. Despite institutions shapes the behaviour of powerful group due to the constraints, these three paradigms undermine the institutions and becoming wild, extractive and harm the institutions.

While the inclusive institutions, promote broad participation and equitable distribution of resources, may undergo transformation due to various mechanisms. The crucial part captures the institutions by a powerful elite seeking to consolidate control and channel resources in their favor. Corruption further accelerates this transition, diverting resources away from public goods and services. Following on the political centralization, where power becomes concentrated in a few hands, may contribute to the extractive nature of institutions. subsequently, further exacerbate this deviation by concentrating power and resources in the hands of a few, limiting economic opportunities for the majority and reversing the inclusive governance process. As an implication, the extractive institutions fell into the trap of 'patrimonialism'.

The nature of extractive institutions and patrimonialism share a deep-rooted connection characterized by the concentration of power, resources, and privileges within a select elite.

Patrimonialism, a system where political power is wielded for the benefit of a leader and their close associates, aligns with the principles of extractive institutions, which prioritize the interests of a narrow group over the broader population as synonym to the process distribution of resources which gave rise to the patron-client networks based on a powerful individual or party to the weakness client (Scott, 1972; Scott & Kerkevliet, 1975; Bratton, 1994; Bratton & Walle, 1994; Berman, 1998; Cornwell, 2005; deGrassi, 2008; Francisco, 2010; Von Soest, 2021; Orlando & Suffian, 2023; Orlando, 2023). The parallel lies in the lack of accountability inherent in both systems, where elites can exploit resources without facing consequences or scrutiny. Weaknesses in the rule of law further contribute to this alignment, allowing for the personalization of power and decision-making processes. Extractive institutions, designed to capture and concentrate resources, echo the resource concentration seen in patrimonial systems, fostering economic disparities, and limiting opportunities for the majority. The connection between extractive institutions and patrimonialism underscores the need for comprehensive reforms that address issues of accountability, rule of law, and inclusive governance to mitigate the adverse effects of such systems on society at large.

Patrimonialism links these deviations by embodying a governance system where the state is treated as personal property, power is concentrated within select groups, and clientelism prevails, contributing to corruption and weakening accountability mechanisms. Together, these concepts create a web of deviations from transparent, inclusive, and accountable governance, fostering environments where resources and opportunities are channelled to benefit a privileged few, perpetuating social inequalities, and hindering broader societal development.

State Play and Possible Reforms
The interconnection between patron networks, state play, and potential reforms is integral to understanding the dynamics that shape governance within a state. Patron networks, often intertwined with government entities, wield significant influence over policy decisions, resource allocation, and key appointments. This symbiotic relationship can lead to compromised governance marked by corruption, biased decision-making, and a deviation from meritocratic principles. To address these challenges, reforms have become imperative. Initiatives promoting transparency, such as disclosing critical decisions and enforcing anti-corruption measures, disrupt the nexus between state play and patronage. Merit-based recruitment, institutional changes to reduce power concentration, and the active engagement of civil society serve as crucial pillars for reform. By fostering a legal framework that upholds ethics and transparent governance, states can sever the link between patron networks and the decision-making processes influenced by personal connections. In essence, reforms are essential to cultivate a governance system that prioritizes fairness, accountability, and effective public service, mitigating the adverse impact of patronage on the state.

From the perspective of Ghazali, implementing possible reforms involves integrating Islamic ethical principles and moral values into the fabric of governance. Ghazali, a distinguished Islamic philosopher, emphasized the significance of justice, accountability, and the welfare of society in his teachings. Reforms guided by Ghazali's perspectives could be initiated by fostering ethical leadership within the government, placing a strong emphasis on justice, honesty, and accountability. Merit-based systems should be established, incorporating Islamic values of fairness and justice into decision-making processes to align with Ghazali's emphasis on meritocracy. Additionally, reforms could draw inspiration from Islamic governance

principles such as Shura (consultation) and Ihsan (excellence) to ensure that public policies are guided by ethical standards for the greater good. Robust anti-corruption measures grounded in Islamic teachings should be implemented, acknowledging Ghazali's stance on the detrimental effects of corruption on society and governance. Transparency measures reflecting Islamic values and accountability mechanisms should be incorporated, mirroring Ghazali's teachings on the importance of accountability.

Reforms might also address socio-economic disparities through Islamic-inspired initiatives, emphasizing Ghazali's advocacy for caring for the welfare of all members of society. Educational reforms could integrate Islamic values, promoting critical thinking and ethical behavior, in line with Ghazali's emphasis on knowledge and education. Involving the community in decision-making processes and humanitarian initiatives that reflect Ghazali's emphasis on compassion can be key components of reform. Ultimately, reforms from the perspective of Ghazali seek to holistically integrate Islamic ethical principles into governance, fostering justice, accountability, and the well-being of society.

From Institutional Dynamics to Tassawuf

Informality becomes a form of culture and tradition as it is shaped by the behaviour of individual due to the constraints (Helmke & Levitsky, 2004; North, 1991 cited in Suffian 2019). The concept of informal institutions classified into two, the inclusive (good) and extraction (wild) as the ruling elite a human being and they were considered have a good and bad however, several scholars and analysts use these terms to justify the behaviour of the human despite the studies related to the human behaviour booming in the academic world however, most of the studies scant in justifies the behaviour of the human determines by the heart and lust not by their action or behaviour[2]. The theologist Ghazali explains the intention of the heart determines the behaviour and action of an individual. To put it simply, the pure heart (tasawwufán) will tend to be good for humankind (Ahmad, 2007).

Nasr and Smith quoted, "Islam is not only a religion; it is also the creator and living spirit of major world civilization with a long history stretching over fourteen centuries". Contemporary orientalist Bernard Lewis stated that "Islam, the offspring of Arabia and the Arabian Prophet, was not only a system of beliefs and a cult. It was also a system of state, society, law, thought and art as well as a civilization with religion as its unifying element and eventually, a dominating factor". This means that Islam and civilization are inseparable. Since coming into existence, Islam has introduced a concept and a mission pertaining to civilization because the system introduced by Islam patronizes the happiness of the individual and society. It would not be something strange if Islamic civilization cannot be isolated from its spiritual component, which is Islam[3].

Concept of tassawufán found as dimension from Islamic thought from the term of 'ihsan' i.e., doing good to another person without expecting anything in return. In other words, it meant for the loving god (Al Qasas; Ayah 28;7; Ghazali, n.d; Ahmad, 2007). In hadith, the Prophet Muhammad SAW described the word *ihsan* to denote the performance of an action in the best

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[2] Ihya Ulumiddin. Imam Al Ghazali, Jilid 4.

[3] Nazim, Y., Mohamad, M. Z., Omar, S. H. S., Wan, W. I., Abdullah, E. I. E. W. Z., Yusof, S., ... & Kasim, F. M. (2018). The Role of Tasawwuf Ulama in the Governance of Aceh. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 8(10).

possible manners, doing something with attention, putting one's heart into it, taking care of small details. When the heart genuinely understands and freely accepts that which tongue has uttered and this understanding and utterance continuous to be completed by righteous deeds which corresponding improve sincerity and elegance and then that the individual is said to be iman (Sahih Bukhari; Ahmad, 2007). Ghazali explains that to purify the heart, one must throw away heart illnesses including egoism, greedy, wastage. In his book *Ihya Ulummiddin*, Ghazali's emphasized the roles of leadership (Caliph) obligate to practices the rubbu' ibadah, occupation, behaviour (not to harm others).

In his book Ihya 'Ulūmuddīn, it is interesting to see Al-Ghazali's approach to the concept of human health in a hierarchical and integrative concept (Imam Abu Haamid Al-Ghazali, 2005). Al-Ghazāli explained the integration of the mind ('Aql) and its influence on human behavior (al-akhlāk). Common sense will have a significant influence on healthy behavior. With a Sufistic approach, Ghāzali explains that the mind who thinks negatively will have a bad influence on life. Here, Al-Ghazali termed the mind as 'al-Nāsih al-Masyīr', an advisor and general who regulates human behavior. 'Aql is not alone because he is related to the heart (qalb) who acts as al-Malik, 'the king who leads all state administration and soldiers for the welfare of his people (Imam Abu Haamid Al-Ghazali, 2005).

Practically, 'Qalb' also has two armies, al-Azkar al-Dzāhir (external organs) and al-Askar al-bāthin (internal organs). The zahir is lust and ghadab, located in the two hands of humans, the two feet, the two eyes, the two ears, and all the limbs. While the inner one lies in quwā al-khayal (imaginative faculty), al-tafakkur (contemplative faculty), al-hifz (memory faculty), al-tadzakkur (remembering faculty), and al-wahm (delutional faculty) (Imam Abu Haamid Al-Ghazali, 2005). If all these warriors are unbalanced, weak, disorganized, and lose religious values, then the human condition will be weak in this world and the hereafter. Pain becomes certain. So, Al-Ghazāli balances the existence of balance (al-I'tidāl) the potential of reason, qalb, as will create a good spirit/soul. Furthermore, all these elements are oriented towards al-akhlak al-karimah. If al-akhlāk al-Karīmāh is formed, then humans will radiate al-Hikmah (kindness), al-Syaja'ah (courage), al-Iffah (honor), and al-Adl (justice) (Imam Abu Haamid Al-Ghazali, 2005). In the end, al-Sihhah al-Nafsiyyah, or mental well-being, (Imam Abu Haamid Al-Ghazali, n.d.) according to Imam Al-Ghazali is the key to achieving happiness. This happiness is achieved by humans who recognize their potential, always coherent with sacred values of goodness. The goal is to achieve the meaning of life (al-Hayāh al-Nāfi'ah) based on humans' psychological, psychic, emotional, and spiritual aspects based on a comprehensive monotheistic paradigm in viewing human psychological faculties.
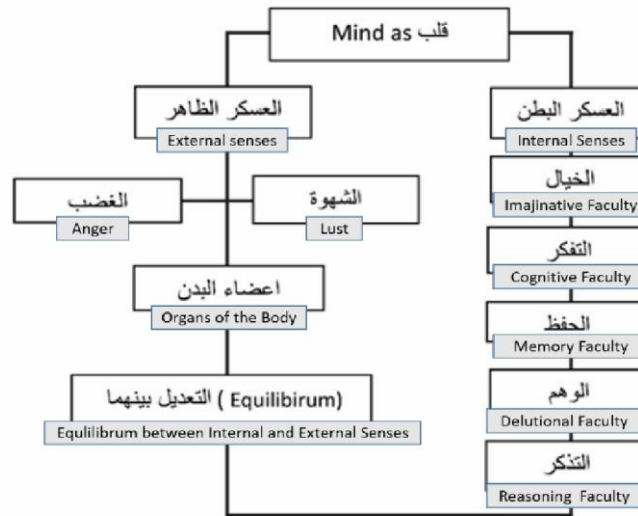
Figure 2 Psychological Model of Mind and Qalb according to Imam Abu Hāmid al-Ghazālī. Imam al-Ghazali, Ihyā

According to al-Attas, reason has material and immaterial dimensions, the main form in the mind that perceives visible and invisible realities. The term reason is a synonym for the heart, a small organ in the body that regulates human behavior.

> *'It has many names because of its accidental modes or states (ahwal). Thus when it is involved in intellection and apprehension it is called 'intellect' ('aql): when it governs the body it is called 'soul' (nafs): when it is engaged in receiving intuitive illumination it is called 'heart' (qalb): and when it reverts to its world of abstract entities it is called 'spirit' (ruh). Indeed, it is in reality always engaged in manifesting itself in all its states' (Al-Attas, 1995).*

Thus, with four terms –'Aqal, Qalb, Nafs, and Ruh – in Islam, it cannot be separated, when it enters into thinking and intelligence, this soul is called 'aql (intellect), when it acts as a regulator of the human body it is called soul (nafs). When illuminated into an intuitive form, it is called the heart (qalb), and when it enters into a complex abstract entity, it is called a spirit (ruh). Thus, reason in Islamic psychology discourse has comprehensive and comprehensive characteristics. Meanwhile, the dimensions of thinking in Islam can be referred to as Thakur, tafakkur, tadabbur, and ta'akkul. Tadzakkur is a derivation of the word dhikr which means keeping something that has been understood, and dhikr is everything that has been spoken by mouth (Ibnu Mandzur, n.d.). In the Qur'an, there are more than 256 verses that contain the word dhikr with all its derivations (Ar-Raghib Al-Asfahani, n.d.). This tazhakkur activity is a manifestation of the heart's function, with which the mind can work with the guidance of the heart for those who are obedient and pious to Allah SWT. Tafakkur comes from the word fakara, or power which leads to understanding and power to knowledge.

Pure Heart Always Win the Game in All Forms

In the game of life, which encompasses various aspects such as ethical conduct, relationships, and personal development, Ghazali's perspective suggests that the virtue of a pure heart finds resonance in contemporary discussion on patron networks. Ghazali emphasizes honesty and integrity aligns with the ethical considerations inherent in modern professional networks, where trust is paramount. Within patron networks, fostering genuine connections goes beyond transactional engagements, requiring an understanding of others' needs and concerns. Ghazali's teachings on compassion and empathy can thus inform how individuals navigate these complex relationships. Moreover, Ghazali's insights into conflict resolution and building meaningful connections offer valuable guidance for maintaining harmony within patron networks. While the direct application of Ghazali's philosophy to contemporary contexts requires careful consideration of cultural and societal differences, the principles of spiritual triumph, intellectual excellence, and humility he espouses may contribute to personal fulfillment and ethical networking practices in today's professional landscape. Thus, Ghazali's enduring wisdom resonates with those seeking virtuous and meaningful engagements within modern patron networks.

Al-Ghazali's teachings provide a profound ethical framework that serves as a guiding light for those seeking a virtuous existence. This framework, deeply rooted in Islamic ethics, encompasses a range of principles, including justice, compassion, humility, and self-discipline. Ghazali contends that a life shaped by these moral principles is reflective of righteous living. Within this framework, the purity of one's heart emerges as a crucial factor, as explored in Ghazali's emphasis on compassion and empathy towards others. A heart devoid of negative attributes, such as selfishness or arrogance, is more inclined to connect with and understand the struggles of fellow human beings, fostering a sense of unity. Furthermore, Ghazali underscores the paramount importance of honesty and integrity in all endeavors. A person with a pure heart, according to Ghazali, upholds these virtues unwaveringly, whether in business dealings, interpersonal relationships, or personal conduct. In essence, this section illuminates how Ghazali's moral philosophy, centered on a pure heart, shapes an individual's character, and influences their actions in the intricate game of moral decision-making and conduct.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this comprehensive exploration of the interplay between governance, patronage networks, and ethical considerations, as articulated through the lens of Ghazali's teachings, highlights the critical role that political leadership plays in shaping the destiny of a society. The analysis delves into the complexities of patron networks, neopatrimonialism, and the associated traps of extractive institutions, drawing attention to the detrimental effects on transparency, fairness, and accountability. As this paper suggests that the dynamics between patron networks and state play necessitate reforms for effective governance, the needs of transparency initiatives, anti-corruption measures, merit-based recruitment, and increased civil society engagement are identified as essential pillars for fostering a governance system that prioritizes fairness and accountability. The integration of Islamic ethical principles, as advocated by Ghazali, is proposed to guide these reforms, emphasizing justice, honesty, and meritocracy. The exploration extends to the psychological dimensions of human behavior, introducing the concept of Tassawuf and Ghazali's emphasis on the purity of the heart. The paper connects these spiritual dimensions to the broader discussion on governance, proposing that a pure heart, aligned with Islamic values, can contribute to virtuous behavior, ethical decision-making, and

harmonious interpersonal relationships within complex patron networks. The incorporation of Ghazali's teachings into the discourse on patronage networks and governance underscores the enduring relevance of Islamic ethical principles in shaping societies. The emphasis on justice, compassion, humility, and self-discipline aligns with the quest for ethical networking practices in contemporary professional landscapes. In essence, Ghazali's philosophy serves as a guiding light for individuals seeking virtuous and meaningful engagements within patron networks, offering insights that resonate with the pursuit of righteousness and moral excellence in all aspects of life.

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