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The Mediating Effects of IEAP on the Relationship Between General Cognitive Ability of Imamship and *Masjid* Performance in Lagos State, Nigeria.

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	The purpose of this study is to examine the mediating effects of IEAP (Islamic ethical administrative practices) on the relationship between general cognitive ability (GCA) of Imamship and Masjid (mosque) Performance (MP) in Lagos State, Nigeria. This study utilized a quantitative approach. It employs a cross-sectional survey and administers 310 online questionnaires to the Chief Imams of central Masaajid (plural of a mosque/mosques) in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study used statistical techniques to analyze the collected data with partial least square structural equation modeling (version 3 (PLS-SEM-V3). In the Lagos State of Nigeria, people have criticized the effectiveness of imams in the state. The critiques were raised based on why the participation of Muslim Ummah in activities organized by imamship is low and the ineffectiveness of imamship. This study aims to formulate the mediating effect of IEAP that will serve as the best administrative policy that can lead to a better management system in the Masjid to improve Masjid attendance and serve as an attraction for Muslims Ummah to the Masjid. The results of data on MP equally demonstrate that the Jama'ah would emulate their Chief Imams and consequently increase the performance of the Masaajid. This study recommends that with the presence of IEAP, the effectiveness of Chief Imam in promoting efficiency in MP by imbibing the knowledge/wisdom, truthfulness, responsibility/trust, and deliverance of khutbah will increase. Finally, critical benefits for practitioners and academia were discussed under the theoretical and practical contributions, while necessary suggestions for future study were recommended.

1. Introduction

In Islam, *Masjid* has been the central abode utilized by *Muslim Ummah* for the conduct of obligatory daily *Solawât* (five times prayers daily), in the congregation, includes calling the name of Allah Almighty (SWT) with glorifying Him (SWT) and other religious activities for their spiritual uplift. According to the Holy *Qur'an*, as follows: -

> "***In houses (Masaajid) Allah has permitted to be raised and His Name to be mentioned therein- in them, people glorify Him in the early mornings and the evening (hours before sunset)***" (*Qur'an* 24, Verse 36).

However, several Islamic researchers *e, g.*, Alade, Hussain, & Aziz (2016); Eniafe, Azmin, Abdullah, Hussain, Rahman, and Owoyemi (2020); Mutalib, Hashim, Ahmad, Zakaria, Rahman, and Ghani (2017); Rahman, Mastuki, and Syed Yusof (2015) have discovered that *Masjid* performance (MP) has become one of the contemporary discussions issues in Islamic religion over the years. This fact is because *Masjid* is regarded as a vital institution for promoting effective management and directing the affairs of the *Muslim Ummah* (Muhamedi & Ariffin, 2017; Zakariyah, 2014).

Moreover, the *Masjid al-Nabawiy* (Prophet Muhammad's Mosque in *Madinah* city) is one of the greatest multipurpose *Masaajid* and administrative centers of all the significant events (Omer, 2018). It is a center where *Muslim Ummah* perform five daily congregational *Solawât* and other religious activities, as it equally teaches religious knowledge and moral standards of lives and strengthens their relationships with the Almighty Allah (SWT), the families, and the community in general (Arshad, & Zain, 2017; Ebrahimi, Yusoff, & Salamon, 2015). Also, it is a place for the conduct of teaching, learning activity and a place of superior *'ibadah* (worship) since the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), as narrated from *Abu Hurayrah* (RTA) [1] that Prophet Muhammad (SAW), said: -

> "***Whoever comes to my Masjid (Masjid an-Nabawiy), with the good intention to conduct learning or teaching activities, and to promote beneficial knowledge will have his reward equivalent to the person who fights (Jihad جهاد) in the path of Allah (SWT)***;" (*Sunnan Ibn Majah: Vol; 1, Chapter: 17, Hadith: 227; Musnad Ahmad: 23/270*).

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[1]- His name was 'abdus-Shams, who was born in Republic of Yemen, in year 603 CE (19 years before *Hijrah*). The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) changed his name to 'abdur-Rahman/*Abu Hurayrah* (RTA) in Islam. He (RTA) was the most narrator of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) *ḥadīths*. Also, *Abu Hurayrah* (RTA) narrated about 5,375 *Hadīth*, despite the fact that he (RTA) only spent three years in the company of the Prophet (Samad, 2015).

The above **Hadith** shows that the performance of **Masjid an-Nabawiy** was not only a place of *ibadah* but was an essential place for administration, management, and highly revered institution among early *Muslim Ummah*. Moreover, it is a general knowledge that the significant role of performance of *Masjid* in Islam has transformed from a center of congregation *Solawât* to the symbol, instrument, and institution of promoting and directing the well-being – spiritual, social, political, and economic activities – of Muslim Ummah in their immediate societies. However, despite the growing number of *Masaajid* around the globe, *Masjid* as an institution in recent times is faced with so many challenges that have adverse effects on positioning it for better performance. For example, according to Mutalib et al. (2017), Malaysia, which holds low attendance, Masjid of Jama'ah (congregants) to perform obligatory congregational Solawât regularly. In addition, Zakariyah (2014) stated that one of the most apparent issues in the administration of *Masaajid* in Malaysia is the Tabung *Masjid* (poor management of funds). Also, in the United States (US), where Soldo (2017) emphasized the lack of training among leaders of *Masjid* to fulfill their responsibilities effectively to their followers and managed funds to provide tools of practices *Masaajid* in the country (US). While, Kareem and Adetoro, (2017) notice inadequate accountability of *Masjid* funds in Nigeria, which appears to be insignificant challenges facing the voluntary donation of *Masjid* (*Bayt al-Māl - بيت المال*). Additionally, Yusuf and Raheem (2013) decried the unethical practices of Muslim leadership administration of the *Masjid* in Nigeria, where committee members indulge in immorality due to intolerance among the members (p67). This finding aligns with the argument of Imosem (2012) cited in Abdullateef, Muhammed Yinusa, Danjuma Sulaiman, and Abdulwasiu (2018, pg370) that: -

> "*It appears that many Nigerians are religious without being righteous. We observed all the prayers, fasting, and attendance of services but did not reflect the true teachings of our religions in our day-to-day interaction with our fellow citizens. We compartmentalize our lives such that what is taught in our Churches or Mosques stay there*" (Abdullateef *et al.*, p370).

Due to the issues above, most *Masjid* is no longer serving the purpose for which they are established in terms of their roles in shaping the thoughts and the ideology of the *Muslim Ummah* (Rahman *et al.*, 2015; Sallehhuddi, Abu Said, Hasmanto, Mustafa, Jais, Samsudin, Masuod, & Ismail, 2017; Sapri, Ab Muin, & Sipan, 2016). Also, this is evident that the rampant ideological deficiency results in MP deficiency issues because researchers have found that attachment to the *Masjid* by *Muslim Ummah* affects the well-being of individuals and the community. Therefore, because of the significant role of the *Masjid* for the *Muslim Ummah* of

today, it has become imperative to revive the idea of the *Masaajid* in the Lagos State of Nigeria as a community canter of spiritual uplift and locus of activities for the *Muslims Ummah.*

According to several Muslim Scholars *e, g.,* Badi (2017); Omer (2018); Rahman *et al.* (2015) affirm the antecedents of Islamic leadership of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is the most influential leadership styles of all time, while his successors (RTA) emulated him (SAW) with those virtuous exemplary characters to direct affairs of the *Muslim Ummah* under their governance with significant consistency in creed and principles. Furthermore, Priest and Gass (2017) stated that scholars agree that the process of leadership reflects the leader's effectiveness. Therefore, understanding the mediating IEAP could help us understand the importance of leaders in enhancing organizational performance and, most importantly, MP. Because of the above, there is a need to understand MP from the standpoint of Islamic leadership antecedents, and there is a need to understand MP from the perspective of Islamic leadership theories, which are repose in the Holy *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to provide qualities need for implementing by Islamic leaders purposely for getting blessings from Almighty Allah (SWT) (Daud, Rahim & Nasurdin, 2014). Therefore, among the essential factors mentioned by the previous studies are the GCA of imamship. This fact can help improve antecedents of Islamic leadership (Mahazan & Abdullah, 2013). Includes IEAP has introduced as a mediator in this study deals with the rules that define moral conduct according to the ideology of a specific group.

2. Literature Review

This section reviews the Central *Masaajid* in Lagos State of Western Nigeria. Areas of a contextual background of GCA of Imamship are independent variables (IV) of the study. At the same time, IEAP is this study's mediating variable (MV). Also, MP is the dependent variable (DV) of the study.

2.1 Lagos State, Nigeria

Lagos State is located in the South-Western Geopolitical Zone in Nigeria. It is the most populous city in Africa, with over 21 million people (Eniafe *et al..,* 2020). Additionally, Alade *et al.* (2016); Owolabi, Odugbemi, Odeyemi, and Onigbogi (2018); Oniyide (2019) had reported that Lagos State was the capital of the Republic of Nigeria during the Colony and Protectorate until 1991, when the capital was relocated to Abuja during military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida. Also, Lagos State is subdivided into five major sub-ethnic/cultural groups, each

having its peculiar Yoruba dialect. These are its five administrative divisions of Ikeja, Badagry, Ikorodu, Lagos-Island, and Epe, regarded as the IBILE (Eniafe *et al.,* 2020; Oniyide, 2019). Moreover, the State (Lagos) has subdivided into 37 Local Council Development Areas (LCDA) in addition to the 20 LGAs, making a total of 57 Local government administrative units (Eniafe *et al.,* 2020).

To highlight the justification for choosing Lagos State. Lagos State is selected as a case study because Islamic Religion was practiced during the colonial era and after the Nigerian independence (1960). Also, the first Muslim School was established and officially opened on June 15, 1896, by Government in 1920 and established Islamiyyah Grammar School at Bamgbose Street in Lagos. Moreover, the Qur'anic Central *Masjid* in Lagos established a primary school in 1922. One fundamental achievement of Imam Ankuri was the constitution of the first Executive Committee of the Lagos Central *Masaajid* (Eniafe *et al.,* 2020; Raifu, 2016). Hence, Oniyide (2019) stated that during the Post-Colonial era, the Central *Masjid* with Qur'anic education witnessed tremendous development and growth by one the often acclaimed most outstanding Islamic scholars called Shaykh Adam Abdullah al-Ilory [2] (RA), who situated his Arabic school; Arabic and Islamic Training in Agege area of Lagos, as Quranic Center. According to Makinde (2012) cited in Oniyide (2019, p137): -

> "*Before 1952, Yoruba land, including the area today is known as southwestern Nigeria, never had modern standard Arabic school. What was common was the traditional Qur'anic school that operated in mosques or known as Ile-kewu. The first modern standard Arabic school surfaced in 1952. This issue was Markaz- Institute of Arabic and Islamic Training Center established by our illustrious scholar, shaykh Adam Abdullah al-Ilory in April of that year*" (Makinde 2012, cited in Oniyide 2019, p137)

Therefore, the Maliki school of jurisprudence is the prevailing school of thought in Lagos State and other states in Nigeria and all countries in Africa (Adelani, 2015). Despite the growing number of *Masaajid* in Lagos State with more *Muslim Ummah.* Given the significant role of the *Masaajid* in the *Muslim Ummah* of today, it has become imperative to revive the idea of the mosque as a community center of spiritual upliftment.

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[2]- He (RA) was born in 1917 at a town called Waza in the Republic of Benin, his father (Abdul-Baqi bn Ḥabībullah -RA), who hailed from Ilorin in kwara State of Nigeria. Also, Sheikh Adam (RA) was one of the greatest Islamic international scholar Nigerian. He studied various Islamic books on different fields of Islamic knowledge under many Muslim scholars *e, g.,* Shaykh Salihu (Esin-ni-yoo-biwa - RA) at Ibadan in 1934, Shaykh 'Umar Agbaji (RA) in 1939 while he was in Lagos, Shaykh Adam Namaji (RA) at Kano State (d.1944). He (RA) also learnt from Sayed Musa al-Amin (RA) who was a trader from Syria that settled down in Lagos (*See,* Oniyide, 2019).

2.2 *Masjid* Performance (MP)

Masjid performance (MP) refers refer to a large of Muslims that come to the *Masaajid* to offer their obligation *Solawât*, learn more about Islam which is related to a complete way of their life and thereby strengthen their faith with Allah Almighty (SWT) (Alhassan, 2017; Eniafe *et al.*, 2020; Jaafar, Habidin, Hussin, Zakaria, & Hamid, 2013; Omer, 2018). According to the Holy *Qur'an*, Allah Almighty (SWT) says in *Surah at-Taobah:* -

> "*The Masaajid of Allah are only to be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day (Day of Judgment), perform the Solât (conduct of obligatory daily Solawât), and give Zakat (almsgiving to the poor), and fear none but Allah. It is they who are on true guidance*". (*Qur'an* 9, Verse 18).

Based on the noble verse above, the keyword in these verses above is: If it is applied to the subject of *Masjid*, four guidelines could be derived, included (1) to build or to repair, (2) to maintain in fitting dignity, (3) to visit for devotion, and (4) to fill with light, life and activity (Omer, 2013; as cited in Alberta, *et al.*, 2015, p372).

The performance of *Masjid* is always associated with the state of religious behavior in many *Muslim Ummah*. This thought could be located in the researches done by previous scholars, for example, Oskooii, and Dana (2018) on Muslims in Great Britain as well as Mutalib *et al.* (2017), in Malaysia, also Alade *et al.* (2016); Eniafe *et al.*, (2020) in Nigerian. In general, *Masjid* is considered the essential socio-religious center for Muslims around the globe (Mahazan & Abdullah, 2013; Jaafar *et al.*, 2013). Westfall (2019), the United States, examined the nature of the relationship between *Masjid* and political engagement. The result of the study found a positive relationship between *Masjid* attendance associated with political engagement. Additionally, the study discovered that in *Solât -ul- Jumu'ah* on Friday, the chief Imam Delivery's *Khutbah* talks about current issues that affect the people in the political space, which is significant because it shows the concern of *Masjid* leadership with politics as the study pointed out. Nonetheless, Utaberta *et al.* (2015) argued in a study on *Masjid* in America that: -

> "*Unfortunately, we, Muslims today facing difficulties implementing the commandments of Allah and following the footsteps of Prophet (PBUH) as we have deteriorated from the guideline prescribed for us and adopted the western philosophy of life. As a result, the most important institution of the Muslim community, i.e., the mosque, has become insufficient to be integrated with the fabric of the Muslim societies. Now with the present resurgence of Islamic thoughts and philosophy, once again, the time has come to revive the institution of mosque completely based on the direction that is prescribed in the Qur"an and the practices of Prophet (PBUH) and the early generation of the Muslims which portrays the practical aspect of utilizing the advantages mosque institution to its fullest extent*" (Utaberta et al., 2015, p374).

In this regard above, there are many *Masaajid* around the globe witnessing parts of the preceding problems, according to Mutalib *et al.* (2017), who found low attendance among congregants to perform obligatory congregational *Solawât* regularly in *Masaajid* in Malaysia. At the same time, Zakariyah (2014) stated that Tabung *Masjid* (funds of the *Masjid*) is one of the most apparent issues in the administration of *Masaajid*. Poor management of funds, especially in Nigeria. According to Yusuf & Raheem (2013), it is an issue that calls for a lot of attention among the Muslims on MP as this is affecting the way the *Masjid* is being managed. Additionally, they said that: -

> '*It is, however, pathetic and disturbing that Muslim community for a very long time has not been able to live up to expectation judging by its moribund institutions of which the Masjid is one*' (Yusuf & Raheem 2013, p8).

Hence, the unethical practices of the Muslim leadership administration of the *Masaajid* in Lagos in particular and Nigeria general where committee members indulge in immorality as a result of intolerance among the members are also something that affects MP and calls for attention. Therefore, this study attempts to provide some insights on how we should revive our *Masaajid* to perform efficiently by measuring performance in three dimensions which include: (a) *Masjid* attendance, (b) *Masjid* activities, and (c) *Masjid* funding. Based on the direction of the Holy *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* of Prophet (SAW) and the early generation of our

successors (RTA), which portrays the practical aspect of utilizing the advantages of *Masjid* institution to its fullest extent. Additionally, some previous studies measured MP tangible and intangible resources, such as expenses ratio of religious events, religious education, charity, and community services, to indicate how efficient the *Masaajid* resources are utilized. While, Mutalib *et al.* (2017) measured MP with three items: *Masjid* attendance, fund-raised by *Masjid*, and assets of *Masjid*. Additionally, the performance of the *Masjid* should be continuously investigated regularly (Mutalib *et al.*, 2017). The dimensions of MP for this study will be explained in the following subheading below: -

2.2.1 *Masjid* Attendance

Masjid attendance defines as regularly attending *Masjid* for compulsory congregational *Solawât*. Also, it is a crucial ritual activity of MP (Eniafe *et al.*, .2020; Mutalib *et al.*, 2017; Rahman *et al.*, 2015). While, Oskooii, and Dana (2018), defined *Masjid* attendance as several increments of political participation with an association of people from diverse social and ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, *Masjid* attendance has been revealed in many verses of the Holy *Qur'an*. Likewise, the following (*Surah an-Nisaahi*): -

> "***When you finish your Solât (congregational Solawât), remember Allah's praises, while you are standing, sitting down, or lying down on your sides, but when you are free from danger (secure), perform Solât (daily Solawât) regularly. Indeed, Solât (daily Solawât) are enjoined on believers at the appointed times***". (*Qur'an* 4, Verse 103).

Hence, many *Hadiths* reported by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) indicates the importance of attendance congregational *Solawât* as the following: -

> "***The Solât in congregation is twenty-seven times superior to the Solât offered by person alone***" (*Sahih Bukhari* – Book 11; *Hadith* 618).

2.2.2 *Masjid* Activities

Masjid Activities refers to the various activities that *Muslim Ummah* performs in the *Masjid* through the guidance of the Holy *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* (Mutalib *et al.*, 2017; Omer & Farhadullah 2019; Prawirasasra, & Mubarok, 2017). According to the Holy *Quran*, Allah Almighty (SWT) says in *Surah An-Noor*, concerning this: -

> "*In houses (Masaajid) Allah has permitted to be raised and His Name to be mentioned therein- in them, people glorify Him in the early mornings and the evening (hours before sunset)*" *(Qur'an24, Verse36).*

Additionally, *Abu Hurayrah* (RTA), narrated from the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), says: -

> "*Whoever comes to my mosque (Masjid an-Nabawiy), with the good intention to conduct learning or teaching activities, and to promote beneficial knowledge will have his reward equivalent to the person who fights (Jihad جهاد) in the path of Allah (SWT)*;" *(Sunnan Ibn Majah:* Vol; 1, Chapter: 17, *Hadith:* 227; *Musnad Ahmad:* 23/270).*

All these above have been practiced since the early era of Islam during the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Also, *Masjid* activities are identified by the voice of call (*adhān*), performing five daily *Solawât*, Islamic readings such as *Azkar/Wirid*, and organizing Islamic education for Muslims in the *Masjid* (Mardhatillah, 2020). According to Eniafe *et al.* (2020); and Said (2020), among of companions of the Prophet (SAW), a platform was called the *Suffah* platform (**Ahlu Suffah/Ashab Suffah**), they dedicated themselves to activities of teaching and learning of religious sciences the Holy *Qur'an* and Hadiths' Prophet Muhammad (SAW) regularly and systematically to the spiritual-moral life (*Azkar/Wirid*) in the *Masjid an-Nabawiy* activities. Additionally, *Masjid al-Haram*, *Masjid al-Quba*, and *Masjid an-Nabawiy* are centers of field Da'wah that disseminate knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence (*i.e.,* Delivering lecturing and learning of the Holy *Qur'an*, *Sunnah*, and schools of thought in Islam, via worship Allah Almighty (SWT) (Said, 2020). Additionally, in accordance to *al-Imam al-Ghazali* (RA) said: -

> "*Mosque is an institution. It is the spiritual and material guidance; it is the hall for worship, the school for knowledge, and the center for literacy pursuits. Strongly attached to the duty of prayers and the rows of worshippers are more attitudes and traditions which form the essence of Islam*" (Al-Ghazali, 1999).

Therefore, there are several studies that Muslims Scholars Researches, e.g., Alade *et al.* (2016); Eniafe *et al.* (2020); Mahazah and Abdullah (2013); Mutalib *et al.* (2017); Omer and Farhadullah (2019); Prawirasasra, and Mubarok (2017); Rahman *et al.* (2015); and Said (2020), have found that *Masjid* activities are significant with organized through the *Masaajid* and are the symbol of those who receive guidance from Allah Almighty (SWT).

2.2.3 *Masjid* Funding

Masjid funding is an essential factor dimension that can promote MP better. Also, it can develop socio-economic and contribute to new knowledge relating to the principle of Islamic finance (Razak *et al.*, 2014). It has been mentioned in the literature reviewed part earlier in this section. Moreover, numerous several previous studies have examined on fund *Masaajid* and Islamic leaders, such as Eniafe *et al.* (2020), Mutalib *et al.* (2017), Rahman *et al.* (2015). Most of them found significance in their studies, particularly Mutalib *et al.* (2017); Razak *et al.* (2014). In their study conducted in Malaysia, the study's outcome showed a significant relationship between *Masjid* funding and MP.

In Lagos state particular, and Nigeria context generally, no organization or society pays the salaries of Islamic leader particular Imam, Quranic learning and other related to Islamic affairs. Hence they are forced to search for alternative means of financial assistance (Amuda, 2013). In bolstering the above statement, AbdulKareem, Ogunbado, AbdulGaniyy, and Mahmud (2019) affirmed no provision for Nigeria's Ministry of religious affairs. Therefore, many *Masaajid* countries need financial assistance and support for MP, maintenance, and Islamic activities programs. According to Riwajanti (2019), who hold emphasized as following: -

> "*Funds can be utilized for empowerment activities/programs, useful for the ummah... however, is not easy because the takmir might have different backgrounds, have different*

understandings...these differences sometimes could also raise conflicts of thinking". (Riwajanti, 2019, p201).

2.2 General Cognitive Ability of Imamshiep

Several researchers, e.g., Bedell-Avers, Hunter, and Mumford (2008); Mahazan, and Abdullah (2013); Mumford, Campion, and Morgeson (2007) have defined general cognitive ability (GCA) as the brain-based skills and mental processes needed to carry out any task and have more to do with the mechanisms of how you learn, remember, and pay attention rather than any actual knowledge you have learned. While some previous researches earlier, *e.g.,* Bensaid, Machouche, and Grine (2014); Mahmood, Arshad, Ahmed, Akhtar, and Khan (2018); Miller (2019) have argued that the GCA is the depict same with intelligence variables that they are empirical evidence supports the importance and predict antecedent of leadership. This finding is also referred to as the lead intelligence or qualities in several studies. According to Bass (1990), who posited that amongst variables explaining GCA, "intelligence has probably received the most attention in studies of leadership" (cited in Mahazan, 2012, p109). While, in another definition, intelligence is a general mental ability for reasoning, problem-solving, and learning (Colom, Karama, Jung, & Haier 2010).

Additionally, previous studies *e, g.,* Bedell-Avers, *et al.,* (2008); Mahazan and Abdullah (2013); Mumford *et al.* (2007), mentioned that there were five categories of cognitive ability for leadership, which includes: (a) Analytical Ability\Goal Orientation, (b) Complex Problem-Solving Skills, (c) Creative Reasoning Abilities, (d) General Cognitive Ability and (e) General Intelligence\Spiritual Intelligence. Therefore, these studies above examined the relationship between these five categories of cognitive ability in leadership performance. The studies affirmed that GCA should be focused on one aspect of mental ability. Therefore, GCA was found to be one of the predictors of leadership in some previous research. Consequently, the GCA of Imams influenced MP. As such, it is reasonable to suggest that an Imam with GCA would make significant contributions to the organization of *Masaajid*, where he works as Imam (Mahazan & Abdullah, 2013; Mutalib, & Ghani, 2013). This fact implies that GCA is vital competency that is needed to meet the challenges of MP or job demands, education, and advanced training, societal expectations, and the demands of everyday life of middle-aged adults who form the bulk of leaders in the performance of *Masaajid* (Mahazan & Abdullah, 2013; Mutalib, & Ghani, 2013).

Furthermore, many studies on Islamic leadership *e, g.,* Daud *et al.* (2014); and Rahman and Shah (2015), conducted their investigations and were concerned about its implication on measuring characteristics of the concept of Islamic leadership. Also, they developed four model factors characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), including knowledge/wisdom, truthfulness, responsibility/trust, and deliverance. This organic relationship is shown in the Holy *Qur'an*'s thesis, whereby the cognitive dimensions of spiritual intelligence are integrated. Also, it is grounded firmly in the teaching of revelation. It has been demonstrated practically throughout the life and example of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), nourished through the contribution of people of wisdom, scholars, and those grounded in knowledge and action (Bensaid *et al.,* 2014). According to the Holy *Qur'an*, in *Surah al-Nisaahi:* -

> "*But those of them who are well-grounded in knowledge and the believers, believe in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down before you. And those who keep up the Solât and those who give alms (Az-Zakât), the believers in Allah and the Last Day, these it is whom We will give a Mighty Reward*" (Qur'an 4:162).

Therefore, this study adopted four dimensions' measures for characteristics of the concept of Islamic leadership via relates to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) from Daud *et al.* (2014); and Rahman and Shah (2015) for GCA of imamship. Based on the nature of Islamic leadership in this study, they are the greatest divine assets for the MP. Moreover, these qualities are needed in the management of *Masaajid* to perform well in Lagos State. Also, this research explains each of four sub-dimensions as follows: -

2.2.1 Knowledge/Wisdom (*Fatonah* فطانة)

Knowledge/wisdom both are the attributes of Allah Almighty (SWT). Also, He (SWT) explicitly directs human beings in the Holy Qur'an to seek and employ knowledge for the development of human potential. The religion of Islam encourages human beings to acquire skills of knowledge/technology (Rana & Malik, 2017). At the same time, Akgün (2020); and Randeree (2011) indicated the difference between knowledge and Wisdom that Wisdom is the ability for a person with true leadership potential to apply his knowledge into fruitful action towards an articulated goal. However, the word wisdom precedes knowledge teaching, indicating that the former is gifted to a person as an inherent quality whereas the latter is acquired through learning". Therefore, the *Masjid* leaders (Imams) have interpreted wisdom with their knowledge according to the Holy Qur'an and *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as follows: -

> "...*reciting to them (people) His verses (in the Holy Qur'an), purifying their corrupt faith (cleansing their souls), teaching them (about the messages in) the Book (the Holy Qur'an) and (imparting) the wisdom (to them throughout his examples and saying;*" (Qur'an 62, Verse 2).

Therefore, the Prophet Mohamed (SAW) says: -

> "*Wisdom is the lost property of the believer; wherever he finds it, he has more right to it*" (Sunan al-Tirmidhī 2687).

2.2.2 Truthfulness (*Siddiqi*)

Truthfulness is a quality in general cognitive ability for imamship in this study. According to Daud *et al.* (2014), one of the Islamic leadership qualities that required consistency between words and actions is truthfulness. Additionally, truth is a value that drives the commitment of an imam as a leader and subsequently leads to better performance (Daud *et al.*, 2014). Rahman and Shah (2015) defined trustfulness as the sense of responsibility, honor, courtesy, showing optimal results, and respect for others. An imam always has to speak the truth and be truthful from the core of his heart, not for affectation but for establishing moral standards in the *Muslim Ummah* (Daud *et al.*, 2014). Also, Rahman and Shah (2015) affirmed that a believer must fulfill the obligation to achieve success in this world and hereafter. While looking to become a successful person, one must be obedient to Allah Almighty (SWT) and His terms and rule. According to the Holy *Qur'an* says: -

> "*Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing*" (Qur'am 4, Verse 58).

Consequently, the Prophet Mohamed (SAW) says: -

> "*Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise*" (Al-Bukhari).

2.2 3 Responsibility/Trust (*Amanah*)

Responsibility is trust (*Amanah*), and an Islamic perspective is about how Muslims enact their leadership role (Aldulaimi, 2016). A true leader does not seek his interest but the welfare of others. In the context of work culture in an organization, every worker must be aware that a position he holds is decided by him (Aldulaimi, 2016). Truthfulness is the opposite of lying, and it is the mother of all good in a person's character and the source of all other virtues. Imam of the *Masjid* must show responsibility in his character and competence to influence members of the congregation in the *Masjid*. The position of Islam on leadership has very significant implications for the present-day Human Resource Development (HRD) practices and policies (Ahmad, 2012). The *Masjid* is an example of a communal unit with Responsibility in Islam (Utaberta, Asif, Rasdi, Yunos, Ismail, & Ismail, 2015). While, the

responsibility of an Islamic leader consists of six dimensions: Emotional control, Sadakah (Leader helping), Forgiveness, Integrity, Patience, and Justice (Mukred Mohsen, 2007). Therefore, the responsibility of Imamashp is to manage the world according to Allah's wants and establish good relationships among humanity (Alimin, Awang, Ahmad, & Nain, 2018). Moreover, our beloved Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was the best example of a trustworthy leader. According to *Sheikhayni (Bukhari and Muslim)*, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) saying: -

> "***All of you are providers of care, and everybody is responsible for doing it right for his subordinates and dependents***" *(Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim);* "***There is no faith for a person who does not possess Amanah, [i.e., unreliable] and there is no religion for one who does not keep his promise***." *(Sunan Ahmad).*

2.2.4 Communication/Delivery of massage (*Tabliigh*)

Communication/Delivery of massage is required to fulfill the purpose of the mission and inspire people to follow it. The Holy *Qur'an* itself is the most eloquent document, and it appeals both to the mind and the heart. For example, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) delivered messages of Islam in a way that a small group of people in Makkah instantly admitted. Even though the tribe of *Quraish* in *Makkah* accepted that his statement had value, they were against it because they found it undermining their interests (Daud *et al.*, 2014). Communication can articulate ideas and views with clarity and eloquence (Daud *et al.*, 2014). Communication is an essential quality that needs to be learned, practiced, and mastered by every leader, especially the Chief Imam of the Central mosque. According to Muhamedi and Ariffin (2017), communication might help management spread Islamic values among its members, such as prayers, fasting, and fighting corruption. Not at that level only, but may help spread Da'wah and Islamic values to the public. Allah Almighty says in *Surah Jinn* that

> "***To ensure that the messengers fully deliver the messages of their Lord [Allah Almighty - SWT] though He [SWT] `already` knows all about them, and keeps account of everything***" *(Qur'an 72, Verse 28).*

2.3 IEAP (Islamic Ethical Administrative Practice)

IEAP is an essential mediating factor for this study. IEAP introduced as a mediator in this study deals with the rules that define moral conduct according to the ideology of a specific group. Several researchers e, g., Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2014); Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2016), defined mediating effect as is created when a third variable or construct intervenes between others related constructs, understand how mediating effects work. It seeks to be a predictor MP by ensuring that there is adherence to the ethics rules – in other words, the people receive what they need pretty. It likewise seeks to give the administration guidelines for integrity in their operations. This integrity, in turn, leads to the fostering of trust in the *Masjid* community. By building this atmosphere of faith, the administration helps people understand that they are working with their best interests in mind (Kamri, 2014).

In Nigeria currently, the inability of *Masjid* administration to cope with the dynamics of the modern age, no mechanism for regular monitoring performance of *Masaajid*, and non-participation of congregants appear to be significant challenges facing the *Masaajid* (Alade *et al.*, 2016; Kareem & Adetoro, 2017; YAKUBU, 2019; Yusuf, & Raheem, 2013). There is an increasing public fear and complaints that the administrative effectiveness of the Imam is jeopardizing, especially in Lagos, where poor *Masaajid* Administration has been the major challenge, according to several Islamic researchers *e, g,* Abbas (2016); Alade *et al.* (2016); Eniafe *et al.*, (2020); Yusuf and Raheem, (2013), identified the poor MP in terms of ineffective management and unethical practices of imamship administration of imamship of Central *Masaajid* in Lagos.

In this regard, IEAP is excavated from the Holy *Qurʼan* and the *Sunnah*. Therefore, it could be said to incorporate the four dimensions that have been proposed in this research and based on previous studies, which are: 1, Competition, 2, Effort, 3, Morally responsible conduct, and 4, Transparency (Haider & Nadeem. 2014; Wahab, 2017) as used in this study.

2.3.1 Competition

Competition is regarded as *Shura* (Consultation), which Imams are encouraged to preach to their *Jamaʼah* (followers) in line with the concepts of IEAP. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW), as a great example, laid the excellent foundation of a civilization, an ethical value, also conceived as a set of significant leadership traits of the Prophet (SAW) was *Shura.* The *Shura*

(Consultation) was held to be very important, and he of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) consulted and followed his companions' advice in several matters, as Allah Almighty (SWT) revealed in the Holy *Qur'an:*

"*...and consult them in the matter,*" (*Qur'an*3, Verse159).

2.3.2 Effort

Effort: Chief Imams of the Masaajid nee*d* to invest their professionalism in congregations of the *Masaajid.* In this regard, Islamic ethics that is excavated from the Holy *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* was proposed by previous studies (Eniafe *et al.,* 2020; Wahab, 2017). While, an effort is considered as perform *'ibādah* (worship) in Islam and will be rewarded, as the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

"*Worshipping has seventy avenues. The best of them is the involvement in an honest and earned a living*" (cited in Aldulaimi, 2016; Wahab, 2017).

2.3.3 Morally Responsible Behaviour

Morally responsible behavior is a perfect peace to the entire *Muslim Ummah* and other establishments. It forms the bedrock for attaining spiritual prosperity as an individual must maintain ethical orientations and values as detailed by Islam. There are two dimensions of ethics in Islam: ethics towards Allah Almighty (SWT) and others. These indicate to believe in Allah Almighty (SWT) by worshipping Him (SWT), dealing ethically with others by maintaining a good relationship with them (Wahab, 2017). In the same vein, sincerity in worship and the love of Allah Almighty (SWT) makes one becomes one of the people of *al-Ihsan.* The people of *al-Ihsan* are the best among the servants of Allah Almighty (SWT), who are doers of good deeds which leads to goodness and guidance (Kadhim, Ahmad, Owoyemi, & Ahmad, 2017, p102) as indicated by the word of Allah Almighty (SWT) says:

"*As to those who believe and work righteousness, verily We shall not suffer to perish the reward of any who do a [single] righteous deed*" (*Qur'an*18, Verse30).

2.3.4 Transparency

Transparency is a good value and relates to good character and morals (*Akhlaq al-Hasanah*). Also, transparency is considered a pillar of IEAP that is built on sound values such as honesty (*Sidqah*), integrity (*Istiqomah*), justice ('*adl*), sincerity (*Ikhlas*), and trustworthiness (*Thiqqoh*) (Wahab, 2017). Likewise, the transparency of IEAP is deeply rooted in the belief in Allah Almighty (SWT), having trust in Him. At the same time, an *Imam* is anticipated to be fair and behave righteously towards the affairs of his followers in the *Masjid*. According to Riwajanti (2019), who hold emphasized as following: -

> "...*building trust among members is significant, being transparent. It will be easier to do this in the mosque because mosques apply management based on the ummah. So, people will trust each other. The problem usually appears because when they have public trust, they break the trust*" (Riwajanti, 2019, p200).

Also, he is to be relating responsibly and be accountable for what he is entrusted with. This commandment is because justice is one of the transparent principles of Islam, and it is also associated with the qualifies of leaders in Islam as Allah Almighty (SWT) says in *Surah Sod*: -

> "*O David {Prophet Dahud}, We {Almighty Allah} have appointed you vicegerent on earth. Therefore, rule among people with justice {truth} and do not follow (your) desire lest it should lead you astray from Allah's Path*;" (*Qur'an*38, Verse26); "*Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. So excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing*" (*Qur'an*4, Verse58).

3.   Research Method and Result

This study used a ***quantitative*** leadership approach. A conceptual framework was developed to show the identified elements of mediating effect of the IEAP of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), the most influential leadership style. Hence, in line with Sekaran and Bougie (2016), the cross-sectional survey method is the approach for this study and implies a procedure for collecting and analyzing data to test the proposed hypotheses. The survey instruments consist of two parts: demographic information of the respondents and the

variables' instruments prepared to elicit information. The questionnaires were specifically designed for this study. This study focuses on three variables: Islamic leadership of GCA of Imamship as the independent variable (IV). While IEAP is the mediating variable (MV), MP is the dependent variable (DV). The dimensions and items were adapted from previous Islamic studies, which contained constructs model based on the Holy *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*, including measurements of personal qualities as the qualities to be portrayed by the chief Imam of Central *Masjid*.

3.1 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual or theoretical framework refers to a demonstration of reality, and it comprehensively explains those factors (variables) of the actual world that the researchers think to be related to the problem identified as well as it demonstrates the significant association among them (Nachmias & Nachmias 1996; Rahi, 2017). Therefore, according to the literature review earlier for this study, the Islamic leadership of GCA of Imamship is an independent variable that includes four dimensions (knowledge/wisdom, truthfulness, responsibility/trust, and deliverance of *khutbah*). While the mediating knowledge variable is IEAP, it is also introduced to improve independent variables' effect on DV, which is MP. Consequently, the conceptual framework depicted the theoretical relationships among all the constructs, which is the basis upon which the study's hypotheses are formulated. This model is shown in Figure 3.1:
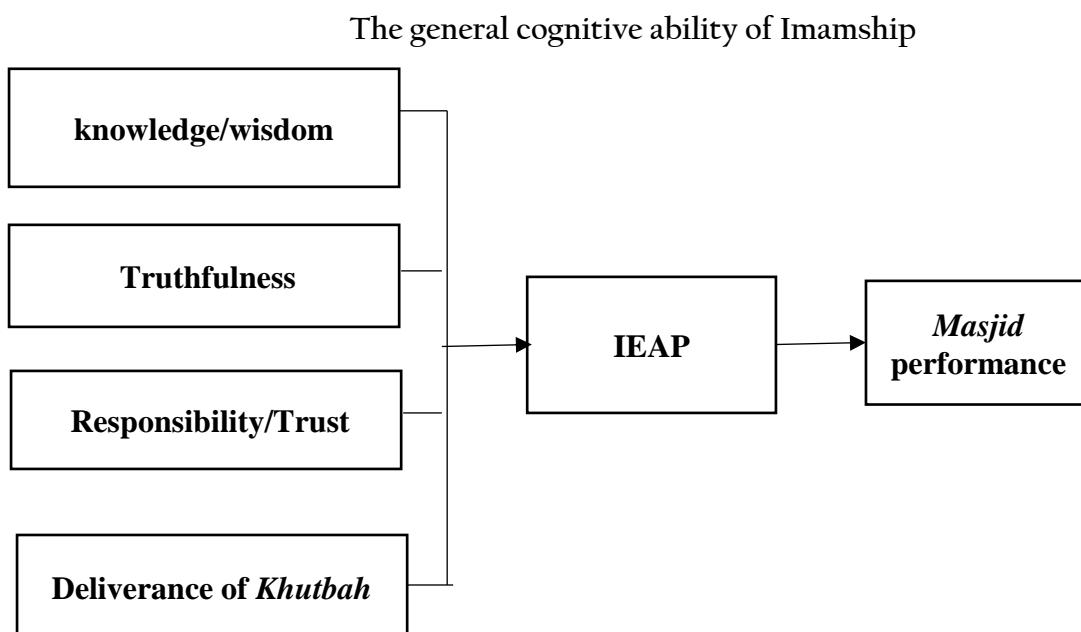
The general cognitive ability of Imamship

Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework

3.2 Hypotheses Development of the Study

The hypothesis is defined as a primary postulate or clarification by the researchers of what the researchers consider the study's result (Rahi, 2017; Singh, 2020). This study is based on thirteen hypotheses (nine direct and four indirect hypotheses), including four subsections. The first direct hypotheses test the relationship between the independent variable of GCA of Imamship with four dimensions (knowledge/wisdom, truthfulness, responsibility/trust, and deliverance of *khutbah*) and the dependent variable of MP. The second direct hypotheses test the relationship between the mediating variable of IEAP and the dependent variable of MP. The third direct hypotheses test the relationships between the GCA of Imamship (knowledge/wisdom, truthfulness, responsibility/trust, and deliverance of *khutbah*) and IEAP. While, the fourth indirect hypothesis considered the mediating roles of IEAP between the GCA of Imamship (knowledge/wisdom, truthfulness, responsibility/trust, and deliverance of *khutbah*) and MP.

3.2.1 Thirteen Hhypotheses Developments Test of Relationship between the IV, MV, and DV.

These are thirteen hypotheses (nine direct hypotheses and four indirect hypotheses), included with four subsections: -

3.2.1.1 Relationship between the GCA of Imamship and MP.

Several studies have examined the relationship between the GCA of imamship and MP. For example, the study conducted by Mahazan and Abdullah (2013) concerning the effect of Imam leadership on MP in Malaysia revealed a significant relationship between GCA of imamship and MP. In the light of this, this study would adopt four dimensions' measures for characteristics of the concept of Islamic leadership via relates to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) from Daud *et al.* (2014); and Rahman and Shah (2015) for GCA of imamship by using four items of the Prophet's behaviors and values which includes: Knowledge/Wisdom, Delivery of *Khutbah*. Truthfulness and Responsibility. Moreover, the four dimensions align with the behaviors of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) by having a good relationship with Allah

Almighty (SWT) and the relationship with another human being. Based on the above, the following hypotheses are proposed for empirical analysis: -

> *H1- KnowledgeWisdom, positively predicts MP.*
>
> *H2- Deliverance positively predicts MP.*
>
> *H3- Responsibility positively predicts MP.*
>
> *H4- Truthfulness positively predicts MP.*

3.2.1.2 Relationship between GCA of imamship and IEAP

For instance, Mahazan and Abdullah (2013) found that GCA of imamship (knowledge and abilities of leadership) predicted skills through mediating effect IEAP. Also, the authors found that leadership self-efficacy and past leadership experiences mediated the relationship between distal antecedents and leadership potential. The same was also found by Chan and Drasgow (2001) in their leadership behavior research. Therefore, the following hypothesis is presented below: -

> *H5,6,7,8: A relationship between GCA of imamship (i.e., Knowledge/Wisdom, Deliverance, Responsibility, and Truthfulness) positively predicts IEAP.*
>
> *H5: There is a relationship between knowledge/wisdom and IEAP.*
>
> *H6: There is a relationship between deliverance and IEAP.*
>
> *H7: There is a relationship between responsibility and IEAP.*
>
> *H8: There is a relationship between truthfulness and IEAP.*

3.2.1.3 Relationship Between IEAP and MP

IEAP is an essential mediating variable factor for this study. It can assist imams to improve *Masjid* performance (MP). In line with the studies mentioned above, Noor, Ab Wahab, and Nasirun (2017) investigated the relationship between Islamic work ethic and performance management among employees of Islamic organizations in Malaysia. The study reported a significant relationship between ethics and performance management (among employees of Islamic organizations). In the light of these studies above, this study aims to increase our

understanding of the influence of IEAP of Imams towards MP. Based on these findings, the following hypothesis is presented: -

H9: There is a relationship between IEAP mediates and Masjid performance

3.2.1.4 Mediating Effects of IEAP on the Relationships Between IVs and DV

A mediating effect is divided into direct and indirect mediating effects (Hair *et al.*, 2014; Richiardi, Bellocco, & Zugna, 2013). Direct mediating effects linked the relationship between two constructs with a single arrow, modeled as a possible mediator for the indicated relationship. At the same time, the Indirect effects are those relationships that involve a sequence of connections with at least one interfering construct (Hair *et al.*, 2014).

This study predicts that the IEAP will be influenced by the GCA of imamship: Knowledge/Wisdom, Delivery of *Khutbah*. Truthfulness, and Responsibility, on MP for the *Muslim Ummah* in Lagos State Nigeria. As we discussed earlier that several studies e, g., Mahazan and Abdullah (2013); Mutalib and Ghani (2013); Mutalib *et al.* (2017) had examined its influence on the leadership of imams in Malaysia towards MP. The studies reported a significant mediating of Imams' leadership to influence MP.

In line with mentioned studies above, Noor *et al.* (2017) investigated the relationship between Islamic work ethic and performance management among employees of Islamic organizations in Malaysia. The study reported a significant relationship between ethics and performance management (among employees of Islamic organizations). Moreover, this evidence above correlates with the arguments made by Hair *et al.* (2014), that when the effect of independent variables on a dependent variable is reliant upon the values of another variable, such variable can serve as a mediator for the relationships between the independent variables and dependent variable.

Thus, based on the existing studies on mediating effect of IEAP on the relationship between GCA of imamship (Knowledge/Wisdom, Delivery of *Khutbah*. Truthfulness, and Responsibility*)* on MP in previous studies, this study examines the effects of IEAP on the relationship between GCA of imamship (Knowledge/Wisdom, Delivery of *Khutbah*. Truthfulness, and Responsibility*)* on MP for *Muslim Ummah* in Nigerian. In sum, a proper understanding of the issues revolving around the Imam's leadership and MP can be achieved through the empirical investigation in various perspectives. Therefore, the mediating hypotheses of this study are presented below: -

H10, 11, 12, 13: IEAP mediates the relationship between GCA of imamship (i.e., Knowledge/Wisdom, Deliverance, Responsibility, and Truthfulness), positively predicts, and MP.

H10: IEAP mediates the relationship between Knowledge/Wisdom and MP

H11: IEAP mediates the relationship between Deliverance and MP

H12: IEAP mediates the relationship between Responsibility and MP

H13: IEAP mediates the relationship between Truthfulness and MP.

3.3 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection procedures for this study were collected from Chiefs Imams of Central *Masaajid* in Lagos State, Nigeria. Besides, previous researchers have utilized several approaches in administering questionnaires such as face-to-face interviews, offline questionnaires, online questionnaires, and telephone interviews (Zhang, Kuchinke, Woud, Velten, & Margraf, 2017). While Remillard, Mazor, Cutrona, Gurwitz, and Tjia (2014) acknowledged that online questionnaires have successfully targeted groups of individuals who are members of organizations or institutions. The researcher uses strict administration procedures (Sudman, 1996) by designing an online questionnaire for data collection in Arabic and English. Due to the deadly virus called Covid-19 worldwide, it was difficult for the researcher to meet respondents (Chiefs Imams of Central Masaajid in Lagos State) face-to-face. Besides, the determination of this study disseminates questionnaires online via social media groups (WhatsApp) of Council of Chief Imams Lagos State Nigeria. Including five administrative divisions of Lagos State Nigeria: Ikeja, Badagry, Ikorodu, Lagos Island, and Epe, which are traditionally referred to as IBILE (Alade *et al.* 2016; Owolabi *et al.,* 2018). Therefore, the data collection for this study spanned over one and half months, followed up with several phone calls and SMS as a reminder.

This study has distributed 434 total questionnaires in line with those mentioned above. 350 (80.6%) questionnaires were returned as a response rate. There were 350 questionnaires returned, of which 40 were discarded as unusable due to outlier issues, ambiguous responses. Thus, the remaining 310 responses were finally considered usable in the analysis, implying a 71.4% response rate. Following the argument proffered by Creswell (2012) that a response rate of 50% or above is adequate for surveys, the analysis of this study was based on 310 respondents.

3.4 Statistical Analysis Results

Partial Least Square, Structural Equation Modeling - Version 3 (PLS-SEM-V3) was used to examine and analyze purposes in this study since it is considered the best. PLS-SEM is an explanatory methodology that counts on primary and secondary data (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) has been established noticeably in academic research in limitless academic disciplines. Hair *et al.* (2014) pointed out that results of PLS-SEM are recommended in most works of literature, and the two stages comprise the measurement model and structural model assessment. For this study, the two models need to be put in place.

3.4.1 Measurement Model

The measurement model is recognized as the outer model. Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) emphasized that reliability and validity are the two chief principles used in analyzing PLS to evaluate the measurement model.

3.4.1.1 Construct Reliability and Validity

Reliability is the valuation of the level of constancy amongst various measurements of a construct (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Reliability assesses the degree to which measures are free from random error and yield reliable outcomes. The reliability of the instrument terms that the measures will yield a likely result if used repeatedly. The purpose of construct validity is to create the degree to which the results accomplished from using a measure match the theories upon which the test is primarily designed (Sekaran & Bougie 2010). Construct validity is focused on responding to the question. This study subjected the measurement scales to convergent validity and discriminant validity test to regulate the validity of the constructs (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013).

3.4.1.2 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is a type of construct validity that appraises how a particular measure truly measures what it intended to measure and associates positively with other measures of the same construct (Hair *et al.*, 2017). Consequently, average variance extracted (AVE) is a common technique used by researchers to generate convergent construct validity (Hair *et al.*, 2017). On the other hand, the estimate for convergent validity measurement is the average variance explained (AVE) proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981). The argument was that AVE is the total average of the squared loadings items of a given construct.

3.4.1.3 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity refers to a condition where the researchers see that every indicator of a theoretical model is different in terms of statistics (Bhatti & Rehman 2020; Rehman *et al.*, 2019). Discriminant validity in this study was evaluated using the Fornel-Larcker criterion, which was carried out by assessing the square root of AVE values and the latent variable correlations, which must have a higher value than any other latent construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Thus, the results displayed that the square roots of AVE values are higher than the rest of the correspondent latent constructs, revealing the formation of discriminant validity in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: *Discriminant Validity Values (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)*

Constructs	Knowledge	IEAP	MP	Delivery	Truthfulness	Responsibility
Knowledge/Wisdom	0.72					
IEAP	0.69	0.71				
Mosjid Performance	0.70	0.66	0.73			
Delivery of *khutbah*	0.71	0.62	0.64	0.71		
Truthfulness	0.10	0.11	0.09	0.09	0.73	
Responsibility	0.70	0.65	0.68	0.70	0.11	0.71

3.4.2. Structural Model Measures

The structural model measures the relationships connecting the latent constructs in the hypothetical model (Hair *et al.*, 2016). All the anticipated research model variables designated the hypotheses were tested through the structural model. Similarly, the structural model evaluates the inter-connections amid exogenous variables, organization intangible resources of GCA of imamship (Knowledge/Wisdom, Delivery of *Khutbah*. Truthfulness and Responsibility), and the endogenous variable, *Masjid* performance, and the proposed mediator, Islamic ethics administrative practice. In this study, the structural model was evaluated for path coefficient significance of the structural model relationships, level of coefficient of determination (R^2), effect sizes (f^2), the predictive relevance (Q^2).

Insert Table 4.11 Structural Model (Inner Model) and Hypotheses Testing

Table 4.11 shows the results of the hypotheses testing for the thirteen hypotheses (nine direct hypotheses and four indirect hypotheses) relationship as proposed in this study. Moreover, this is equally applicable to the mediating hypotheses that are supported. In this instance, perceived usefulness has a positive and significant influence. Therefore, the results are presented below: -

In this instance, perceived usefulness has a positive and significant influence on the GCA of imamship (Knowledge/Wisdom, Delivery of *Khutbah*. Truthfulness, and Responsibility). Knowledge/Wisdom of Imamship and IEAP with beta ($\beta = 0.18$), t-statistic (t = 5.57) and p-value (p = 0.00). Perceived usefulness has a positive and significant relationship with knowledge/wisdom of Imamship and MP. ($\beta=0.07$, t=2.89, p<0.00). Perceived ease of use has a significant and positive relationship with the Delivery of *Khutbah* and IEAP ($\beta=0.48$, t=10.32, p<0.00). Perceived Security has a positive and significant effect on the Delivery of *Khutbah* and MP ($\beta=0.72$, t=17.01, p<0.00). Perceived security has a positive and significant impact on the truthfulness of Imamaship and IEAP ($\beta=0.56$, t=14.14, p<0.00). The truthfulness of Imamship has a positive and significant impact on MP ($\beta=0.9$, t=2.51, p<0.01). Perceived Security has a positive and significant effect on the responsibility of Imamship and IEAP ($\beta=0.20$, t=6.50, p<0.00). Perceived security has a positive and significant impact on the responsibility of Imamship and MP ($\beta=0.57$, t=16.23, p<0.00). In this respect, the affected of nine direct hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H8, and H9) are supported. Calculating mediation through this approach has been supported by various contemporary scholars who argued that this method is superior to Baron and Kenny's (1986) traditional method (Mackinnon *et al.*, 2007; Zhao *et al.*, 2010).

The mediating effect determined Ned Kock's (2013) approach by running the bootstrapping at 500 subsamples and using the Sobel calculator to test the hypothesized mediation effect of IEAP between the four exogenous constructs and the endogenous construct of the study. Based on the calculation, the result shows that the IEAP mediates between perceived usefulness and Knowledge/Wisdom of Imamship and *Masjid* Performance (IEAP*Knowledge->MP) with beta ($\beta=0.22$, t=7.25, p<0.01), and also mediating of IEAP relationship between perceived Delivery of *Khutbah* and MP ($\beta=0.68$, t=2.63, p<0.01). While the mediating of IEAP relationship between perceived truthfulness of Imamship and MP ($\beta=0.68$, t=2.63, p<0.01). Finally, the IEAP relationship mediating between Imamship and MP's

perceived responsibility (β=0.69, t=3.24, p<0.01). Therefore, the affected of four indirect hypotheses (H10, H11, H12, and H13) are supported. The calculating of the mediation through this study approach has been endorsed by various contemporary Islamic scholars who argued that a significant relationship Islamic ethics administrative practices towards Islamic leadership on performance of *Masjid* (Attahiru, Al-Aidaros, & Md Yusof, 2016; Eniafe *et al.* 2020; Mutalib *et al.* 2017). Also, this method is superior to Baron and Kenny's (1986) traditional method (Mackinnon *et al.*, 2007; Zhao *et al.*, 2010).

4. Discussions

This study examines the mediating effect of IEAP in the relationship between GCA of imamship (Knowledge/Wisdom, Delivery of khutbah. Truthfulness, and Responsibility) on MP for Muslim Ummah Lagos State Nigeria. This section discusses the present study's findings based on the research questions, objectives, framework, underpinning theory, and research hypotheses relationships developments. This empirical study answers the main research questions. The mediating effect of IEAP between GCA of imamship (Knowledge/Wisdom, Delivery of *khutbah*. Truthfulness and Responsibility) were significant influences on the MP in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Therefore, the findings above indicate that when Chief Imams of the Central *Masaajid* in Lagos State, Nigeria, demonstrates good attitudes, and the four qualities of GCA dimensions as relates to Prophet Muhammad (SAW), Knowledge/Wisdom, Truthfulness, Responsibility/Trust, and Deliverance of *Khutbah*, such leader gains the confidence, support and the followership of his people the *Masjid* congregation and *Muslim Ummah*. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is a higher level of exemplary leadership that all Muslim leaders are expected to emulate, especially the imams, as Allah Almighty (SWT) testifies to his ethical standard and possesses all good exemplary qualities characters that are desired from a leader. He (SWT) says in the Holy *Qur'an* (*Surah al-Ahzab & al-Qolam*) below concerning this: -

> "*There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often;*" (*Qur'an*33, Verse21); Additionally: "*And indeed, you are of a great moral character*" (*Qur'an*68, Verse4).

4.1 Theoretical and Practical Contributions

The contribution of this study from the theoretical and practical perspectives lies in identifying how the mediating effect of IEAP in the relationship between *GCA* of imamship (Knowledge/Wisdom, Delivery of *khutbah*. Truthfulness, and Responsibility) on MP for *Muslim Ummah* in Lagos State, Nigeria. Previous researchers have conducted limited research focused on the MP. Therefore, this study contributes to the literature by investigating the factors mentioned in the context and developing a theoretical framework that will affect MP among Chief Imams in Lagos.

Governments across levels should make an effort towards creating a Ministry to overlook Religious Affairs. This information could be replicated across neighboring southwest states such as Ondo, Ekiti, Ogun, Oyo and Osun, and other states in Nigeria generally. The Ministry could overlook inter-religious issues, debates, and conflict resolution. It could serve as the basis for Council of Chief Imams and *ʾulamahu* of Lagos State, Lagos State Government, Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC), Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) to see the need to oversee the affairs of Islamic societies and also to help them maintain the religious status quo of the state since the state is a multi-religious state.

This information will be pivotal in assisting the Government at all levels to solve any form of social conflicts arising from religion through a proper channel to review existing policy for the betterment of her future generation in line with the finding of the research. Also, the Ministry could organize conferences, seminars, and workshops from time to time for Chief Imams, Religious Preachers, *Ustath/Asatitha* (Islamic lecturers), researchers, missionaries, Muslim clerics, *Amīr/Amīrah* (Presidents of Muslim Organizations: Male/Female) to keep them informed of trends in religious circles. The Ministry could also translate books into three major Nigerian languages via Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo. As a result, the current damaging accusations of terrorism against Islam will lessen as the center will orientate and educate everybody that Islam has nothing to do with terrorism. Therefore, as a recommendation of this study, the Government of Lagos State Nigeria should monitor the Imamship of central *Masaajid* to checkmate unholy practices such as hate and extremist *Khutbah*, *Tazkirah* (preaching) capable of disrupting the peaceful co-existence among different religions.

4.2 Recommendation of the Study

As a recommendation of this research, the Government of Lagos State Nigeria should monitor the Imamship of central mosques to checkmate unholy practices such as hate and extremist Khutbah, Tazkirah (preaching) capable of disrupting the peaceful co-existence among different religions. This issue will also reduce the tendency of owners of a central mosque to use it to achieve their interest socially and politically. The training system should also strengthen mosque leaders' leadership and management capabilities. Furthermore, the participation of chief Imams must organize *Qur'an* tuition in the *Masjid* for Muslim Ummah because it is the main activity of the mosque. At the same time, it is in terms of the resources of the Imam of the Mosque to organize *Qur'an* tuition among his followers.

5.   Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to assess the mediating effect of IEAP on the relationship between *GCA* of imamship (Knowledge/Wisdom, Delivery of *khutbah*. Truthfulness, and Responsibility) and MP for *Muslim Ummah* in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study was underpinned by Islamic human resources management (IHRM) and resource-based theory (RBT). Although the influence of IEAP and GCA of imamship has been tested on MP, researchers have paid lesser attention to the holistic integration of all these constructs (Knowledge/Wisdom, Delivery of *khutbah*. Truthfulness, and Responsibility) in a framework. Thus, this study was conducted for testing and validating a conceptual framework to elucidate the hypothesized relationships.

The empirical results of this study have contributed to the body of literature. This study addressed the significant theoretical research gap by integrating the mediating role of IEAP on the relationship between the GCA of imamship and MP. Also, its conceptual framework has provided additional support to the use of IHRM and RBT. Further, the study added to the limited studies within the confine of IEAP in developing countries towards improving MP. In addition to the theoretical contributions, this study also provides critical practical insights to the Chief Imams on improving the MP. People will be attracted to coming to the *Masjid* for learning, praying, consulting, listening to *Khutbah Jumu'ah* and able all there will be better performance of the *Masajid* based on the Holy *Qur'an*, the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), and emphasizing spiritual motivation based on Islamic *Shari'ah*, in Lagos State, Nigeria.

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