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A Study of the Ethical Principles of Political Leadership Presented in *'Nahj al-Balagha'*: Analyzing Ethical Norms and Their Application in Governance and Leadership

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ABSTRACT

SUBJECT & OBJECTIVES: This article explores the ethics of political leaders in "*Nahj al-Balagha*," a collection of sayings, letters, and sermons attributed to Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib , the first imam of the Shiites and the fourth caliph in Sunni Islam, as well as a prominent leader of the historical period of Islam. Over the centuries, "*Nahj al-Balagha*" has become an integral source of Muslim literature, and its content is actively studied for ethical and political lessons. This research aims to analyze the ethical principles and norms embedded in "*Nahj al-Balagha*," with"a focus on the role of political leaders.

METHOD & FINDING: The research is conducted through qualitative analysis of the texts in "*Nahj al-Balagha*" using methods such as thematic analysis, content analysis, and comparative analysis. The texts are systematically examined to identify explicit and implicit ethical principles,as well as examples and scenarios related to political ethics. Contextual data is utilized for a more comprehensive understanding of the philosophy and ethics embedded in "*Nahj al-Balagha*".

CONCLUSION: It is expected that the results of this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of the ethical values that political leaders should adhere to according to "*Nahj al-Balagha*." The study encompasses several key aspects, such as justice, honesty, compassion, conscience, governance, and leadership. The ethical expectations of leaders are presented in three contexts: subordinates, the general population, and their adversaries. By analyzing the texts of "*Nahj al-Balagha*" related to political matters and leadership, this work seeks to determine which ethical principles are deemed important for political leaders and how these principles may influence their behavior and decision-making.

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Introduction

In today's world, society is grappling with a range of crises, including economic instability, social upheaval, and environmental degradation, which are compounded by ongoing conflicts that claim countless lives and displace millions each year *(Kruchinin, 2015)*. The 2020 pandemic further highlighted vulnerabilities in resilience frameworks, revealing gaps in the ability of communities and nations to adapt to unprecedented challenges *(Babkin, 2020)*. These global issues emphasize the critical need for effective and ethical leadership, as existing systems often struggle to provide consistent and equitable solutions *(Roth & Lee, 2006; Ibragimov, 2009)*.

Islamic ethics, rooted in divine guidance, offer a cohesive framework that transcends the limitations of secular governance models. Based on the Quran, the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, and the principles articulated by Imam Ali in *Nahj al-Balagha*, Islamic ethics provide actionable guidance for leaders in navigating complex societal challenges *(Tariq, 2018; Platonova, 2018)*.

Nahj al-Balagha stands out as a seminal text, offering a unique synthesis of practical wisdom and ethical principles. This collection of sermons, letters, and sayings by Imam Ali is renowned for its emphasis on justice, compassion, and accountability, making it a timeless guide for ethical leadership *(Tariq, 1999; Mohseni-Cheraghlou, 2015)*.

Despite being over a millennium old, *Nahj al-Balagha* continues to provide relevant insights for addressing modern leadership dilemmas. Its principles extend beyond individual relationships to encompass societal responsibilities, offering a universal perspective on governance and ethical norms *(Ghazvini, 1992)*. This study focuses on the ethical frameworks outlined in *Nahj al-Balagha*, examining the role of leaders in their relationships with agents, ordinary citizens, and opposition *(Alem, 2000)*. By analyzing the ethical ideals articulated in the text, this research aims to highlight its enduring significance as a model for ethical governance and societal progress.

Theoretical Foundations

The study of ethical principles in political leadership within the Islamic tradition is grounded in centuries of philosophical and theological inquiry *(Nasr, 2010)*. Unlike secular approaches, Islamic ethics regards leadership as a divine trust, interweaving administrative duties with moral and spiritual responsibilities. Leaders are expected to adhere to ethical norms that serve the well-being of society and align with the principles outlined in the Quran and other foundational texts *(Kamali, 2008)*. Leadership, in this context, transcends mere governance, becoming a moral obligation characterized by respect, mercy, and justice.

Among the central texts that elaborate on these principles, *Nahj al-Balagha* occupies a prominent position. Authored by Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib, this compilation of sermons, letters, and sayings provides clear ethical guidelines for leaders, emphasizing justice, accountability, and compassion as indispensable traits of effective governance *(Amir-Moezzi, 2014)*. Its teachings balance practical advice with profound spiritual insights, making it a cornerstone for understanding Islamic leadership ethics.

Islamic scholarship has extensively explored *Nahj al-Balagha*'s significance. Ansari Qomi (2010) highlights its relevance in shaping governance models that align with Quranic prescriptions. Mavani (2013) underscores its enduring applicability, noting that its ethical principles remain pertinent in addressing modern leadership challenges. These studies emphasize *Nahj al-Balagha* as both a historical artifact and a contemporary guide for ethical leadership.

Literature Review

Internationally, the ethical dimensions of leadership have garnered significant attention in broader contexts. Beekun and Badawi (2005) examine the role of justice, mercy, accountability, and humility in leadership, comparing these Islamic principles with secular leadership models. Sachedina (2022) provides an analysis of *'Adl* (justice) as a universal value that transcends cultural boundaries, resonating with both Islamic and modern governance frameworks.

Roth & Lee. (2006) discuss challenges in contemporary leadership, highlighting the need for ethical accountability in addressing global crises.

Within the Islamic tradition, the foundational ethical principles of leadership justice, accountability, mercy, and humility are deeply rooted in early Islamic thought. Esposito (2011) traces their origins to the early Islamic era when governance was inseparable from moral and spiritual values. Leadership was regarded as the highest form of service, with rulers expected to guide their communities with integrity, compassion, and fairness. These principles, articulated in texts like *Nahj al-Balagha*, continue to inspire modern scholarship and practice.

In addition to Islamic scholarship, international studies have contributed to understanding the relevance of these principles in a globalized world. Works such as those by Chong and Eggleton (2003) and Keeley (2007) examine the ethical dimensions of leadership in contemporary organizations, emphasizing the importance of transparency and inclusivity. These studies provide valuable insights into how Islamic ethical frameworks can address modern challenges, offering a unique perspective on governance.

By bridging traditional and modern approaches, this study contributes to the growing body of research on ethical leadership. It situates *Nahj al-Balagha* within both its historical and

contemporary contexts, highlighting its relevance as a guide for addressing complex societal and organizational challenges. The integration of internal and international scholarship enriches the understanding of leadership ethics, providing a comprehensive framework for fostering trust, inclusivity, and justice in governance.

1. Imam Ali's Ideas and Concepts on Leadership and Governance

Leadership, according to Imam Ali, is fundamentally an ethical responsibility. In *Nahj al-Balagha*, leadership is presented not as mere management but as a moral duty, deeply intertwined with principles such as justice, accountability, and compassion. These principles align closely with Quranic ethics and provide leaders with a framework for addressing governance challenges through ethical prescriptions *(Rutter, 2012)*.

Imam Ali's teachings emphasize the ethical obligation of leaders to protect the underprivileged, uphold public accountability, and maintain justice as the cornerstone of governance *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, 11ᵗʰ century)*. By offering practical guidance for moral decision-making, *Nahj al-Balagha* remains a key source of inspiration for contemporary political leadership *(Bosk & Vries, 2004)*. The ethical framework it presents reflects the Quran's teachings, offering detailed prescriptions for practical application in governance *(Rutter, 2012; Fitzpatrick & Walker, 2014)*.

2. Practical Dimensions of Ethical Leadership

According to Imam Ali, leadership has two key components: tactical and strategic. Tactical leadership focuses on immediate tasks, requiring timely and effective decision-making, organizing actions, and evaluating performance. Whether in Islamic or non-Islamic contexts, leaders are judged by their results *(Baradaran, 2008)*. Strategic leadership addresses global issues, setting priorities and guiding society in response to broader challenges.

From the texts of *Nahj al-Balagha*, eleven components of governance emerge:

- Supremacy of law.
- Public order guarantees.
- Equality before the law.
- Participation.
- Self-restraint.
- Guiding people in their quest for God.
- Awareness of public opinion.
- Building a progressive economic system.
- Protecting the underprivileged.
- Creating a social security system.
- Accountability.

These components provide practical benchmarks for implementing ethical governance and ensuring societal well-being *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, 11ᵗʰ century)*.

Practical examples provided in Nahj al-Balagha clarify how these principles can be applied, ensuring a thorough understanding of governance practices *(Mavani, 2013)*.

3. Ethical Requirements of a Political Leader Regarding Ordinary Citizens

Imam Ali, in his collection of sermons, letters, and sayings known as *Nahj al-Balagha*, laid out a comprehensive ethical framework for political leaders. His teachings emphasize the responsibilities of rulers towards ordinary citizens, focusing on the principles of justice, fairness, compassion, and humility. In *Nahj al-Balagha*, Imam Ali repeatedly stresses the importance of governance that benefits all citizens, particularly the most vulnerable, while ensuring that leaders maintain ethical integrity and humility in their rule.

A key theme in Imam Ali's teachings is the importance of ethical behavior at all levels of governance. He emphasizes that leaders should treat all individuals with dignity and respect, regardless of their social or economic status *(Ansari Qomi, 2010)*. The greatness of a leader lies not in their power or position but in their ability to assume responsibility for both major and minor affairs, to act justly in both public and private actions, and to uphold the rights of all citizens, especially the marginalized *(Schmitter, 2012)*.

3.1. Execution of Justice in Leadership

Justice is the cornerstone of Islamic leadership as outlined by Imam Ali. His understanding of justice extends beyond mere adherence to the law, encompassing fairness, compassion, and

the moral duty to uphold the rights of all citizens, particularly the vulnerable. Imam Ali defines justice as "placing things in their proper order" *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Aphorism 437)*, which implies not only legal fairness but also the appropriate allocation of resources and responsibilities. True justice, he argues, is achieved when each individual is given their due, based on their unique circumstances and needs *(Husserl, 1970)*.

Imam Ali's teachings reflect his belief that justice must guide leadership, especially in times of conflict when fairness must underpin decisions and actions *(Radelet, 1989)*. *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Letter 27)*.

This illustrates his commitment to balancing the treatment of the powerful and the weak, ensuring that no one can exploit their position for personal gain while safeguarding the marginalized from injustice.

Justice, as envisioned by Imam Ali, is not simply about equality in treatment but involves recognizing and addressing the specific needs of different societal groups. Leaders must actively pursue justice as a social objective to create a just and equitable society. Imam Ali views justice as the foundation of a stable state and the ultimate goal of governance *(Aristotle, 2009)*. To achieve this, rulers are tasked with ensuring that all individuals have equal access to their rights and opportunities, free from discrimination or favoritism. His teachings continue to offer

timeless guidance on the execution of justice as the bedrock of ethical leadership and governance.

3.2. Keen Awareness of Individuals' Social-Economic Status

One of the distinguishing features of Imam Ali's leadership was his keen awareness of the social conditions in his community. He was deeply attuned to the rights of the people and the dangers posed by oppressive rulers who sought to exploit the weak. He emphasized that leaders must remain vigilant against any actions that threaten the rights of ordinary citizens. In cases where injustice occurred, Imam Ali was known to confront oppressors directly, ensuring that the rights of the vulnerable were protected *(Gearing, 2004)*.

Imam Ali's leadership also highlighted the importance of a ruler's awareness of the people's needs and conditions. He was a strong advocate for social justice, ensuring that rulers were in touch with the needs of their citizens and addressed any grievances that arose. He encouraged rulers to develop a critical attitude toward their policies, urging them to reflect on their decisions and seek counsel from those who were not afraid to speak the truth *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Letter 53)*.

3.3. Fostering Ethical Leadership in Complex Social Structures

Imam Ali offers profound insights into the challenges of leadership in diverse and complex social structures. He emphasizes that a leader's primary responsibility is to harmonize competing interests within society while ensuring that justice and equity remain central. This requires not only adherence to ethical principles but also a nuanced understanding of societal dynamics and human behavior.

According to Imam Ali, leaders must be proactive in addressing systemic injustices that disproportionately affect marginalized groups. He warns against complacency, stating, "Beware of injustice, for it will lead to destruction and discord among the people" *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Aphorism 431)*. This guidance reflects the necessity of ethical vigilance in governance, where leaders are tasked with identifying and rectifying inequalities before they escalate into societal unrest.

A critical aspect of ethical leadership is the capacity to mediate conflicts and foster reconciliation. Imam Ali underscores the importance of patience and dialogue, advising leaders to "extend a hand of peace even to those who oppose you, for reconciliation strengthens the bonds of society" *(S arīf al-Raḍī, Letter 53)*. This perspective highlights the leader's role as a unifier, capable of navigating discord through fairness and empathy.

Moreover, ethical leadership requires balancing individual needs with collective goals. Imam Ali advocates for policies that promote social welfare without sacrificing personal freedoms. He writes: "Governance is a trust; fulfill it with the utmost care, so that the rights of the people

are upheld and the integrity of society is preserved" *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Sermon 216)*. This teaching underscores the dual obligation of leaders to serve both the individual and the community.

Finally, Imam Ali stresses that ethical leadership is not static; it demands continuous self-reflection and adaptation to changing circumstances. Leaders must remain humble, acknowledging their own fallibility while striving for improvement. *"A leader who does not question their own actions risks straying from justice,"* He warned *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Aphorism 247)*. This principle of self-accountability ensures that leadership remains aligned with ethical standards, even amidst evolving societal challenges.

By integrating these teachings, leaders can navigate the complexities of modern governance while maintaining ethical integrity. Imam Ali's insights provide a timeless framework for fostering social harmony, addressing systemic injustices, and achieving equitable progress.

4. Ethical Requirements for Political Leaders Regarding Their Agents

Imam Ali outlines the ethical responsibilities of political leaders toward their agents in *Nahj al-Balagha*. Agents, representing the ruler's aut oritymust embody competence, loyalty, and ethical integrity. Imam Ali emphasized that agents should be well-versed in Islamic teachings, possess practical experience, and demonstrate ethical

judgment. Their primary functions include protecting the people, ensuring justice, and preventing governmental overreach. Effective agents are vital to the functioning of a just and ethical state.

4.1. Imam Ali's Framework for Governance and Social Protection

Imam Ali categorized the functions of an agent into three main areas:

- protecting people from aggression, theft, and violence;
- ensuring economic freedom by preventing arbitrary government actions;
- supporting a predictable and fair judicial system.

These responsibilities ensure that agents protect individuals' rights and maintain social harmony, which aligns with the leader's overarching goal of promoting justice.

4.2. Ethical Requirements for Agents

Imam Ali sets forth distinct ethical standards for agents, recognizing their influential roles and the responsibilities they bear. Unlike ordinary citizens, agents wield authority that can significantly impact society, making it imperative for them to embody the highest moral principles. In *Nahj al-Balagha*, Imam Ali emphasizes three essential qualities that agents must possess: competence, moral integrity, and loyalty.

Competence is a foundational requirement for agents, as their decisions directly influence the welfare of society. Imam Ali states, "The most

deserving of this work is the one most capable of conducting affairs and well-versed in God's commandments" *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Sermon 172)*.

This statement underscores the necessity of appointing individuals with both practical experience and a deep understanding of ethical principles. In his letter to Malik al-Ashtar, Imam Ali advises selecting agents who possess sound judgment and the ability to navigate complex challenges, ensuring that justice prevails.

Moral integrity is another critical quality that protects agents from corruption and bias. Imam Ali insists that agents must act with honesty and fairness, upholding their duties without succumbing to personal ambition or external pressures. These principles safeguard the trust placed in agents and ensure that their actions align with the broader goals of justice and governance.

Loyalty, as described by Imam Ali, reflects the agent's dedication to their responsibilities and to the ethical principles that govern their role. This loyalty ensures that agents remain steadfast in their commitment to serve the interests of the people, particularly the vulnerable while maintaining harmony within society.

By adhering to these ethical standards, agents fulfill their roles with integrity and competence, contributing to a just and equitable governance system. Imam Ali's teachings serve as a timeless guide, emphasizing the moral strength required to uphold justice and protect societal harmony.

4.2.1. Integrity, Competence, and Loyalty

Imam Ali stressed the importance of an agent's loyalty and commitment to the ruler's vision. Agents must align with the leader's goals and decisions while also maintaining their ethical integrity. He advised Malik al-Ashtar to select honest and reliable agents, warning that agents who seek personal gain or engage in corruption would undermine the state's stability *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Letter 53)*.

Agents must also possess foresight and pragmatic thinking. Imam Ali emphasized the need for patience and endurance, arguing that these traits are essential for effective leadership. In Sermon 154, he said, "A wise person sees the end of their work and understands the challenges of what they wish to accomplish" *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Sermon 154)*.

4.2.2. Decision-Making and Responsibility

One critical ethical requirement for agents is their willingness to take responsibility for their decisions. Imam Ali stressed the importance of decisiveness in leadership, advising agents to act with confidence and avoid hesitation. In Saying 274, He states, "Do not turn your knowledge into ignorance and uncertainty when you know how to act and are confident that you will act" *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Aphorism 274)*.

4.2.3. Education and Perseverance in Leadership

Imam Ali highlights education and perseverance as essential for ethical and effective leadership. Leadership, in his view, demands continuous growth and adaptation. Education extends beyond formal learning, emphasizing intellectual curiosity, self-awareness, and moral refinement. Leaders committed to learning are better equipped to make ethical decisions, adapt to societal changes, and guide their teams effectively *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Saying 80)*.

Perseverance complements education by fostering resilience and steadfastness in pursuing justice and overcoming challenges. Imam Ali advises, "Do not let difficulties deter you from pursuing what is right, for perseverance is the key to success" *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Aphorism 183)*. It ensures leaders remain focused and principled despite adversity. Together, education and perseverance create a virtuous cycle, enabling leaders to adapt, inspire trust, and maintain integrity. These principles remain highly relevant for navigating modern leadership challenges and fostering long-term success.

Therefore, Imam Ali's teachings in *Nahj al-Balagha* provide a detailed framework for the ethical responsibilities of political leaders and their agents. These teachings emphasize three key ethical principles: personal accountability, unwavering commitment to justice, and ethical strength. Agents must embody specific qualities, including competence, integrity, loyalty, and foresight, to fulfill their duties effectively.

In *Nahj al-Balagha*, Imam Ali outlines three primary responsibilities for agents: Protecting people from aggression, theft, and violence, as emphasized in his letter to Malik al-Ashtar *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Letter 53)*.

Ensuring economic freedom by preventing arbitrary government actions and safeguarding fair resource distribution *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Letter 27)*. Supporting a predictable and fair judicial system that ensures justice for all segments of society *(Nahj al-Balagha, Sermon 216)*.

These responsibilities illustrate that justice is not merely a theoretical ideal but a practical obligation that underpins effective governance. By adhering to these principles, agents contribute to maintaining social harmony and upholding the moral vision of leadership presented by Imam Ali.

Incorporating these ethical teachings into contemporary leadership practices ensures that governance not only meets the immediate needs of society but also fosters long-term stability and equity. Imam Ali's timeless wisdom provides a guiding light for political leaders and their agents, enabling them to navigate the complexities of governance with fairness and integrity.

5. Ethical Requirements for Political Leaders Regarding Opponents

Imam Ali emphasized the ethical responsibilities of Islamic leaders when dealing with political opposition, as presented in *Nahj al-Balagha*. His teachings advocate for justice, tolerance, and dialogue with opposition groups, promoting peaceful conflict resolution and the maintenance of integrity. Leaders should avoid deceit and honor agreements, even with adversaries. This approach ensures long-term peace and prevents unnecessary bloodshed.

5.1. Understanding Political Opposition

Imam Ali viewed opposition as a natural part of governance. Political opposition often represents alternative ideologies or dissenting views. Rather than suppress opposition, leaders should foster an environment of fairness and open dialogue. He cautioned against harboring ill will and emphasized cooperation: "Refrain from harboring ill will... and refusing to offer help to each other" *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Sermon 192).*

5.2. Loyalty and Honoring Agreements

Loyalty and adherence to agreements were central to Imam Ali's ethical framework. He stressed that agreements should be honored, stating: "I do not know of any better shield... than faithfulness in agreements" *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Sermon 41).* Even in conflict, a leader should remain truthful and avoid betrayal, ensuring that peace and dialogue are prioritized over violence.

5.3. Justice in Punishment

In *Nahj al-Balagha*, Imam Ali emphasizes the necessity of justice in punishment, stating: "Beware of shedding blood unjustly, for nothing invites divine retribution, greater consequences, or quicker removal of divine blessings and shortening of life spans, than shedding innocent blood" *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Letter 53).*

This quote underscores the severe consequences of unjust punishment, particularly the shedding of innocent blood, which incurs divine wrath and disrupts societal harmony. Justice in punishment, therefore, is a core principle to ensure the preservation of divine mercy and societal stability.

5.4. Treatment of Captured Enemies

Imam Ali emphasized patience, forgiveness, and dignity in dealing with adversaries, avoiding torture or humiliation even for captured enemies. This is evident in Sermon 43 of *Nahj al-Balagha*, where He advises patience and careful consideration before resorting to conflict and says, "My opinion is in favor of patience, so wait a while. (In the meantime) I do not dislike your getting ready" *(Sharīf al-Raḍī, Sermon 43).* This guidance reflects his prioritization of peaceful resolution and moral decision-making.

Imam Ali's approach highlights his commitment to justice and ethical

leadership. He ensures that actions are not driven by anger or haste. He advocates for fairness and humanity even in challenging situations, focusing on rehabilitation and upholding moral principles rather than punitive measures.

Conclusion

This study delves into the leadership principles articulated in *Nahj al-Balagha* by Imam Ali , offering a rich tapestry of ethical and ethical norms that can guide contemporary leaders across various fields. The research demonstrates that the ethical framework provided by Imam Ali remains highly relevant, addressing key dimensions of leadership such as justice, humility, compassion, and perseverance. These principles are not only foundational to Islamic governance but are universally applicable, offering insights that can be adopted by leaders in the modern world.

Throughout *Nahj al-Balagha*, Imam Ali emphasizes the central role of justice. It is not simply about enforcing laws; it is about ensuring fairness, equality, and the protection of rights, regardless of a person's social standing, background, or faith. Justice, as described by Imam Ali , is the bedrock of ethical leadership, enabling leaders to create environments where fairness prevails and trust is built among all members of society. Leaders must act impartially, ensuring that their decisions are not swayed by personal biases or social pressures, but rather guided by the pursuit of justice.

The second crucial principle in *Nahj al-Balagha* is humility. Imam Ali repeatedly reminds leaders that power and authority are not ends in themselves but are responsibilities that require service to others. A leader must not be arrogant or driven by personal gain; instead, they should act with modesty, focusing on the collective good rather than self-promotion. Humility allows leaders to remain grounded, fostering an environment of mutual respect and cooperation. When leaders exhibit humility, they earn the trust of their followers and can more effectively lead teams toward achieving common goals.

Compassion is another core element of leadership emphasized by Imam Ali Compassion is the ability to empathize with others, particularly those who are vulnerable or in need. A compassionate leader takes the time to understand the concerns of their subordinates, offering support and guidance when necessary. This creates a sense of security and loyalty within a team, allowing individuals to thrive both personally and professionally. In *Nahj al-Balagha*, Imam Ali underscores the importance of treating others with kindness and dignity, particularly in times of hardship. Compassion is a key quality that distinguishes great leaders from merely competent ones.

One another principle that emerges from the study is the emphasis on education and perseverance. Leaders,

according to Imam Ali, must be continuously committed to learning and self-improvement. A leader who remains intellectually curious and open to new ideas is better equipped to adapt to changing circumstances and to guide their team through challenges. Perseverance, in this context, refers to the leader's resilience in the face of difficulties. Imam Ali encourages leaders to remain steadfast in their pursuit of justice and to persevere through trials and tribulations. This quality is essential for long-term success, as it allows leaders to remain focused on their objectives even when faced with obstacles.

The study also highlights Imam Ali's guidance on the relationship between leaders and their subordinates. Effective leaders, as outlined in *Nahj al-Balagha*, should not only lead but also mentor. They should listen to the opinions of their subordinates, fostering an environment where everyone's voice is heard. By showing genuine care for the well-being of their team members, leaders can cultivate loyalty and trust. This two-way relationship is critical for maintaining a healthy dynamic within the organization, where leaders are seen not as distant figures of authority but as approachable mentors who are invested in the growth and success of their subordinates.

Dealing with opponents, Imam Ali sets high ethical standards that demand honesty, fairness, and a commitment to peaceful conflict resolution. Leaders are urged to engage with their adversaries tactfully, avoiding deceit or manipulation. Imam Ali promotes diplomacy and the preservation of peace, reminding leaders that true strength lies in their ability to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence. This principle is particularly relevant in today's world, where political and social tensions are often resolved through force rather than dialogue. By adhering to these ethical standards, leaders can foster environments of mutual respect, where conflicts are resolved peacefully and inclusively.

A key takeaway from this study is the enduring relevance of the leadership principles in *Nahj al-Balagha*. Justice, humility, compassion, education, and perseverance are not just abstract ideals but practical qualities that can make leaders more effective, empathetic, and fair. By embodying these principles, leaders can build teams that work cohesively and harmoniously toward common goals. The ethical foundation outlined by Imam Ali provides a roadmap for leaders to navigate the complexities of modern leadership, helping them to inspire trust, foster collaboration, and achieve lasting success.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this manuscript.

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