HUMAN MANAGEMENT MODELS: DIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS OF CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC THINKERS[1]

Fadzila Azni Ahmad[2]

Centre for Islamic Management Development Studies
Centre for Social Science Studies
University of Science Malaysia
E-mail: suekainah@yahoo.com / sukainah@usm.my

ABSTRACT

This paper has two main objectives. Firstly, it attempts to assess how current human management models are presently perceived by the contemporary Islamic thinkers. Secondly, it suggests the basis of analysis in perceiving the current human management models. Human management models which are widely proposed to and adopted by institutions and organizations throughout the world are mostly originated from the west and Japan. These models are also commonly accepted amongst the Islamic development institutions as the definitive reference for their management practices. The widespread use of such models particularly by the Islamic development institutions has eventually led to considerable discussion among Muslim scholars on how to perceive them. The questions are, what are the contemporary Islamic thinkers' perception of these models and the position of the perception looking from Islamic perspective? Subsequently, what is the Islamic basis of analysis best used to determine a perception of the models? This paper attempts to answer these questions.

Keywords: Human Management, Islamic Management, Total Quality Management

1. INTRODUCTION

This article analyses the perception regarding the current application of human management by contemporary Islamic thinkers. This analysis is important as it can highlight the state and problems of human management applications today through an examination of theories, and will then conclude by directing the discussion towards answering the question: What should be considered when studying and conceptualising human management from an Islamic perspective?

To achieve this objective, the article will, first and foremost, study human management from an Islamic perspective as espoused by contemporary Islamic thinkers through their work. Then, based on the study, the article will present the features/characteristics that should be considered in forming a concept of human management in the real sense of the word.

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[2] Fadzila Azni Ahmad is a senior lecturer of Centre for Islamic Development Management studies Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia.

In this article, discussions on human management will be done within the context of the basic management model in use at present. The models referred to and found to be predominantly applied include Total Quality Management (TQM), Zero-Defect Management, McKinsey's 7-S, and Kaizen's. Generally, discussions on human management are held in the context of management models because human management as it is today tends to be discussed as part of the components that make up the existing management models.

2. HUMAN MANAGEMENT FROM THE ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ACCORDING TO CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC THINKERS

Based on the examination of existing studies and writings of contemporary Islamic thinkers, human management models from an Islamic perspective can be divided into four groups. First, writings and studies that put forward Islamic justification for today's human management models; second, writings and studies that suggest the embodying of Islamic values into the current human management models; third, writings and studies that convey Islamic criticism towards the current human management models; and fourth, writings and studies that attempt to highlight human management models from the perspective of Islam itself.

2.1 Presenting Islamic Justification for Present Day Human Management

There are Islamic thinkers who have presented Islamic justification for the current or conventional human management in their writings or studies. These Islamic thinkers are inclined to apply, in principle, the existing management concept or that which is referred to as the conventional concept as the framework for human management in Islam. Their justification for accepting the conventional management model is based either on the Qur'anic verses, the Traditions of the Prophet (pbuh) or the management practices found in the early days of Islam. For instance, Muhammad al-Buraey (2000) and Muhammed Asghar (2002) justify the Total Quality Management (TQM) model with Qur'anic verses[3], as does Hairunnizam Wahid *et al.* towards the Zero-Defect Management model[4].

The *hadith* or Traditions of the Prophet (pbuh) were also submitted by the Islamic thinkers as justification for the conventional management. Muhammad al-Buraey (2000), for example, submits a *hadith* that promotes the execution of every action in the best possible manner[5], as well as a *hadith* that explains the meaning of *ihsan*[6] (beneficence) for justifying the application of the standard TQM model for human management.

Besides the Quranic verses and *hadiths* of the Prophet s.a.w., the management practices of the Prophet s.a.w. and *Khulafa al-Rashidin* are also highlighted to justify the application of the conventional management concept. This was done by Syed Othman al-Habshi (1995 and 1998) in justifying McKinsey's 7-S, Kaizen's, Management by Walking About (MBWA) and Management by Walking Outside (MBWO) models, as well as by Aidit Hj Ghazali (1993) in justifying the Total Quality Control (TQC) management model.

Among the studies that submit Islamic justification for the conventional management models, there are thinkers who incorporate all the sources of Islamic knowledge to justify the conventional management. For example, Mohd. Mauli Azly Abu Bakar (2004) presents several verses from the Quran, *hadiths* of the

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[3] Among the Qur'anic verses presented by Muhammad al-Buraey (2000) are: 3:159 and 42:38, while the verses highlighted by Muhammed Asghar (2002) are: 2:148, 2:286, 3:200, 5:8, 5:93, 12:22, 18:7, 18:30, 19:76, 29:58, 58:11, 65:3 and 98:5.

[4] The Quran verse highlighted by him is 99:8.

[5] *Hadith* narrated by Muslim in *Sahih Muslim*, Book 21 (Hunted animal, slaughter and lawful to eat), *Hadith* No. 4810.

[6] *Hadith* narrated by Bukhari and Muslim in *Sahih Bukhari*, Book 2 (*Iman*), *Hadith* No. 47 and *Sahih Muslim,* Book 1 (*Iman*), *Hadith* No. 1.

Prophet (pbuh), and the management practices of *Khulafa al-Rashidin* as justification for the Quality Control (QC) management model and the international standard, ISO, implemented by Government institutions.

Overall, the Islamic justification given is focused on the operational aspect or stage of the conventional model being studied. The philosophy or framework of the said management model has not been examined; let alone the Islamic justification for it. Among the important philosophical aspects that determine its Islamic characteristics are worldview or *tasawur,* epistemology, and ontology.

Tasawur refers to the concept or the comprehensive and real meaning of something (Mohd Kamal Hassan, 1993 and Ramli Awang, 2002:6). This comprehensive meaning covers the actual and exhaustive explanation about the matter being studied (Haron Din, 1992:3). Epistemology refers to the theory of knowledge. It involves a critical study of the sources, its authenticity, testing methodology as well as its development, classification, specialisation, role, and limit or scope of the knowledge (Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, 2003:18; Ramli Awang 2003:24, and Muhammad Uthman El-Muhammady). Lastly, ontology refers to the coverage or characteristics of the knowledge, and the relationship between those characteristics. The characteristics include physical and metaphysical characteristics (Sirajuddin Zar, 2004:6 and Abdul Rahman Abdullah, 2005:19). An examination of the three aspects – *tasawur,* epistemology and ontology – is important and should be considered when evaluating something, including the concept of management that exists today. An examination of *tasawwur* is important because it gives an idea of the form and the philosophy behind the human management concept. An examination of epistemology is important because it will determine the sources for the formation of a particular management concept. Examination of the ontological aspect is important because it will provide an analysis of the elements that make up the human management concept. (Muhammad Syukri Salleh *et al.*, 2004 and Sirajuddin Zar, 2004:6). In short, the three aspects – *tasawur,* epistemology and ontology – cover the basis of the philosophy, and would be adequate enough to determine whether something is Islamic or not. However, it is noted that none of these aspects – *tasawur*, epistemology and ontology – were ever discussed by the Islamic thinkers when presenting their Islamic justification of conventional management.

2.2 Adoption of Islamic Values in Current Human Management Practices

Besides the management researchers and thinkers who have tried to establish an Islamic justification for the application of the conventional human management, there are researchers who are critical of the application. While they do not reject the conventional human management models altogether, they put a condition that Islamic values be assimilated into conventional models before they are adopted for use. Azly Rahman (2005), for example, believes that human management in the TQM model will have greater benefit to a Muslim organisation if spiritual values are incorporated into the management. However, he did not specify the spiritual values that he meant.

Wan Mohd Zahid Noordin *et al.* (1987), in his general analysis of the conventional management model, also suggests that spiritual values be assimilated into the current models. His suggestion is based on his analysis that the main shortcoming of conventional management models is their emphasis on the physical aspects only while neglecting other more important aspects. The latter, according to him, are the spiritual aspect and

human psychology. Like Azly Rahman (2005), Wan Mohd Zahid Noordin et al. (1987) also did not spell out the spiritual values that he had in mind[7].

Ridzuan Mohd Sagir and Sanep Ahmad (1996) also suggest the inclusion of spiritual values in human management in conventional models, particularly in McKinsey's 7-S management model which they had examined. The spiritual values for management which they suggested are *Iman* (Faith/Belief), *Ibadat* (Practice), *Ihtisab* (Trust)[8], *Ihsan* (Beneficence) and *Ikhlas* (Sincerity), or in short, 5-I, which should be the cornerstone not only for the application of McKinsey's 7-S model, but also of the other standard models.

Besides that, Mazilan Musa and Shaikh Mohd Saifuddeen (2000) also suggest the incorporation of Islamic values in conventional management models so that they will be acceptable from the Islamic standpoint. The value suggested by Mazilan Musa and Shaikh Mohd Saifuddeen is the objective of pleasing Allah at every stage of its implementation, particularly human management in the TQM model. In relation to the TQM model, Shahnon Ahmad (1996) also suggests the addition of another element to make it more integrated and meaningful from the Islamic perspective. The element he had in mind is the management of the heart and soul. Hence, he suggests the adoption of the TQM1 + TQM2 model in which TQM1 stands for total quality management of the heart and TQM2 for the standard total quality management.

2.3 Critiquing Current Management Practices
Then there are Islamic thinkers who are critical of the conventional management models. However, such writings and studies are few, compared to writings and studies that put forward Islamic justification of conventional models and those that suggest the inclusion of Islamic values into these models. Moreover, past studies and writings that exist only concentrate on critiquing the principles of conventional management in general, but not on the human management models in particular.

Criticisms and analyses of conventional management first appeared among the Islamic management thinkers in the last decade of the 80s. It started with a comparative analysis between the Western management principles and those of the Japanese as was done by Hassan Mohd Ali (1989), followed by Nik Mustapha Nik Hassan (1995). Hassan Mohd Ali criticised the management theories in terms of its philosophy in general, its implementer, system, and implementation, whereas Nik Mustapha Nik Hassan used a worldview approach or Islamic *tasawur* in his comparative analysis.

Mohd Shahar Sidek (1991) also presented a criticism of the conventional model based on a comparison with Islamic management. The issues he highlighted as a critique to conventional management, which gives too much focus on the material aspects, bureaucratic management practices, and unrealistic accountability, form the basis for his philosophy.

With respect to the application of conventional management models, however, the only critique from an Islamic viewpoint was levelled against human management in the TQM model. Mohd Salmi Sohod and Rushaimi Zien Yusof (1996), for example, critique the TQM model by highlighting three shortcomings. First, neglect of the welfare and spiritual needs of man; second, over dependence on the top management to implement quality; and, third, the disorderly process of implementing the management method.

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[7] Wan Mohd Zahid Noordin *et al.* (1987) on the contrary presented the 'Management by *Shura*' or PDS method founded by Mohd Affandi Hassan (1992) to address the shortcomings of conventional management methods.
[8] *Ihtisab* is defined as trust in Allah's promises (Ridzuan Mohd Sagir and Sanep Ahmad, 1996).

As a whole, the writings or studies that convey Islamic criticism towards the concept and models of conventional human management are general in nature. To date, the only study offering a detailed criticism of conventional management in terms of its philosophy or foundation is the one by Fadzila Azni Ahmad (2010). By narrowing the discussion to the TQM model, her study offers an in-depth analysis in terms of *tasawur*, epistemology and ontology. These three aspects form the basis of the philosophy which reflects whether the management is truly Islamic or not in character.

2.4 Attempts to Introduce the Concept of Islamic Management

Studies specifically about Islamic management are few. Most are explanation about Islamic principles and attempts to relate these principles to human management. This is true in the work of Jabnoun (1994)[9], Moursi (1997)[10], A. Khaliq Ahmad (2000)[11], Asmadi Mohamed Naim (2003)[12], and Nik Mustapha Nik Hassan (2013)[13]. Although the writers in general have outlined different Islamic principles, all the principles presented are based on *tasawur* whereby Allah is the Creator of all creatures including man, and man is a creation of Allah in an attempt to relate it to management. The principles highlighted are premised on Islamic epistemology, namely the Quran and Traditions of the Prophet (pbuh).

Apart from the principles, Islamic values are often discussed in the context of the application of human management. Values such as trustworthiness, truth, consultation (*shura*), and justice are the dominant values agreed upon by researchers of Islamic management such as Syed Othman al-Habshi (1994), Abdul Monir Yaacob (1998), Azman Che Omar (2001), Syed Mohd Ghazali Wafa *et al.* (2002), and Mokhtar Abdullah *et al.* (2003) who regard these values as fundamental in Islamic management. Besides these values, they also agree that quality, responsibility, self-evaluation *(muhasabah)*, patience, moderation, keeping promises, humility, mutual respect, thoughtfulness, sincerity, knowledge, compassion, foresight, gratitude, discipline, diligence, and commitment are important in Islam. Generally, all writers have analysed these values from the perspective of the Quran, Traditions of the Prophet (pbuh), and practices in the history of Islam.

Besides the writings and studies concerning Islamic principles and values in human management, studies have also been conducted on personalities in Islamic human management. Ismail Noor (2000), for instance, specifically discusses the management style of the Prophet (pbuh). So did Syed Othman al-Habshi (1987) who also analysed the management of *Khulafa al-Rashidin* and other caliphs during the reign of the Ummayad and Abbasid Caliphates. Besides these personalities in the early days of Islam, studies were also focused on the concept of Islamic management according to scholars in the post-Islamic empire and scholars of later generations *(muta'akhirin)*. For example, Muhibbuddin Abdullah (2003) also managed to study the

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[9] Jabnoun (1994) presented sixteen main principles in Islam that relate to management i.e. planning and collective action; a mission that is consistent with man's primary mission on earth; the objective of attaining success in the world and the hereafter; objective of the organisation that is consistent with Islamic requirements; achievements that are not in opposition to the limits set out in Islam; practice of *shura;* gradualism in all circumstances except those contrary to Islam; contingency planning; management activities which are consistent and constant; healthy competition in all management activities; responsible for the trust that is given; accountability based on the teachings of the Quran; selection of leadership based on character and professionalism; adhering to justice; and faith in Allah.

[10] Moursi (1997) presents six principles i.e. the belief that Allah is the Prime Administrator; knowledge and practice of management should be premised on the guidelines of Allah; foremost management is that of self-management; every act of management is a trust from Allah; management should be based on the laws of Islam; and effective time-management.

[11] Khaliq Ahmad (2000) stated that the principles in Islamic management should be based on true knowledge, co-operation and sensitivity; managing wisely, cultivating a strategic mindset in managing, always sincere, and acting fairly.

[12] According to Asmadi Mohamed Naim (2003), the Islamic principles relating to management are: priority for suitability, qualifications and refinement of character, consensus, meeting material and spiritual needs, shouldering responsibility for those that one manages and are loyal to, having control so as to ensure discipline, comprehensive (across the board), and universal *(shumul)*.

[13] The Islamic principles outlined by Nik Mustapha Nik Hassan (2003) are: cultivating a spirit of doing good in every management activity, choosing leaders based on character and qualification, a management culture that upholds truth, justice and consensus, and provides opportunity for all to participate in a systematic way, while emphasising a culture of quality and productivity.

human management concept as espoused by Imam al-Ghazali, while Asyraf Ridwan Hj Ali (1998) studied the one according to Ibn Khaldun.

In addition to the above-mentioned studies that dealt with the theoretical aspects, there are also studies that tried to create an Islamic management model that could be put into practice as a model for human management. However, such studies are very few and are still in the exploratory stage. Mohd. Affandi Hassan (1992), for example, had submitted a management model which he named *Management by Shura* (MBS) which represents an initial attempt by an Islamic management thinker to synthesise the fundamentals of the philosophy, principles, and values of human management into a practical form. The basis for this PDS management method is the consultation *(shura)* concept based on the Qur'anic verse (42:38)[14] and the practice of the Prophet (pbuh) and his Companions.

Besides the PDS management method, Mohd. Affandi Hassan has also presented the Tawhidic approach in management in his book, *'The Tawhidic Approach in Management and Public Administration: Concepts, Principles and an Alternative Model'* (1992). In this book, Mohd. Affandi Hassan stresses on the knowledge approach in management based on the infinity of Allah as the Creator of all creatures and the limitation of man as a creature subjected to Allah's decree. Based on man's limitations, two main functions of man have been outlined, that is, as Allah's servant and Allah's caliph (Mohd. Affandi Hassan, 1987 & 1992:36). Both these functions - as servant and caliph - represent a primordial contract which will be attained when management is regarded as a religious obligation through the practice of co-operation based on the *shura* principle (Mohd. Affandi Hassan, 1987). In fact, the PDS model explained prior to this was submitted to substantiate the management concept promoted through the *Tawhidic* approach.

In 2001, the YaPEIM Management Academy tried to develop the *Tawhidic* management method. Although the YaPEIM Academy's management method did not refer directly to Mohd. Affandi Hassan, it can still be regarded as an attempt to develop a *Tawhidic* management method like the one developed by Mohd. Affandi Hassan.

With *Tawhid* (the Oneness of Allah) as the basis of its philosophy, the YaPEIM Management Academy's version of the *Tawhidic* approach aims to make human management as the practice of submission of man as servants of Allah, The One and Only God. In order to realise this, it is also suggested that human management be implemented based on the guidelines from Allah (YaPEIM Management Academy, 2005:xii).

Although the PDS and the *Tawhidic* management models present management concepts that are altogether different from the conventional model, while demonstrating the uniqueness of the Islamic paradigm in management, it is still too theoretical. It is also difficult to translate these models into a practical form because the how-to was not given.

Also, attempts to produce an Islam-based management method had been made by Muhammad al-Buraey (1985) who called it *'Islamic Model of Administration – The 6Ps Version'* that emphasises three things: The individual as a member of the organisation, consultation *(shura)*, and leadership. As its name indicates, the 6P method covers six main elements – people, place *(diwan)*, problems, process, plan, and performance. Undeniably, this management method is based on several concepts in Islam such as *shura* and *diwan*.

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[14] Translation of verse 38 of *al-Shura*: *"And those who respond to their Lord and keep up prayer, and their rule is to take counsel among themselves, and who spend out of what We have given them."*

However, the basis from which this 6P method is developed is not completely outside the framework of conventional management. Even Muhammad al-Buraey (1985:326) himself admits to this when he said that the 6P management method represents a middle course between the Islamisation of the prevailing conventional management method and the effort to produce a management method that is completely within the Islamic paradigm[15].

Another attempt to produce a management model based on Islam was made by A. Riawan Amin (2004) through his book, *'The Celestial Management'*, which specifically outlines in depth an Islam-based management method which he named the Celestial Management Method. He presents twelve (12) characteristics: *Iman* (faith/belief), *fitrah* (zero-based), *istiqamah* (consistent), *natijah* (result-oriented), information-sharing, knowledge-sharing, authority-sharing, wealth-sharing, *mujahadah* (resolve/determination)[16], competitive, regenerative, and intellect - which are covered under three principles, namely worship, wealth, and warfare. This Celestial Management tries to give a new perspective to an Islam-based model by emphasising on the spiritual as a whole. Nevertheless, as in the other Islam-based models, the thinking and theoretical study of Celestial Management is still in its infancy because it is very new (A. Riawan Amin, 2004:xxii), and therefore requires more detailed examination. So far, based on the study by Lenny Luat (2010) from the perspective of human management, there exists a blend of conventional management concepts from the West and Japan and Islamic management concepts in the Celestial Management model introduced by A. Riawan Amin. In other words, the Celestial Management model itself is still not completely outside the framework of the conventional model.

3. CONCLUSION

In brief, the Islamic-based management concepts proposed by contemporary Islamic thinkers deal with two aspects. First, the operational aspect only – as in the study that uses the main sources of knowledge in Islam to justify the standard management method; and, second, the basis of the philosophy and principles – as in the study that suggests adding value to the conventional management method, or the study that offers a criticism of conventional methods from the Islamic perspective, and the study that attempts to present an Islamic method or model of management. In any case, studies relating to the philosophy are general in nature by way of articles or working papers and not yet in-depth or detailed based on the three important aspects of the philosophy i.e. *tasawur,* epistemology, and ontology. Fadzila Azni Ahmad (2010) attempted to fill this gap through her in-depth and comprehensive study in critiquing the TQM model. According to her, in the study and application of human management from the perspective of Islam, the fundamentals in Islam itself such as *tasawur,* epistemology, and ontology should be upheld and made the underlying principles of the management framework. In the application of an Islamic form of management, the bedrock should be *tawhid* (The Oneness) of Allah as the Creator. Such a model should also be founded on the two dimensions – relationship between man and Allah (*hablumminallah*) and relationship between man and man, and man and nature (*hablumminannas*). This type of human management model should also take into account the time span that covers a man's life in the soul/spiritual world, the material/physical world, and the

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[15] However, Muhammad al-Buraey (1985:243) still maintains that in developing an Islamic management method, there should be three prerequisites i.e. it should be developed by a Muslim who understands the theory and implementation of the administration from the Islamic perspective; and such management method should follow the example set by the Prophet (pbuh) and Khulafa al-Rashidin in terms of its spiritual aspect and its ethics. Its dynamism, if any, is only allowed in its operation, for example, in the structure of its system that might vary according to time. The third condition is that such a method should stem from the Islamic epistemology. According to al-Buraey, there are four verses in the Quran, the fundamental source of Islamic knowledge, (Yunus, 10:3, 10:31, al-Rad, 13:2 and al-Sajdat, 32:5) which contain the expression *yudabbirul amr,* meaning 'to manage'. These verses should be one of the thrusts in Islamic management.
[16] *Mujahadah* in this case means a determined struggle to overcome one's worldly desires or lust. However, the term used by A. Riawan Amin (2004) to explain the meaning is *militant.* This article will use the term *mujahadah* instead of *militant* because it is closer to the meaning in Bahasa Malaysia as intended by A. Riawan Amin.

world of the Hereafter. The ultimate objective of the application of this form of management should be the attainment of Allah's blessing *(mardhatillah)* (Muhammad Syukri Salleh, 2002:49). To fulfil all these characteristics, such a model should be moulded based on its Islamic *tasawur* and epistemology. The development of the concept or ontology and its management method should then follow according to this foundation of *tasawur* and epistemology.

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