

The Islamic Management Method Based on the Thinking of Sidek Baba

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Abstract--- This working paper intended to examine and study the Islamic management method based on the thinking of an academic figure named Sidek Baba, a Professor of Education at the Kuliyyah of Education in Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIAM). Hence, what is the Islamic management method based on the thinking of Sidek Baba. In order to answer this question, this paper was divided into three main discussion topics, namely the philosophy of Islamic management, application of ihsan (a sense of social responsibility borne from religious convictions) and humankind in the Islamic management method and lastly, fundamentals of the Islamic management method. These three elements were explored through an examination and analysis of several literary works by Sidek Baba. Findings showed that Islamic management philosophy is based on five main fundamentals of work according to Islam. Whereas, in the Islamic management method, there exist an integration of relations between humankind and Allah SWT (*habl min Allah*) or between ihsan/ humankind and inter-human relations (*habl min al-Nas*). Lastly, the study found that the core of the Islamic management method is piousness (*taqwa*) towards Allah SWT.

Keywords--- Method, Management, Thinking, Academic Figure, Humankind, Ihsan, Piousness.

I. INTRODUCTION

There are innumerable theories related to the field of conventional management. The approach used in the implementation of work is based on the philosophy that emphasises on the importance of material gains. Ethics is not considered as the guiding principal, what more the aspect of syariah, which is also not the platform for managing it. In the management approach that is based on the capitalist-liberalist system or laissez-faire, elements such as productivity, quality and services are mostly determined by current factors that could lead to maximum gains (Heilbroner, 1962; Bontrup, 1998; Raiklin & Uyar, 1996; Gailbraith, 1967).

Looking at Western management knowledge that focuses on achieving maximum gains, it is unsuitable for use by Muslims for managing matters related Islam. In reference to this issue, this study intended to examine, and study Islamic management methods based on the thinking of Sidek Baba, a Professor of Education at the Kuliyyah of Education in Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIAM). When discussing Islamic management methods based on the thinking of Sidek Baba, this study focused on the main elements, namely the philosophy of Islamic management, which is fundamental in nature, applying ihsan (a sense of social responsibility borne from religious convictions) and humankind in the Islamic management method and lastly, the fundamentals of the Islamic management method.

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II. DEFINITION OF A MANAGEMENT METHOD

Discussions related to the definition of the management method can be divided into two sections. The first section only involves the physical or material aspects. For example, Standingford (1967) and Warner (1996) had defined a management method as a systemic method process, procedure or regulation used to implement management activities in order to achieve the stipulated objectives.

The second section concerning the management method involves both the physical and spiritual aspects. For example, Carroll (1973) is of the view that a management method must take into consideration the physical and mental elements. This was also emphasised by Mohd Affandi Hassan (1992), who said that the spiritual element is a very important part of a management method, especially since it is managed by humans. According to Mustapha Hj. Mohd. Jar (1986) and Wan Azhar Wan Ahmad (2014), humans are a composite entity consisting of physical, spiritual, cognitive and instinctual elements. The physical element is animalistic (haywaniyyah) in nature, while the spiritual element is more cognitive or rational. A symbiosis between these two elements is what makes humans what they are. Both are inter-dependent with one another when lending meaning to life. Thus, if one element is missing or its significance neglected for some reason, then humans will not be what they are. Therefore, based on the discussions, the second definition is used in this study.

III. THE PHILOSOPHY OF ISLAMIC MANAGEMENT

Management in Islam is a responsibility and trust. Allah SWT has invoked innumerable blessings and pleasures in this world for humankind to manage and relish. Managing it requires knowledge, experience, a good personality and a deep sense of appreciation. When knowledge, experience and personality is imbued with values and wisdom, it welcomes ethics as a platform for management and work quality, which then becomes a source of worship (ibadah). Therefore, according to Sidek Baba (2012), management according to Islam is a process that helps lay trust is a certain matter and a form of worship or act of devotion that is demanded from humankind.

According to Sidek Baba (2012), Islamic management is not only about work, but rather work that is moulded by its own philosophy. This Islamic management philosophy is built on five main fundamentals of work according to Islam, as mentioned below.

First, to work in the name of Allah SWT (sincerity), which is the key element when doing something, what more when that element of sincerity is related to Allah SWT. This would give humankind a sense of affinity to the Divine Being and thus, abstain from doing anything that is prohibited in Islam. The element of sincerity demanded from humans could be degraded due to humankind's 'ammarah instinct, which always prioritises an individual's self-interest above all else. Nevertheless, a strong feeling confidence in Allah SWT could be a guideline for humankind and their behaviour would always follow logic based on faith (iman).

Therefore, to work in the name of Allah SWT not only affords positivity to the actor but also affects an organization and other humans. Sincerity is something that forms a vertical relationship with Allah SWT (habl min Allah). When this vertical relationship forms the basis of a practice, it imparts a positive effect on others, the organization and the

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system (habl min al-Nas). This element is an important prerequisite for an actor, because without a high level of sincerity the actor's life will not be showered with blessings from Allah SWT. Hence, work done sincerely is not only a pathway to honesty, trust and fairness but at the same time it could be part of the ibadah.

Second, an individual's work for the organization, society and country. Each individual has the potential, talent, certain advantages and expertise. In this context, these positive elements could help develop and progress the individual and the organization. Similarly, other individuals who possess different talents and potentials can contribute towards an organization. Here lies the importance of the jama'i attitude or the aggregation of energy aimed at enhancing and consolidating an organization. For example, contributions by individuals could affect an organization but the effect could be stronger and firmer when trying to achieve the organization's objectives if decisions made during a meeting are unanimous and concerted, implementation strategies are made in unison and lastly, the outcome is more productive and showered with blessings.

When the jama'i spirit is alive and productive, the society and country tends to benefit. A successful organisation is one that is productive. Contributions from each individual combined as one can produce multiple gains. Society as well as the nation stands to benefit because only the very best is produced by the organisation. The strength of the organisation contributes towards a stable system.

Third, work implemented with a strong sense of trust is actually a form of ibadah. Islamic management is a process that helps enhance trust, which is the most important key in the success of an employment. The highest state of trust in an employment is the trust towards Allah SWT. Trust means that an individual carries out a task with sincerity and the best of his ability and fairness by realising that Allah SWT knows everything that the individual does. The task or work is not only a responsibility, because at the same time Allah SWT rewards HIS subjects with rewards in the form of blessings.

Trust in Allah SWT has a positive effect on the organisation, humankind and the system. Thus, if a decision is made through a syura and consensus with a high spirit of ta'awun (mutual assistance), then, the blessings from Allah SWT will follow suit. When there is a sense of consensus when deciding something, it has the potential to create a high sense of we-feeling or esprit de corps, a strong feeling of togetherness and a high level of cooperation. All these elements will foster the attitude that all work done in trust will end as a source of ibadah.

Fourth, excellent work is rewarded with excellent blessings. Excellent work refers to the sincere intent in doing the work, feelings of mutual effort by all parties concerned in making a decision, implementation of strategies in a jama'i fashion as well as being the best guideline and source of tawakal when carrying out a task. It is supported by a high degree of muttaqin (piousness), which is the fundamental element of excellence because the spirit of muttaqin puts workers in a favorable position to do something sincerely in the name of Allah SWT.

This is the main form of encouragement that instigates a work to be performed excellently because the reward of blessings is rated higher than the reward of a remuneration. A high rate of blessing will ensure that the remuneration is

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halal. And if this occurs, it not only provides earthly benefits but also benefits in the afterworld. This is the feeling of excellence a worker feels about himself, his life as well as with his Creator.

Fifth, work that is beneficial and can lead to blessings from Allah SWT. The management and employees who possess basic knowledge, experience and good personality will be able to become better persons if the work constitutes a part of their ibadah. Specific types of ibadah, such as the solat, is a good source of blessings for one's life and the organisation too. The basics, such as having an imam, is a good platform for instilling the habit of obedience towards a leader. The basics of being a makmun (followers) is a platform for understanding and performing practices and work as part of the *jemaah* or as one whole unit. A deep state of contemplation (*khusyuk*) during the solat is a guideline for maintaining the focus on the work at hand, which leads to earnestness (*kesungguhan*). It can also produce a high level of productivity because there is strong encouragement to do something in the best way possible in order to obtain the best results.

The most important thing when implementing a consideration is to consider the benefits. Doing something that is non-productive, without commitment and without full effort or planning will affect the quality of the blessings that will be received. Work that is done with sincerity, trustworthiness and fairness is closely related to the question of blessings.

Therefore, something that is beneficial is achieved through a well-planned strategy that produces a high level of productivity. This productivity is not only in the form of goods or quality of work but rather returns in the form of blessings (*berkat*). Blessings here refer to a sense of satisfaction about oneself when doing something and feeling calm when receiving rewards for the work done because it is verified, halal and affects the moulding of one's heart and spirit.

It is important that all five fundamentals that form the philosophy of Islamic management be well understood so that the individual understands that whatever is done in life is a form of work that manages the blessing and pleasures bestowed by Allah SWT. What ever done in a specific kind of work is a continuance from a specific ibadah to a general ibadah, whose characteristics complement one another

IV. APPLYING IHSAN AND HUMANKIND IN THE ISLAMIC MANAGEMENT METHOD

After understanding the Islamic management philosophy, Sidek Baba (2012 & 2017) tried to adduce the Islamic management method as an alternative to the conventional management method. The Islamic management method is based on the fundamentals of the relationship between humankind and Allah SWT (*habl min Allah*) or *ihsan* (a sense of social responsibility borne from religious convictions) and humankind as well as inter-humankind relationships (*habl min al-Nas*). The vertical dimension refers to *ihsan*, while the horizontal dimension refers to integrating humankind to produce the Islamic management method.

Ihsan (a sense of social responsibility borne from religious convictions) is usually referred to a hadith by Rasulullah SAW: verily, "although we cannot see Allah when carrying out our ibadah, Allah is surely watching us" (Hadis Riwayat Muslim). In other words, when carrying out ibadah, the thoughts and focus is always on Allah SWT. Thus, focusing on Allah SWT means that whatever work that is carried out follows the guidelines (*pedoman*) of right and wrong, good

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and bad, what is permitted and forbidden as well as halal and haram, as the perimeters of an action. This is consistent with the syariat of Allah SWT, which is intended for the good of humankind. When we carry out work with a high sense of ihsan (a sense of social responsibility borne from religious convictions), we intend to do good, convey truth, practice what is permitted and abstain from what is forbidden as well as promote what is halal.

Hence, if ihsan serves as motivation for us to work and reminds us that Allah SWT is always with us as well as kiranman-katibin records every sin and divine reward (*pahala*); hence, carrying out work is in the guidelines stipulated by Allah SWT. Humankind will be afraid to deceive anybody because although the deceitful act might go undetected by others, we believe that Allah SWT is All-Knowing.

Therefore, if we intend to be corrupt or abuse the power given to us even though it is not known by anybody else; however, when we are convinced that Allah SWT is All-Knowing and HIS retribution is merciless, we will then be prudent and avoid negative practices. Moreover, if we intend to commit acts of cruelty or mistreatment for some reason, then Allah SWT will punish us with those similar kinds of acts, and this will remind us of the day of Resurrection. This is an important fundamental aspect of ihsan that is in every worker so that his career is always protected by the ibadah.

Imagine if a worker or his superior in an office possess a high degree of ihsan, then, surely the benefits of ihsan would be received by the organization, including the employers. A high degree of ihsan would make a person honest, sincere, trustworthy, fair and wise. These noble characteristics found in workers and their superiors would enhance the status and excellence of an organization due to the presence of taqwa towards Allah SWT. This feeling of taqwa encourages a worker to excel and the benefits of working enhances the quality of the ibadah.

This is the fundamental sense of ihsan that should be present in every worker so that the relationship between superiors and their subordinates is always cordial and managed with mutual respect. Besides, the relationship between the worker and his superior is always kept in check by adherence, loyalty, obedience and accommodating because the superior has a high level of ihsan towards Allah SWT, while at the same time abstain from doing what is forbidden.

For example, in time management, workers who possess a high level of ihsan would not cheat on their working hours because doing such a thing is wrong and decreases the quality of the ibadah. In the matter of making decisions or conducting meetings, the musyawarah approach will always remain the basis or platform. Each member is given the freedom to voice out one's best opinion. A decision based on overall consensus will nurture a high sense of togetherness, we-feeling or esprit de corps and belonging.

V. FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ISLAMIC MANAGEMENT METHOD

Piousness or God-consciousness (taqwa) is a fundamental element in the Islamic management method. In other words, it is the fundamental element in the vertical dimension in the relationship between humankind and Allah SWT and the projection of the dimension in inter-humankind relationships. The vertical dimension (ihsan) affords humankind a pious (muttaqin) soul, which will then help produce characteristics of honesty, trust, transparency, fairness and wisdom, which are closely associated with Allah SWT. Whereas, wisdom, or its benefits, will be returned to humankind. For example, performing prayers (solat) teaches humankind to become pious (muttaqin). Thus, a pious (muttaqin) soul

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will have a good effect on the organization because the quality of work is related to ibadah and the source of income is related to barakah (Sidek Baba, 2012).

The ulama have referred to taqwa as being God-fearing or God-consciousness. Fear of Allah SWT refers to a sense of ihsan by workers towards Allah SWT, which forms the basis for a high degree of obedience to the limitations and guidelines stipulated by Allah SWT when implementing something as well as becoming aware of the positive rewards when adhering to the limitations and guidelines and the painful retribution when these limitations are transgressed.

Besides that, being conscious of divinity is having the confidence that Allah SWT is the Creator, the All Mighty and the All-Knowing. With this consciousness. A worker in the course of his employment will always be conscious that when doing something, even though his superior is not aware or others are not looking, but Allah the All-Knowing is watching. This sense of consciousness will drive humankind, in terms of speech, practice or work, to be always conscious that whatever humankind does is under the supervision and observation of Allah SWT. This is an important factor for workers because it is the basis for nurturing the heart to be honest, trustworthy and transparent when practising anything.

VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the entire discussion in this study, it was found that Islamic management philosophy is founded on five fundamentals of work according to Islam, namely sincerity, jama'i, trust, excellence and being advantageous or beneficial. The Islamic management method contains an integration of the relationship between humankind and Allah SWT (habl min Allah) or ihsan (a sense of social responsibility borne from religious convictions) and humankind as well as inter-human relationships (habl min al-Nas). Whereas, the fundamental element of the Islamic management method is piousness or God-consciousness (taqwa) in Allah SWT.

BIOGRAPHICAL FIGURES

Professor Dato' Dr. Sidek Baba was born in Kampung Pulau in Masjid Tanah, Melaka. He obtained his primary and secondary education in Melaka before attending Sultan Idris Teachers Training College (now called UPSI) in Tanjong Malim, Perak. He obtained his first Bachelor's degree in Malay Studies (Hons) from Universiti Malaya. He then obtained the Diploma in Islamic Studies from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). He went on to obtain his Masters in Educational Science from Indiana Universiti in Bloomington, USA. He was deeply involved and active in Islamic institutions in Malaysia, such as the Islamic Consultative Council of Malaysia, Board of Directors of Darul Quran Malaysia, Lembaga Pemegang Amanah Yayasan Dakwah Islamiah Malaysia (YADIM), Board of Directors of Institut Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (IKIM), Board of Directors of Majlis Agama Islam Selangor (MAIS), and Board of Directors of Yayasan Murni Akidah. His career started as a teacher in Melaka for 18 years and then as an officer and lecturer in Institut Aminuddin Baki (IAB) for 5 years, Dean of the Matriculation Centre in Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIAM) (1992-1994), Deputy Rector of Student Affairs (HEP) in UIAM (1994-2002) and the Professor of Education in Kuliyyah of Education in UIAM until present (Sidek Baba, 2008).

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