An Islamic Perspective on Organizational Motivation

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Organizations are an indispensable part of our lives, for they provide services for satisfying our basic needs. Central to any organization's performance is the motivation of its members. Indeed, organizational motivation is related closely to some fundamental questions in organization theory in particular and to public administration in general. Such questions focus on how organizations can be made efficient and responsive or accountable to their clients. Since organizations are simply human collectivities, in essence these questions apply to organizational members and, in particular, to what motivates them to be efficient and responsive.

Although various models of organization have addressed, either implicitly or explicitly, the question of motivation in organizations, they have yet to come up with satisfactory answers. The significance of organizational motivation does not consist of its close relationship to the fundamental questions of organizational efficiency and responsiveness alone, but also of its relevance to how organizations are structured. As this latter consideration may affect such concepts as human dignity, freedom, respect, brotherhood, and justice, this is tantamount to saying that organizational structures are not morally or spiritually neutral, inasmuch as these values have moral and spiritual roots.

Organizational structures are founded on certain underlying assumptions about human nature and motivation that underpin several principal organization models. One common characteristic of these models is the assumption that the individual has certain self-centered needs that govern his/her behavior and that the organization can, by satisfying these needs, motivate the individual to contribute towards the

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achievement of organizational goals. As will be seen, these models prescribe organizational structures that are detrimental to some human values, reduce the individual to a mere instrument of the organization, and fail to solve any of the three perennial organizational problems connected with how employees can be made or motivated to like work, be efficient, and be responsive to the public.

This study offers an alternative Islamic perspective that seeks to preserve basic human values and to provide solutions to the three enduring organizational problems. The first section provides a brief review of some principal models of organizational motivation, the second section presents the alternative Islamic perspective, the third section examines the relationship between this perspective and the Islamic concept of leadership, and the final section discusses this view's implications for some organizational structures and practices.

Modern Models of Organizational Motivation

In the organizational context, motivation is a reflection of an individual's desire to behave and expend effort willingly in order to achieve organizational goals. These elements are considered indispensable to organizational performance or productivity.[1]

Three models of organizational motivation are discernable in the literature on organizations. These models are founded on three principal perspectives on organization theory: the bureaucratic form, the human relations school, and organizational humanism.

Bureaucratic Organizations. The bureaucratic organization's view of work motivation is significant in two respects. First, all organizations are, in varying degrees, bureaucratic.[2] Second, this view is wholly inadequate.

In this type of organization, motivation is predicated on a hedonistic concept of human nature or, in other words, that an individual's behavior is guided by seeking pleasure and avoiding pain.[3] Accordingly, this form of organization uses material rewards (i.e., salaries and fringe benefits) and material punishments (i.e., demotion and dismissal) to motivate its employees to contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. The basis of motivation here is pure economic self-interest.[4]

This economic concept of motivation is implicit in certain structural features. A notable example is personnel incentive policies, which constitute the material rewards and punishments designed to motivate employees to conform to organizational rules and regulations or, generally, to contribute to the achievement of organizational goals.[5]

Indispensable though it is, economic self-interest is not the only factor behind employee motivation. Its inadequacy as a basis for employee motivation gave rise to two schools of thought in organization theory: human relations and organizational humanism.

The Human Relations School. This school originated in experiments conducted by efficiency experts in the 1920s to see if changes in the work environment had any effect on worker productivity. Productivity did change, but it was later discovered that this had nothing to do with changes in the work environment. What changed productivity was the workers' feeling, generated by the experiments, that management was treating them better.[6] Thus, the school's principal message is that economic self-interest is not the only basis of employee motivation; such nonmonetary factors as receiving respect from management are also effective tools of motivation.

Though an improvement on the bureaucratic conception of work motivation, the human relations perspective also sees the individual's self-centered needs as the sole foundation of motivation in the workplace. In other words, individuals are motivated by what satisfies their own needs, whether pecuniary or nonpecuniary, rather than by what satisfies the needs of others.

A more serious criticism is that researchers, after discovering that human factors are important ingredients of employee work motivation, sought to use them in ways designed to manipulate employees to increase their productivity. In short, such human values as respect were to be used to make employees more efficient and more productive tools of the organization. This human relations engineering, it is argued, led to the degeneration of this school's research into what has been called "cow psychology."[7] Robert Presthus bemoaned this engineering of human relations and its attendant instrumental concept of the individual:

> Man, in effect, is made for the organization. He may succeed and prosper within it, but the organization always defines the terms of success. Yet, given his dignity as a human being and his capacity for reason, man ought not to be viewed as an instrument.[8]

Organizational Humanism. Its exploitative use notwithstanding, the human relations school spawned research on work motivation. Researchers drew principally on Maslow's Theory of Motivation. In this respect, Gibson and Teasley wrote that

> many students of organization have structured their theories and prescriptions around Maslow's model of motivation, and they have subsequently argued that a viable organization will satisfy man's higher-level needs, usually those defined by Maslow.[9]

It would be useful to provide a brief account of Maslow's theory here, as its role has been pivotal to the modern concept of organizational motivation. Maslow's theory grew out of the concern of existential psychologists, of whom Maslow was one, for the individual's loss of "self" or "self-

concept" in mass society.[10] Maslow and the existential psychologists set out to restore this lost self to the individual.

Maslow's theory is grounded in human needs as determinants of human behavior. He conceives these needs in terms of the following hierarchy: needs located lower on the hierarchical structure are prepotent (i.e., stronger) and must be satisfied before needs located higher up become urgent and thus direct human behavior.[11] According to him, the lowest needs are physiological (needs for food and drink). These are the most prepotent needs and provide the foundation for the next level of needs: those associated with safety, security, and protection. These are then followed by social needs (love, affection, and belongingness), esteem needs (self-respect and the respect of others), and self-actualization (the realization of one's own potential). According to Maslow, the first four hierarchical needs must be satisfied before one reaches the stage of self-actualization, for at this stage the needs will change. Here, human behavior is motivated by a new set of needs called "metamotivation" or "being" needs: truth, honesty, beauty, and goodness, among others.[12]

Maslow's need hierarchy provided the intellectual foundation for what has been called the humanistic model of organizational motivation. Its basic argument is that the satisfaction of human needs (as specified by Maslow) will lead to higher on-the-job performance. This model was labelled "humanistic" because it holds that a "primary function of an organization should be the satisfaction of human needs" rather than just the enhancement of organizational performance.[13] Proponents prescribe certain structural arrangements that must be made by the organization in order to satisfy its employees' needs, particularly those that are higher on Maslow's need hierarchy. Notable among such arrangements are participative decision making, job enlargement, and autonomy.[14]

Maslow's concept of motivation and the humanistic model of organizational motivation are a considerable improvement over the bureaucratic perspective. In particular, the humanistic model represents a shift from mere concern with organizational performance or productivity to an organization's concern with the individual employee. The moral overtone of this shift is clear: The organization has a humanistic mission, in addition to its quest for efficiency in performance, that consists of such practices as upholding one's dignity, self-respect, and respect for others. Although the humanistic model of organizational motivation has not received convincing empirical support,[15] it is to be commended for recognizing that satisfying human needs is a primary organizational objective and for prescribing organizational structures conducive to satisfying these needs.

In conclusion, the three models furnish complementary bases of organizational motivation: economic incentives are needed for motivating employees, as are various nonmaterial or humanistic elements. However,

they leave a lot to be desired and do not solve the aforementioned three perennial organizational problems.

Employee Work Attitudes

The question of employee work attitude is important for two reasons: Organizational structures are predicated on the assumption that people like or dislike work, and these structures could be dehumanizing or detrimental to human values. For instance, a bureaucratic organization assumes that people are inherently indolent and therefore do not like to work.[16] This assumption underlies the various methods of control (i.e., centralization of authority, close supervision, and an emphasis on rigid adherence to rules and regulations) used in such organizations. Such control are obviously antithetical to the human qualities of self-control, self-direction, and self-responsibility. Organizational humanism assumes the opposite: People are not lazy and therefore like to work. Accordingly, it emphasizes organizational structures that give employees autonomy, self-control, and self-responsibility. However, organizational humanists do not indicate why people like to work–they just assume that this is the case.[17]

Employee Responsiveness to Clients. This problem pertains to how organizational members or employees can be made or motivated to be responsive to clients or the public for whom they perform services. The three models of organizational motivation do not deal with this problem, for they have tended to focus only on private firms, which, when faced with competitors, must be responsive to their clients. Public organizations do not face this pressure. Accordingly, the responsiveness or accountability of public organizations and their employees to clients has been one of the most enduring themes of the study of public administration.[18] In fact, the study that is credited with ushering in the science of public administration dealt with this very question.[19]

Despite numerous studies, there is no satisfactory answer to the question.[20] One major reason for this is that modern theorists of public organizations see a trade-off or a tension between the accountability of public officials and their administrative effectiveness or efficiency. This tension is seen as the classic or most enduring dilemma of public administration.[21]

Employee Efficiency or Productivity. An employee is efficient if he/she performs the task with a minimum expenditure of resources. The problem here is how to make or motivate employees to be efficient. In organization theory, this is the overriding goal of organizations. A bureaucratic organization does not achieve this goal because some bureaucratic structures are dysfunctional and, consequently, detrimental to organizational efficiency. In this regard, organizational sociologists have identified several bureaucratic dysfunctions attributable to certain

structural features of a bureaucratic organization.[22] The human relations and organizational humanism schools do not fare any better, for empirical studies have failed to establish a conclusive link between organizational variables providing for the satisfaction of needs that are located higher on Maslow's hierarchy and organizational efficiency.[23]

As noted above, these problems could be solved within the framework of a spiritually grounded perspective on organizational motivation. More specifically, they can be solved if employees have an inner spiritual commitment to work, to serving others, and to efficiency in their lives. Thus, this perspective shifts the source of motivation from being extrinsic (implying that the organization must seek to motivate the employee) to being intrinsic (implying that the organization just provides an opportunity for the employee's already existing motivation to be harnessed for the benefit of the individual, the organization, and the public).

An Islamic Perspective

Western models conceive organizational motivation as, in essence, a human relationship between the organizational member (the employee) and the organization (including other members, particularly organizational leaders). An important aspect of this relationship is that the organization or its leadership is seen to be the source of motivation for the employee.

The Islamic perspective perceives organizational motivation as a human relationship, but one that springs from or is anchored in the relationship between the individual and God. This implies that the cornerstone of employee motivation is not the individual's instinctive needs but those work-related commitments that derive from the employee's relationship with God. At the core of this relationship is the Islamic concept of *iḥṣān*, which will be explained below. The subsequent discussion of this concept's effect on human nature and of its relationship with several Islamic work-related values leads to the formulation of normative propositions on work attitudes, efficiency in task performance, and the responsiveness of organizational members to clients.

Iḥṣān. This term signifies the beautifying or perfecting one's behavior. As an Islamic concept, it denotes the divine presence, as indicated by the following hadith:

> He asked, What is *iḥṣān* (goodness)? The Prophet said: "That you worship Allah as if you see Him; for if you see Him not, surely He sees you."[24]

The divine presence finds expression in a special relationship between the individual and God:

> As for those who pursue most earnestly the quest in Us (Allah), We surely guide them in Our paths. And certainly Allah is with those who practice *iḥsān*. (Qur'an 29:69)

In the context of this verse, the word "with" is interpreted as emphasizing "togetherness" and "company" and, thus, as denoting a "distinctive form of relationship between God and the devotee, as compared with the universal and general with-ness of God in reference to everything in Creation."[25] The implication here is that one who pursues *iḥsān* (a *muḥsin*) is constantly cognizant of God's presence and that his/her conduct is being observed by Him. This realization motivates him/her to strive for the optimum behavior possible in doing what God enjoins and in avoiding what He forbids.

Iḥsān is closely related to faith in God (īmān) and fear of God (*taqwā*). In fact, it has been described as the "beautification of faith and Islam."[26] It has been pointed out elsewhere that since *iḥsān* indicates a state of sincerity in one's conviction and practice, it embodies both faith and Islam, since the former relates to conviction and the latter to practice.[27] Viewed in this sense, not only does *iḥsān* imply both faith and Islam, but it is higher in degree. Fear of God is also closely related to *iḥsān*, for it is based on personal accountability and belief in the divine judgment that will come into play when the "limits of God" are transgressed.[28] The pursuer of *iḥsān*, who is constantly conscious of God's presence, is best suited to be most God-fearing. As will later be discussed, both faith in and fear of God induce some Islamic values essential for work motivation.

Iḥsān and Human Nature. As noted previously, modern models of organizational motivation are based on a certain conception of human nature: The individual is motivated by personal needs and interests. This implies that one's behavior is basically egocentric. However, an individual also has an inherent motivation to care for the needs and interests of others due to the essential goodness implanted in human nature: "We have indeed created man in the best of molds" (Qur'an 95:4). Note that "in the best molds" has been interpreted as "having the purest and best nature."[29]

However, the self is drawn to evil (Qur'an 95:5; 12:53) and individuals are inordinately attracted to such instinctive pleasures or needs as wealth (Qur'an 3:14). This combination breeds egocentricity, self-indulgence, and other sources of evil. If human conduct is to be imbued with selflessness and charity, the self's excesses and its propensity to evil must be kept in check. One's capacity to do this lies in faith and, by implication, *iḥsān*. The Qur'an expects those who have faith to resist surrendering to the self's evil propensities (95:5-6), a trait enhanced further by *iḥsān*'s ability to imbue its pursuer with altruism and charity (95:6; 2:195; 3:13-40).

By restraining such propensities, faith reinforces the essential goodness ingrained in human nature. This does not mean that it changes one's nature, for God's creation, including the essence of human nature, is immutable (Qur'an 30:30). Faith, in its capacity as a restraint on the self's evil tendencies, simply tilts the balance towards the good in human nature. Thus, faith and *iḥsān* tend to moderate the self's excessive love for instinctive pleasures and to produce a balanced self or a balanced set of needs within that self. One set of needs pertains to the self's own needs, while another set is related to the self's need to do good or to serve others. The implication here is that human behavior is not motivated only by the self's needs but also by the need to serve others. This is contrary to modern motivation theory, which holds that human behavior is motivated by one's egocentric needs.

In sum, the need to serve others is rooted in the essential goodness ingrained in human nature. Faith activates and reinforces this innate goodness. Later, it will be seen that this need is reinforced further by the application of *iḥsān* to several Islamic values.

Iḥsān and Positive Work Values. Some positive work values, among them commitment to perfection in task performance, to one's welfare, and to the welfare of others, can be distilled from Islamic values. As will later be seen, these work commitments form the basis of employee motivation for efficiency or productivity, hard work, and responsiveness to clients. Some of the Islamic values that embody these positive work commitments are beauty, justice and love, selflessness, faith in God, and fear of God. *Iḥsān* plays a pivotal role in the pursuit of these values and, consequently, in implanting positive work commitments in individuals who pursue them.

As the Islamic values in question are enjoined in the Qur'an, the Muslim ought to be motivated to realize them. While it may seem that *iḥsān* is redundant for realizing them, in reality it is needed for three reasons: first, it is commanded in every aspect of life, for the Prophet said: "Allah has made obligatory the use of beauty in respect of everything."[30] Second, it is particularly relevant to the realization of Islamic values, for the consciousness that one is in the company of God generates a sincere motivation to do one's best to achieve what He enjoins; and third, and no less importantly, some of the aforementioned values are either a consequence or a part of *iḥsān*.

Commitment to Perfection in Task Performance. This positive work value can be derived from the Qur'anic concept of beauty, which has several essential attributes. Notable among these is perfection.[31] Since *iḥsān* stands for behavioral perfection, the pursuit of beauty in one's conduct is at its core. As a Qur'anic concept, beauty means the pursuit of *ḥasanah* (the Good)[32] and is enjoined upon the Muslims (i.e., 10:26; 42:23; 2:83; 16:125; 7:26, 32) in every aspect of life.

Beauty is a functional work value, because its pursuit commits one to perfection in task performance. The Prophet encouraged Muslims to apply beauty to their work: "Allah loves that when a worker performs any task that he performs it with perfection."[33]

Commitment to One's Welfare. This positive work value is distillable from the Islamic values of justice to and love for one's self. In this context, justice involves, among other elements, securing one's sustenance through the expenditure of effort to earn one's livelihood, hard work, avoidance of indolence, and purposiveness. In fact, all these virtues are enjoined in the Qur'an (62:10; 53:39,40; 6:132; and 3:200). Love for one's self is a consequence of love for God[34] and entails, inter alia, doing one's uttermost to make oneself physically and economically sound. This requires sustaining one's self through work to earn one's living. Viewed from this perspective, love for one's self is enjoined in the Qur'an. Justice to and love for one's self are positive motivations for the individual not only to work but also to work hard to sustain himself/herself. These two values are mutually reinforcing, inasmuch as each commits the individual to work for personal welfare or sustenance. *Iḥsān* applies to both justice toand love for one's self since it is enjoined in every aspect of life. Its application to these values generates a sincere desire in the individual to work to support himself/herself.

Commitment to the Welfare of Others. Several Islamic values induce this positive work commitment. These values comprehend selflessness, justice to others and love for others, faith in God, and fear of God.

Selflessness consists in the "absence of evils relating to the animal self,"[35] is commended in the Qur'an (59:9-10), and symbolizes an attitude of goodwill, charity, and altruism. The selfless person is committed to caring for others. This attitude can be seen as a consequence of *iḥsān* on both the religious and moral levels. On the religious plane, since God commands *iḥsān* in every aspect of life, it applies to doing good to others, which is the essence of selflessness. On the moral plane, *iḥsān* leads to selflessness by restraining the animal self in human nature and, consequently, by tilting the balance towards the goodness ingrained in human nature.

As regards relating to others on the basis of justice and love, the Qur'an regards justice as consisting of giving others their due and not harming them, even at the expense of one's personal interests or those of one's relatives (4:135). But love is more than this alone, for it involves dealing with them in ways that reflect the virtues of sympathy, compassion, and generosity. Clearly, each one of these virtues denotes commitment to the well-being of others. This also holds true when dealing with others on the basis of justice. Islam stresses that one can practice these values by restraining his/her animal nature.

the organizational work environment or conditions provided by organizational leaders.

Employee Motivation and Organizational Leadership

Modern leadership studies conceive organizational leadership as the source of employee motivation. Organizational psychology regards this as the basis of the relationship between employee motivation and organizational leadership. Organizational psychologists see organizational leadership as the independent variable that determines employee motivation and satisfaction and, in turn, determines leader effectiveness. A notable example is the Path–Goal Theory, which has been described as the most complex and comprehensive of all leadership theories.[38] According to it

> leaders are effective because of their impact on [followers'] motivation, ability to perform effectively and satisfactions .... Leader's behavior is motivating or satisfying to the degree that the behavior increases [followers'] goal attainment and clarifies the paths to these goals."[39]

In contrast, organizational leadership is not the source of work motivation for the pursuer of *iḥṣān*, particularly its application to some work-related Islamic values. Given this, the role of leaders in an Islamic organizational context is simply complementary: It creates the right set of conditions for the *muḥṣin* employee to translate his/her intrinsic and already existing work motivation into optimal efforts to discharge his/her job obligations. These conditions are seen in terms of specific leader "behaviors," two of which have been distilled by Islamic scholars of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. One cluster relates to leader-led relationship, and the other cluster relates to the job.[40]

Leadership Relationship Behaviors. An Islamic leader is required to follow certain behavior norms when interacting with those whom he/she is leading. These behavior norms are not instrumental or manipulative, but rather have intrinsic value, for they seek to reinforce such basic Islamic values as brotherhood, trust, respect, love, mercy, and openness.

Among the most important behavioral norms derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah are kindness, humility, patience and forgiveness, honesty, considerateness, consultation, admission of mistakes, and fairness. These behaviors are, of course, required of every Muslim, leader or follower. Therefore, to say that a leader should observe the same norms required of all Muslims seems, on the surface, to be redundant or superfluous. Why

should the Qur'an make such a demand—to give an unambiguous reminder to the leader that his/her relationship with those being led has other goals than just the manifest or immediate purpose for which that relationship is established? In other words the relationship is not just instrumental—it seeks to preserve and reinforce brotherhood, human dignity, shared respect, compassion, and mercy.

Put differently, the behaviors demanded of the leader in this relationship are actually constraints. In an organizational context, a leader-led interaction is based on a relationship of authority. Since such relationships are essentially coercive and have the potential to alienate those over whom it is exercised, a leader's behavior has to be constrained and tempered by personal kindness, consultative behavior, forgiveness, humility, and other related behaviors. In the absence of these behaviors, all of which neutralize the coercive nature of the exercise of authority, a leader's behavior could, given the coerciveness implicit in authority relationships, undermine the Islamic values of brotherhood, mutual respect, and trust and could even impair leadership itself. On the latter point, the absence of such norms can be seen in the case of an unkind leader. According to the Qur'an (3:159), an unkind leader drives away his/her followers and thereby damages the position of leadership itself. Since leadership is an indispensable organizational variable, its impairment damages organizational effectiveness and overall performance and signifies organizational paralysis or chaos.

Leadership Job Behaviors. In contrast to leader relationship behaviors, leader job-related behaviors furnish the employee with job responsibilities and descriptions. Consequently, the employee is expected to know what to do and how to do it. These behaviors can be classified into two general categories: a) direction, education, task description, and simplification, and b) assignment of responsibilities, supervision, and accountability.

A leader sets goals and provides guidelines to employees concerning task performance and goal achievement, describes and simplifies procedures in respect of task performance, assigns specific responsibilities to employees for task performance, supervises them, and holds them accountable for the discharge of their assigned responsibilities. These two sets of leader behaviors furnish the necessary and sufficient conditions for the *muḥsin* employee to harness his/her work-related motivations: the leader job-related behaviors provide the employee with job responsibility and description, while the leader relationship behaviors impart a sense of community or fraternity to the workplace. Such an environment neutralizes the potentially alienating effect of the coercive nature of the exercise of organizational authority and control. Consequently, the Islamic values of brotherhood, mutual trust, and respect are preserved and reinforced. The end products of these two sets of leader behaviors are effective leadership and a work environment where organizational members

can satisfy their spiritual and moral urges to work, perform with excellence, and serve their clients.

It is worth noting that most modern organizational leadership theories have approached this topic along the two tracks of leader relationship and job-related behaviors. The seminal study in this regard, the Ohio State Studies, identified two factors underlying leader behaviors: "consideration" and "initiating structure." Consideration refers to "behavior indicative of friendship, mutual trust, respect, and warmth in the relationship between the leader and members of his staff. [41] Initiating structure refers to "the leader's behavior in delineating the relationship between himself and members of the work group and in endeavoring to establish well-defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and methods of procedure."[42] A large number of studies, both empirical and conceptual, have built on these two dimensions. The most notable are the Michigan Leadership Studies, Likert's Management Systems, Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid, and the Goal–Path Theory.[43]

These two dimensions are similar to the two clusters of behaviors in the Islamic conception of leadership in that they delineate the leader's relationship and job-related behaviors. There are, however, two fundamental differences between the two perspectives: a) the "consideration" or relationship behaviors in the modern studies are instrumental, for the behaviors are instruments designed to enhance leader effectiveness and are not intended to realize such Islamic goals as mutual trust and respect as desirable ends in themselves; b) the source of employee motivation, according to the modern studies, rests with leader behaviors. In the Islamic perspective, employee motivations do not originate in these behaviors but rather are the function of his pursuit of *iḥṣān* or, as Muhyid-Din Shakoor puts it, of the relationship between the *'abd* (the devoted servant) and his/her *Rabb* (God).[44]

In summary, the relationship between organizational leadership and employee motivation boils down to the following: organizational leadership in Islam creates the right leader relationship and job-related behaviors that enable self-motivated employees to harness work-related motivations for benefiting themselves, the organization, and their clients.

Practical Implications

The Islamic perspective presented here requires organizational members who are pursuers of *iḥṣān*. This suggests, in the area of human resources management, screening mechanisms for the selection and recruitment of employees. To reinforce this process, the organization should provide, on a continuous basis, Islamic teaching for its members and urge them to pursue *iḥṣān*. This point is significant, for it suggests that the organization assumes an active and continual role in enhancing the religious commitment of its members. Such a role may require regular ori-

entation programs and similar on-the-job arrangements. In sum, the organization itself should be a religious milieu.

This perspective also implies organizational structures that de-emphasize control and emphasize self-control and self-responsibility. Such organizational controls as centralization of authority are predicated partly on the assumption that people are indolent and dislike work and responsibility. This is not true in the case of the *muḥṣin* employee, who ought to have strong motivation for hard work and for excellent job performance due to his/her religious beliefs. Such an employee should be motivated to perform his/her duties to the best of his/her ability even in the absence of supervision or the sanction of authority.

Organizational restructuring is needed for the realization of self-control and self-responsibility in the real world of administrative organizations. In particular, this calls for a significant decentralization of administrative power at the workplace. Such a decentralization is entirely consistent with the moral and spiritual qualities of the *muḥṣin* employee and should not be seen as a retreat from supervisory authority in the organization. It neither negates nor derogates organizational authority or leadership. Even with substantial decentralization, organizational authority is there and can be invoked when necessary.

Another closely related implication pertains to personnel incentive policies: As previously noted, such policies are designed to control and direct employee behavior towards organizationally prescribed behaviors. The underlying assumption is that people are solely motivated by material rewards and punishments and that, therefore, their behavior can be controlled through economic incentive mechanisms. In bureaucratic organizations, this assumption is manifested in the reliance on economic incentives as a strategy to raise the productivity of organizational members. For the *muḥṣin* employee, however, the importance of economic self-interest does not form the basis of his/her work-related motivation. In other words, economic incentives might not be the sole or appropriate strategy to use to raise the productivity of those employees who have a personal commitment to high productivity or efficiency due to their religious belief and the necessity of reflecting that commitment in their work. Given this, situational constraints and the level of employee technical abilities are likely to be important factors for the enhancement of work productivity. The implication here is that raising productivity may simply require the creation of the right conditions, notably the leader relationship and job-related behaviors.

A fourth implication relates to the ever-present and enduring conflict between the bureaucrat and his/her clients or members of the public. The bureaucrat/client conflict is due to the depersonalized relationship that exists between them. This process occurs when the bureaucrat follows the norm of impersonality (i.e., no personal beliefs, sentiments, emotions, and other similar concerns are allowed to affect his/her work) in his/her official dealings with the public. In the organizational context, impersonality

is achieved by applying uniform or standard rules to all clients, irrespective of their special cases. The ultimate result of such a poilcy is an "unsympathetic, disinterested, and often uncomprehending bureaucrat perceived by the client."[45]

Although they generate conflicts between the bureaucrat and the public, standard or impersonal rules ensure equal treatment for all clients. However, the use of such rules is likely to confront the Islamically committed administrator with a dilemma. Endowed with the virtues of altruism, sympathy, compassion, optimism, and charity, he/she is most likely to take these qualities into consideration when dealing with clients. As a result, there will be a constant tension between upholding the norm of equal treatment, ensured as it were by following standard or impersonal rules, and these virtues which push him/her to respond positively to the special case of a particular client.

Conclusion

This study provides an Islamic perspective on organizational motivation. The basis of this perspective is the pursuit of *iḥṣān*, which is understood as a process that generates spiritual and moral urges to do good within the character of the Muslim. In the organizational context, it provides the basis for work motivation, motivation for excellence in job performance, and motivation for the service of the organization's clients. Such a model departs from modern models of organizational motivation in two fundamental ways: a) it does not consider the individual's egocentric needs to be the sole basis of organizational motivation, and b) it maintains that the individual's work-related motivations are independent of or originate outside of the organization. In other words, they do not depend upon the motivations induced by organizational leader "behaviors." In the Islamic perspective, such behaviors are needed only to create the conditions that will make it possible for the *muḥṣin* employee to harness his/her spiritually and morally grounded work-related motivations.

The Islamic perspective presented here could be a framework for an Islamic model of organizational motivation. Of course, such a model has to be a normative one and prescribe, inter alia, what needs to be done to reform real-world administrative organizations. The goals of such a model include, among others, a) the maximization of organizational efficiency; b) the organizational member's dignity, self-control, self-responsibility, respect; and c) client-responsiveness.

The normative propositions for this model are readily derivable from *iḥṣān*. For instance, the aforementioned statements on employee work attitude, motivation for efficiency in job performance, and motivation for client service could be some of these propositions. In general, such propositions should indicate how the organization ought to be structured to max-

imize such values as efficiency, human dignity, self-control, respect, and accountability to clients. Commitment to the realization of these values is built into the character of the devout Muslim, who is a pursuer of *iḥsān* and its spiritual and moral consequences. Therefore, what needs to be done is to create those organizational structures that make it possible for these values to be maximized.

An Islamic model of organizational motivation has to solve the dilemma that a devoted Muslim employee is likely to face when dealing with the public. As noted earlier, this dilemma stems from the tension between the need to uphold the norm of equal treatment when dealing with the public and the moral qualities that urge sympathy with those clients who impress on him/her the special nature of their cases.

Endnotes

1. Paul M. Muchinsky, *Psychology Applied to Work: An Introduction to Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1993), 323.

2. Frank Blackler and Sylvia Shimmin, *Applying Psychology in Organizations* (London: Methuen, 1984), 61.

3. On this conception of human nature and its attendant assumptions about employee behavior and managerial strategies, see Edgar H. Schen, *Organizational Psychology*, 3d ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1988), 52-54.

4. Etzioni discussed briefly this perspective on worker motivation. See Amitai Etzioni, *Modern Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964), 21-22. Although his discussion applies to scientific management rather than bureaucratic theory, it can be applied to the latter, for both approaches share the same characteristics. See Nicholas Henry, *Public Administration and Public Affairs*, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1989), 53.

5. The basis of employee motivation in the bureaucratic model is solely money or job security. This is what Max Weber, the original author of the model, seems to indicate in his *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, ed. by Talcott Parsons (New York: The Free Press, 1964), 333-36. For further comments, see Peter M. Blau and Marshall W. Meyer, *Bureaucracy in Modern Society*, 3d ed. (New York: Random House, 1987), 22-23; and Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard, *Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources*, 6th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1993), 59-60. Job security as the basis of worker motivation is a basic feature of what has been called Theory X, which is a variant of the bureaucratic form of organization. See Douglas McGregor, "The Human Side of Enterprise," in Fred A. Kramer (ed.), *Perspectives on Public Bureaucracy: A Reader on Organization* (Cambridge, MA: Winthrop Publishers, 1973), 97-101.

6. On the experiments, their interpretation, and the rise of the human relations school, see F. J. Roethlisberger, "Management and Morale," in Frederick C. Mosher (ed.), *Basic Literature of American Public Administration: 1787–1950* (New York: Holmers and Meier Publishers, 1981), 239-152, and Charles Perrow, *Complex Organizations*, 2d ed. (New York: McGraw–Hill, 1986), 79-118.

7. According to Nicholas Henry, "cow psychology" is a "disparaging term that has been applied to many studies in human relations on the grounds that such research assumes that workers in organizations are perceived by researchers as being comparable to cows and that 'cow psychology' willingly provides management with the means of moving the "herd" in the direction it wishes." Henry, *Public Administration*, 139.

8. Robert Presthus, *The Organizational Society* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), 25-26.

9. Frank K. Gibson and Clyde E. Teasley, "The Humanistic Model of Organizational Motivation: A Review of Research Support," *Public Administration Review* 33, no. 1 (January–February 1973): 90.

10. Ibid., 90-91.

11. See Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 3d ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 15-29.

12. Herbert L. Petri, *Motivation: Theory, Research, and Applications*, 3d ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1991), 325.

13. Frank K. Gibson and Clyde E. Teasley, "Humanistic Model," 89.

14. Ibid., 92-93.

15. Ibid., 91-95.

16. See Douglas McGregor, "The Human Side of Enterprise," in Kramer, *Perspectives*, 99.

17. For this assumption and the organizational structures predicated on it, see Edgar H. Schen, *Organizational Psychology*, 68-69, and McGregor, "Human Side," in Kramer, *Perspectives*, 113-16.

18. Peter Self, *Administrative Theories and Politics* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1977), 277-78.

19. Woodrow Wilson, "The Study of Administration," in Mosher, *Basic Literature*, 68-81.

20. For some of these studies, see Robert B. Denhardt, *Theories of Public Organization* (Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1984), 121-29.

21. See Self, *Administrative Theories*, 247-99.

22. For some of these dysfunctions and the bureaucratic structures that cause them, see Robert Merton, "Bureaucratic Structure and Personality" in Mosher, *Bureaucratic Structure*, 253-59, and Blau and Meyer, *Bureaucracy*, 139-61.

23. See the literature review by Gibson and Teasley, "Humanistic Model," 89-96.

24. Maulana Muhammad Ali, *A Manual of Hadith* (London: Curzon Press, 1977), 22.

25. Muhammad Fazl-Ur-Rahman Ansari, *The Qur'anic Foundations and Structure of Muslim Society* (Karachi: The World Federation of Islamic Missions, 1973), I:139.

26. Ibid., 140.

27. Ali, *Manual*, 23.

28. For more on the concept of the "fear of God," see Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an* (Chicago: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1980), 28-30.

29. A. Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary* (Brentwood, MD: Amana, 1983), 1759.

30. Imam Nawawi (interpretation), *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār al Fikr, 1981), 13:106.

31. Ansari, *Qur'anic Foundations*, 2:49.

32. Ibid., 1:147.

33. Muḥammed Nāṣir al Dīn al Albānī, *Silsilat al Aḥādīth al Ṣaḥīḥah* (Riyadh: Maktabat al Ma'ārif, 1987), vol. 3, hadith no. 113.

34. Love of God projects itself in love for one's self and for others. For more on this, see Ansari, *Qur'anic Foundations*, 1:144.

35. Ibid., 181.

36. Robert Merton, "Bureaucratic Structure and Personality," in Mosher, *Basic Literature*, 257-58.

37. Denhardt, *Theories*, 123-24.

38. For a brief review of leadership theories, including the Goal–Path Theory, see Murchinsky, *Psychology*, 364-93.

39. Quoted in Hersey and Blanchard, *Management*, 121.

40. For these two clusters of leader behaviors and their bases in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, see 'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad, *al Kafā'ah wa al Idārah fi al Siyāsah al Shar'īyah* (Jeddah: Dār al Mujtama' li al Nashr, 1986), 41-136; Sayyid 'Abd al Ḥamīd Marṣā, *al 'Alāqāt al Insānīyah* (Cairo: Wahbah, 1986), 187-92; Ḥamdi Amīn 'Abd al Ḥādi, *al Fikr al Idārī al Islāmī wa al Muqāran* (Cairo: Dār al Ḥamāmī, n.d.), 196-201; and 'Abd al Raḥmān

Dhohayān, *al Idārah wa al Ḥukm fi al Islām: al Fikr wa al Taṭbīq* (Jeddah: Dār al 'Ilm li al Ṭibā'ah wa Nashr, 1991), 155-57, 198-201.

41. Quoted in Hersey and Blanchard, *Management*, 101.

42. Ibid.

43. For some discussion on these studies, see Murchinsky, *Psychology*, 365-69, 374-79, and Hersey and Blanchard, *Management*, 102-8, 110-11.

44. Muhyid-Din Shakoor, "Toward an Islamic Motivational Psychology," in *Islam and Psychology* (October 1978): 1:2-7. (Proceedings of a seminar held in Riyadh.)

45. Henry, *Public Administration*, 117.