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Basic Concepts of Organization: A Literature-based Qualitative Study

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Abstract

The existence of organizations is essential because human beings, as social creatures, cannot fulfill all of their needs individually. This study examines the fundamental concepts underlying organizations. Its primary objective is to identify and understand the key elements encompassed within the basic framework of organizational theory. Employing a qualitative methodology with a literature review approach, the research draws upon digital literacy sources and other relevant data pertinent to the topic. Through analyzing various scholarly references, particularly conceptual frameworks and the Qur'anic perspective on organizational principles, this study explores definitions, essential components, organizational management principles, structural elements, and the broader social role of organizations. The findings indicate that robust theoretical foundations support organizational theory and harmonize the spiritual values embedded in Islamic teachings. Findings from the literature also emphasize that an ideal organization is not solely built upon structural systems, procedures, and work efficiency, but also supported by rooted values of ethics, morality, and spirituality deeply.

Keywords: organization, literature review, management, Qur'an, organizational structure

INTRODUCTION

In human life, it cannot be separated from organizations. In various aspects of life, whether social, educational, political, or economic, human activities almost always involve organized forms of cooperation. The basic human need to interact and collaborate has given birth to various forms of organizations ranging from informal groups to formal institutions with complex structures (Husin, 2022).

The presence of organizations is important because humans as social beings cannot meet all their needs individually. Therefore, through organizations, there is a synergy of human resources, time, and tools used to achieve certain goals efficiently and effectively (Jaelani, 2021).

Interestingly, the values of modern organizations have long been reflected in religious teachings, especially in the Qur'an. Islamic teachings provide an overview of the importance of cooperation (*ta'awun*), deliberation (*shura*), and compliance with rules as part of strong organizational principles (Shihab, 2002). Through this study, researchers attempt to explore the basic concepts of organizations in more depth from a theoretical and religious approach, with the hope of contributing to the development of management science and strengthening organizational values in everyday life practices.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a library research method. This approach was chosen to explore and understand the basic concepts of the organization in depth through a review of relevant literature, both from classical and contemporary sources, as well as the normative perspective of the Qur'an. The library study approach is very suitable for theoretical and normative studies like this, because it allows researchers to interpret and analyze texts and concepts that develop in certain disciplines (Zed, 2004).

The research process was conducted through several systematic stages. First, the collection of literature data from various sources including academic books, national and international scientific journals, relevant popular articles, and Al-Qur'an interpretation books that discuss organizational values. Second, the selection of literature sources was carried out based on the criteria of academic credibility, relevance to the

organizational theme, and its theoretical contribution (George & Bennett, 2005).

Third, the researcher used content analysis techniques *to* identify and categorize key themes such as: organizational definition, organizational structure, management principles, and integration of Qur'anic values in modern organizational practices. This procedure was carried out by reading in depth, noting thematic patterns, and organizing findings based on categories that emerged inductively (Creswell, 2014).

Fourth, a critical interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an and relevant interpretations is carried out to find meanings that are in accordance with contemporary organizational theory. In this way, the religious approach is not only a complement, but also functions as a source of values and ethics in organizational theory (Maidiana, 2021).

Fifth, the results of the analysis are classified into several sub-themes, such as: basic concepts of organization, principles and functions of organization, organizational structure, and organizational perspectives in the Qur'an. The results of this synthesis produce a comprehensive understanding of the organization, both in terms of modern management theory and Islamic spiritual values.

With this methodology, research not only presents organizational studies from a structural and theoretical perspective, but also places them within a framework of values, morals, and spirituality. This is important for building organizations that are not only professional and efficient, but also have character and are meaningful to society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the literature study that has been conducted, several important results were obtained as follows:

a. Basic Elements of an Organization: An organization consists of important elements such as people, common goals, cooperation, equipment, environmental conditions, and location (Anggoro et al., 2022; Wahjono, 2022).

b. Organizational Structure: Modern organizational structures include job specialization, departmentalization, chain of command, span of control, centralization-decentralization, and formalization (Robbins, 2008; Jaelani, 2021).

c. Organizational Principles: The organizational principles according to Henry Fayol, such as division of labor, authority and responsibility, discipline, and unity of command, are still very relevant today (Prasad et al., 2009; Husin, 2022).

d. Islamic Values in Organizations: Islamic organizational principles such as shura (deliberation), amanah (responsibility), and 'adl (justice) are also integrated into modern organizational structures and strengthen the spiritual dimension of the organization (Maidiana, 2021).

e. Convergence of Theory and Spirituality: There is a convergence of Islamic spiritual values and modern organizational principles, which strengthen each other in building a sustainable and ethical organization.

Discussion

Basic Concept of Organization

Etymologically, organization comes from the Latin word *organum* which means tool. According to Anggoro et al., (2022) stated that an organization is a container for a group of people who work together to achieve certain goals whose elements include personnel, cooperation, common goals, equipment, and environmental and location factors. Anggoro et al., (2022) also stated that an organization is defined as a system of cooperation between two or more people that is structured to achieve certain goals. The main elements of an organization include people, cooperation, goals, tools, and environmental conditions that affect the operation of the organization. From this, the author concludes that an organization is a place or container for people to gather, work together rationally and systematically, planned, guided, and controlled in utilizing resources (money, materials, machines, methods, and the environment), infrastructure, data and so on which are used efficiently and effectively to achieve goals.

According to Dydiet Hardjito in Muchtar et al. (2019: 4) states that an organization is a consciously coordinated social unit, which allows members to achieve goals that cannot be achieved through individual actions separately. This means that to achieve a goal in an organization or group must be carried out together between individuals consciously and responsibly. It will be impossible to realize effectively if the goals of the organization are carried out individually. This also reflects the importance of cooperation, coordination, and conscious management between members of the organization.

Stephen P. Robbins (2008) states that important elements of organizational structure include job

specialization, departmentalization, chain of command, span of control, centralization and decentralization, and formalization.

a. Specialization of work: a division of tasks that allows each individual to focus on a specific role or expertise according to their abilities and interests. Through specialization, organizations create space for each individual to grow, develop, and contribute meaningfully to increasing organizational productivity.

b. Departmentalization or division: the process of grouping organizational activities or activities into parts or units. This facilitates better coordination, clarifies the division of tasks, and increases the overall efficiency of the organization.

c. Chain of command: an element or principle in an organization that describes the formal line of authority that connects each position in the organization from the top to the bottom. This concept determines who reports to whom and has the authority to give orders and is the basis where each individual only receives instructions from one immediate superior to avoid confusion and conflict of orders.

d. Span of control: the number of people or subordinates who can be guided, supervised, and supported directly by a superior in an organization. The more appropriate the number of subordinates who are guided, the greater the opportunity for the leader to understand individual needs, provide adequate attention, and build warm and effective communication. This also allows the leader not only to direct the work but to be present in a human way, which means the leader listens, guides, and gives space for each individual or team member to grow.

e. Centralization and decentralization: a decision-making system in an organization where the main authority and responsibility are concentrated at the managerial level or central leadership. Centralization aims to maintain consistency, strong control, and uniformity of policies in the organization. Decentralization is an organizational management system where the authority and responsibility for decision-making are distributed to lower managerial levels or to specific units within the organization. The leader gives trust to the section or branch to make decisions according to the local context and needs so as to increase flexibility, accelerate response to change, and empower individuals or employees to be more independent and responsible.

f. Formalization: a way of providing clear guidance for each individual in carrying out tasks, through mutually agreed rules and procedures. Formalization aims to create clarity, consistency, and control in carrying out work tasks. When implemented wisely and adaptively, formalization can be a tool that supports collaboration, protects individual rights, and ensures that each individual understands expectations and fair and transparent ways of working.

Stephen P. Robbins (2008) also stated that organizations must have identifiable boundaries and act consciously as a coordinated social unit. This means that organizations must have clear and identifiable boundaries, both structurally and functionally, in order to operate as a coordinated and directed social unit.

Based on its elements, the basic concept of an organization includes: 1) people (*person to person*); 2) collaboration; 3) goals; 4) equipment; 5) environmental factors; 6) conditions or circumstances that directly/indirectly affect organizational activities; and 7) location. From these elements, it can be explained that an organization consists of people who are interconnected and interact with each other, work together closely in collaboration, and help each other to achieve common goals. That goal is the reason and motivation for why the organization exists and operates. Furthermore, they utilize various tools and resources to help carry out daily work that is influenced by the surrounding environment, both visible and indirect, which makes it necessary to always adapt.

Next, there are certain conditions or situations that can affect the running of the organization either directly or indirectly. And finally, the location or place where the organization operates is also important as a center of activity and coordination, although now it can be virtual. This is also supported The 7-S model from Peters and Waterman adds a more holistic approach through strategy, structure, systems, shared values, skills, staff, and leadership style, which describes the interaction between technical and cultural elements in the organization (Wahjono, 2022).

Development of Organizations and Adaptive Structures

Rapidly growing organizations are supported by flexible and adaptive structures such as matrix structures, which enable cross-functional collaboration and speed in decision-making. Research by Wulandari and Akbar (2022) shows that flexible structures can increase organizational efficiency by up to 30% in the service sector. Decentralization is also an important factor. A recent study by Fathoni & Rahmawati (2024) in *the Scientific Journal of Strategic Management* (Sinta 2) shows that organizations that clearly delegate authority have higher adaptive resilience in the face of external changes.

Division of labor and specialization as stated by Robbins (2008) has been proven to accelerate the

development of human resource capacity. Putri and Wijaya (2023) noted that companies with good task specialization have 18% higher labor productivity than companies that use generic work systems.

Principles and Functions of Organization

Principles of organization according to Henry Fayol as conveyed by Prasad et al. (2009: 56-57) must be flexible and adaptable to institutions and organizational patterns. These principles include:

a. Division of work, work is divided so that each individual becomes an expert in a particular field so that effectiveness and productivity increase.
b. Authority and responsibility, meaning that managers or leaders must have the authority to give orders and be responsible for all decisions and actions.
c. discipline, that every employee must obey the applicable rules and orders because discipline is the key to organizational success.
d. Unity of command, each employee is only entitled to receive orders from one person because this is to avoid confusion and conflict of commands.
e. Unity of direction means that organizations that have the same goals must receive direction from the same superior or manager so that their targets are similar.
f. Prioritizing public interests over personal interests (subordination of individual interests to the general interests) means that the interests of the organization must be prioritized over personal interests if the goals of the organization are to be achieved.
g. Provision of remuneration, that providing fair compensation to employees will improve their performance so that organizational goals will be achieved properly.
h. Centralization means that decision making must be adjusted to the conditions of the organization or decision making must be adjusted to the level of ability of managers at each level.
i. Chain of command (scalar chain) means that every organization must have a clear line of authority from top management to the lower levels so that it is clear to whom the accountability of employees in the organization is conveyed.
j. Order means that the placement of organizational members or employees must be clear and precise so that the organizational structure becomes more efficient and orderly.
k. Justice (equity), that managers or leaders must be fair and friendly towards subordinates to create a sense of shared ownership of the organization so that organizational goals can be achieved.
l. Stability of tenure or personal means that low employee turnover will increase the efficiency and stability of the organization because frequent employee turnover will reduce organizational productivity.
m. Initiative, that employees are given the opportunity to express their ideas and creativity,
n. Esprit de corps means team spirit and unity must be instilled to create harmony and cooperation so that goals can be achieved easily.

From these principles, it is expected that the organization can become a healthy workplace, where each member of the organization is able to understand their role and is empowered to develop. Leadership that is built on the basis of fairness, a sense of responsibility and appreciation for employee contributions will create a collaborative work environment where employee or personal initiatives are valued so that the organization is not only a productivity machine but also a place for growth, learning, and a sense of belonging for all its members. In addition, the organization also functions as a guideline for activities, a source of legitimacy, standards of implementation, a source of motivation, and a rational basis for organizing (Husin, 2022). These functions show that the organization is not just a structure, but also a coordinated system of values and behaviors.

Principles of Organization and Integration of Islamic Values

Fayol (in Prasad et al., 2009) mentions the principle of authority and responsibility and discipline as the pillars of management. This principle is reinforced in Islamic values such as amanah. A study by Alfi and Nugroho (2021) stated that the amanah principle increases leadership accountability in community-based organizations.

The value of shura or deliberation, as contained in QS. Asy-Shura: 38, is a principle of collective decision-making. This is reinforced by research by Zulkarnaen & Fitriani (2022) in *the Iqtisaduna Journal,* which shows that the practice of deliberation increases the loyalty of organizational members by 25%. In addition, Pranowo & Handayani (2023, *Journal of Organization and Business Ethics*) also stated that organizations that combine the principles of justice ('adl) and transparency have a more positive and collaborative work climate.

Organizational Structure

Organizational structure can be interpreted as a form of work network regarding tasks, communication and a form of reporting that connects each job between members of the organization (Wahjono, 2022). In general, organizational structure design consists of three types of models, namely:

a. Conventional organizational structure which has a simple level of departmentalization, has a wide span of control, centralization of authority and a low level of formalization. Simplicity is the strength of this structure, fast, flexible, and inexpensive maintenance and clear responsibilities.

b. Bureaucracy. In this structural model, the achievement of routine operational tasks through specialization, rules, regulations are formal, division of tasks is grouped based on functional departments, centralized authority, narrow span of control, and decision making is based on the chain of command. This design can function well even though the manager is less talented due to a lack of understanding of the rules and regulations.

c. Matrix. The matrix model organizational structure creates dual lines of authority, functional departmentalization and combined products. Its advantages lie in the placement of specialists together, the number is minimized, allowing the collection and resources used specifically for all products to be carried out together. The matrix organizational structure combines the strengths of functional specialization and product orientation (Jaelani, 2021).

Organizational Structure and Operational Efficiency

Bureaucratic structures are suitable for large organizations that require high stability. A study by Santosa & Arifin (2023) shows that digital bureaucracy drives efficiency in government agencies up to 22% better than manual systems. Matrix structures are considered suitable for project and innovation organizations. Research by Chen et al. (2020, *International Journal of Organizational Theory & Behavior*) found that the matrix model increased team innovation by 35% by maintaining cross-departmental coordination. Wahjono's study (2022) also emphasized that the organizational structure model has an influence on the speed of response in decision making and the efficiency of interdepartmental coordination.

Integration of Spirituality in Organizations

Quranic values such as *shura* (Asy-Shura: 38), *amanah,* and *bunyānun marsūs* (Ash-Shaff: 4) provide moral and ethical dimensions that strengthen the organization. This approach is supported by Darmawan and Rahayu (2020) who state that organizational spirituality strengthens members' emotional attachment to organizational goals. Quraisy Shihab (2002) in his interpretation *of Al-Misbah* explains that the principle of *ta'awun* (cooperation) is a social foundation in a harmonious organization. This is reinforced in the research of Hidayat et al. (2021) in *the Journal of Leadership and Spirituality,* which concludes that the principles of shura and justice strengthen the sense of belonging and commitment to collective work.

This integration of spiritual values is also the basis for value *-based management,* which is seen as more sustainable in the context of Indonesian society (Syamsul & Munawar, 2024).

Organization in the Perspective of the Qur'an

The spiritual approach to understanding organizations adds a dimension of ethics and moral responsibility to managerial practice. The organizational values in the Qur'an provide a strong normative framework for building organizations that are not only effective in structure, but also spiritually and socially healthy.

In Islam, togetherness and order in carrying out a matter is not something new. The Qur'an, as a guide to the lives of Muslims, contains many values that indirectly or directly become important foundations in organizing. Organizational principles such as amanah (responsibility), syura (deliberation), and 'adl (justice) are very relevant guidelines in building a healthy and dignified organization.

Discussing organizations from the perspective of the Qur'an is not only about the structure or work system, but also about how we treat each other, maintain trust, and foster a spirit of togetherness that is valuable in worship. Within that framework, this discussion wants to dig deeper into how the teachings of the Qur'an guide us in forming and running organizations that are not only efficient, but also humane and meaningful.

The concept of organization in Islam can be traced through several relevant verses of the Qur'an, such as:

QS. Ali Imran (3:103)

وَاعْتَصِمُوْا بِحَبْلِ اللّٰهِ جَمِيْعًا وَّلَا تَفَرَّقُوْا ۖ وَاذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ اِذْ كُنْتُمْ اَعْدَاۤءً فَاَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوْبِكُمْ فَاَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهٖٓ اِخْوَانًا ۚ وَكُنْتُمْ عَلٰى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَاَنْقَذَكُمْ مِّنْهَا ۗ كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُوْنَ ۝

It means:

And hold fast to all the ropes (religion) of Allah and do not divide. And remember Allah's favor when you were enemies (in the era of ignorance). And you were on the verge of hell and Allah saved you from there. Thus Allah explains His verses to you so that you may be guided.

In QS. Ali Imran (3:103), Allah SWT commands His people to hold fast to the rope of religion and avoid division. This is in line with modern organizational theory that prioritizes *shared values* as the foundation of togetherness in achieving collective goals. Unity of vision and mission in an organization is the main force in maintaining internal cohesion, preventing conflict, and strengthening member loyalty. This verse emphasizes the importance of maintaining unity and avoiding division. In the context of an organization, this refers to the importance of *shared vision* and *trust* among members of the organization. Tafsir Al-Misbah explains that this verse reflects the importance of strengthening bonds between each other and making trust the main binder in the organization (Shihab, 2002).

QS. Ash-Shaff (61:4)

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِيْنَ يُقَاتِلُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِهٖ صَفًّا كَاَنَّهُمْ بُنْيَانٌ مَّرْصُوْصٌ ۝

It means:

Indeed, Allah loves those who fight in His cause in orderly formation, as if they were a solid organization.

QS. Ash-Shaff (61:4) emphasizes the importance of forming a solid line in the struggle in the way of Allah. This verse can be interpreted as an invitation to build a strong, orderly organizational structure that has a clear division of roles, in line with the principle of division of labor in organizational theory (Al-Baghawi, in Wahjono, 2022). From this verse, it is very clear that Allah loves those who fight in His path in orderly lines, like a solid building. This illustrates the importance of structure, coordination, and clarity of roles in an organization. Elements such as job specialization, chain of command, and division of responsibilities as explained in modern management theory are reflected in this verse. A solid organization is an organization that has an orderly and structured work system. Thus, this verse emphasizes the importance of organizational structure, clear division of tasks, and coordination between organizational elements. This is in line with the principle of structure and job specialization in modern organizational theory, and emphasizes the importance of maintaining unity and avoiding division.

QS. Ash-Shura (42:38)

وَالَّذِيْنَ اسْتَجَابُوْا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَاَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَۖ وَاَمْرُهُمْ شُوْرٰى بَيْنَهُمْۖ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنٰهُمْ يُنْفِقُوْنَ ۝

The meaning of the verse is and those who accept (obey) the call of their Lord and perform worship, while (determined) with deliberation in between they. They consume part from the food we have given them.

In QS. Ash-Shura (42:38), the value of deliberation is emphasized as the main principle in decision making. Deliberation (shura) in decision making is an important value in Islamic organizations. Deliberation not only produces more inclusive decisions, but also increases a sense of ownership and shared responsibility. Quraisy Shihab explains that deliberation is an integrative process that eliminates egoism and produces the best decisions for the common interest (Shihab, 2002). This not only reflects democratic and participatory principles, but also emphasizes the importance of involving all parties in the organization. This supports the principle of decentralization and delegation of authority which is also discussed in organizational theory. So this verse emphasizes the importance of member participation in the decision-making process, which is parallel to the principle of decentralization and participatory leadership in organizational theory.

These verses show that a successful organization is not only built on technical and system bases, but also on values, spirituality, and high work ethics. Thus, the organizational principles in the Qur'an do not contradict modern management theory, but rather enrich it with moral and spiritual perspectives. This approach is very relevant in the context of sustainable organizational development that is oriented towards the welfare of humanity as a whole, not just efficiency and productivity.

Conceptual Convergence between Islamic Spirituality Values and Modern Organizational Theory

One of the important findings in this study is the significant conceptual convergence between the basic principles of organization in modern management theory and the spiritual values embedded in the teachings of the Qur'an. This finding confirms that an ideal organization is not only built on a system of structure, procedures, and work efficiency, but is also supported by deep ethical values, morality, and spirituality.

Some new findings that are developments from previous concepts include:

a. Reconstruction of Organizational Ethics: Integration of Qur'anic values such as *amanah* (responsibility), *'adl* (justice), and *syura* (deliberation) can form the foundation of organizational ethics that is not merely formal but has spiritual and emotional binding power. This expands the meaning of the principles of "equity" and "responsibility" in Fayol and Robbins' theories.

b. Spiritual-Progressive Leadership Model: The Qur'an's emphasis on the value of deliberation (QS. Ash-Shura: 38) and unity of vision (QS. Ali Imran: 103) gives rise to a leadership model that is not only transactional or transformational, but also *transcendental,* namely connecting the leadership role with spiritual responsibility towards God and the people. This is a new form of contribution to the development of contemporary leadership models.

c. Organization as a Social Worship Space: Departing from the concept of *bunyānun marsūs* (a solid, organized structure) in QS. Ash-Shaff: 4, the idea emerged that an organization is not only a functional container but also a spiritual and social space. This concept emphasizes the importance of social cohesion, role clarity, and collective contribution within the framework of worship, which has not been widely developed in conventional organizational literature.

d. The Holistic Paradigm of Humans in Organizations: An approach that combines the rational side (structure, efficiency, productivity) and the spiritual side (values, meaning, morality) presents a new, more complete paradigm for humans in organizations. It rejects the purely utilitarian view and opens up space for a more humanistic and sustainable approach.

Thus, this study can contribute to the development of organizational science in general by expanding theoretical and practical horizons towards the integration of managerial systems and spiritual values. This finding is important to strengthen the value *-based management approach* in the context of local culture and religious society in Indonesia.

CONCLUSIONS

This study shows that the basic concept of organization involves structure, roles, functions, and principles designed to achieve common goals effectively and efficiently. Organization as a structured cooperation system is very relevant to various sectors of life. In the perspective of the Qur'an, the principle of organization is not only oriented towards results and structure, but also towards unity, moral responsibility, and collective involvement. Values such as deliberation, unity, and order become spiritual foundations that enrich modern managerial practices. Thus, organizational theory and the teachings of the Qur'an do not run separately, but complement each other in building a professional, humanistic, and spiritually meaningful organization.

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