Islamic Instruments for Sustainable Human Capital Development

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Abstract

Over the years, the terms used to describe staff and employees in businesses have altered and been being changed. We have moved from "personnel" to "human resources" (HR) and now to "human capital". The term human capital is recognition that people in organizations and occupations are more significant and essential than physical assets like cars and money. Organizations are investing thousands of dollars behind developing human resources. In spite of having ample attempts, still the world is aching from lack of spiritual and moral leaders/manpower both in business and non-business sectors. However, all of those attempts and theories, being used to develop human capital, are from a conventional view. Though Islam has a great command to convert the human being into human capital, there is no such model developed from an Islamic perspective. To minimize the gap, the researchers have conducted the present study to develop a comprehensive theoretical model for sustainable human capital development. The present study is a theoretical one and relevant secondary data have been used in appropriate places to address the objectives of the study. The researchers hope that the findings of this present study will help the practitioners and the Muslim Ummah as well to develop their manpower according to their needs. And also the model will help them to build such a nation who will be full of spirituality, morality and intellectuality. One of the limitations of this study is that the proposed model is not empirically tested; rather it is a conceptual paper.
Keywords: Human capital, Sustainable development, Dimensions of human development, Comprehensive model for SHCD, Islamic Instruments for HCD.

1. Introduction

Human Resource/Capital development (HRD/HCD) is considered to be one of the major functions of Human Resource Management (HRM) in any organization. To develop human capital, the organizations usually arrange some training and development programs which are developed based on the western culture and literatures. All the Muslim practitioners are following those without any adequate amendment in the flavour of Islam (Ali, 2005).

Immense of organizations are working to convert the human being into human resource or asset. Most of them are conventional and most of the texts and literatures, used to develop human capital, are conventional. The result is that so called worldly improvements are being done with those human resources, but fail to bring peace in human life and more or less corruption and mismanagement is everywhere. In today’s complex and dynamic field of organizational management, continuous changes are faced by organizational leaders, many of which could be addressed by developing new knowledge based on extensive studies on peoples’ internal moral convictions on various organizational and societal issues (Osman-Goni & Sharif, 2011). Management scholars are today considering some steps to include morality and teaching spirituality in some training and development sessions for their employees in the corporate world. Altalib (1991) proclaimed that Islamic training and development is all encompassing, beginning of the moral and spiritual development of man and manifested eventually into physical development. In every religion in this globe, has a great command to be moral and spiritual in every facet of life, but most of the people have forgotten their religious instruction. Granting to the power of the individual, the strong recommendation of Islam is to perform all the projects in such a direction that can convey the utmost benefit for human beings in this Earth and can secure the maximum good return in the life hereafter.

The literatures for Human Capital Development (HCD) from Islamic Perspective are very rare. Recently it has been commenced to write the literatures from Islamic Perspective and the researches are ongoing at the same. The current literatures are discussing about the general functional areas of HRM like, recruitment & selection process in Islam, training mechanisms in Islam, payment and compensation system in Islam, rewarding system in Islam and so on, but not
much on HCD. A lot of studies have been conducted on HCD, but all of those are from a conventional perspective except a few. However, there is no such model has been originated from Islamic point of view. Here is a big research gap and the researchers’ intention to convey the present work to minimize this disruption. As a part of the Muslim Ummah, the authors have tried to conduct the present study to fetch forth the guidelines of Islam to convert the human being into human capital.

2. Research Questions

The following questions are in the researchers’ mind and the present study has been conducted to satisfy those questions:

1. Why the whole world is suffering from lack of moral and spiritual manpower,
2. Why the present education /training and development system fails to provide quality manpower to the organizations,
3. Is there any solution in Islam to solve this problem, and
4. Is there any model to develop human capital equipped with morality, spirituality and professionalism?

3. Objectives of the Study

This study embarks on the following objectives:

1. To illustrate the approaches guided by Islam to build sustainable human capital.
2. To put some conceptual contribution in the field of HCD
3. To develop a comprehensive model for human capital development.

4. Methodology

The present study is an exploratory and conceptual research work; relevant secondary information and data referring the published literature, relevant verses from the Holy Qur’an, principles and traditions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), judgments of Muslim reformers, and contributions of Muslim scholars are used in appropriate places to satisfy the objectives of the study. On the basis of the theoretical study, the researchers have developed a comprehensive theoretical model to develop human capital.
5. Literature Review

Over the years, the terms used to describe staff and employees in businesses have changed. We have moved from "personnel" to "human resources" (HR) and now "human capital". The term human capital is recognition that people in organizations and businesses are important and essential asset who contribute to development and growth, in a similar way as physical assets such as machines and money. The collective attitudes, skills and abilities of people contribute to organizational performance and productivity. Any expenditure in training, development, health and support is an investment, not just an expense. Although an organization or business is a separate legal entity, it ceases to exist if it has no people - leaders, directors, members, employees - are required to maintain an organization’s existence. They are the most important and valuable resource of any organization. Dynamic people can build progressive and growth-oriented organizations. Competent and motivational people can make things happen and enable an organization to achieve its goals. Therefore, organizations should continuously ensure that the dynamism, effectiveness, competency and motivation of its people remain at a high level. Organizations should have initiatives to develop human capital so that the people can perform all the tasks or functions they do or may be required to perform in the future as they go up in the organizational hierarchy or as the organization takes up new tasks through diversification, expansion, and modernization. Every effort should be taken, whether formally or informally, to develop skills and abilities and to provide opportunities for people to maximize their contribution. To develop the human capital a lot of approaches and mechanisms or instruments are developed in traditional Human Resource Management (HRM). The most frequently used instruments are performance and potential appraisal, feedback and performance coaching, career planning, training, organization development, honours and awards, employee welfare and quality of work life, self-renewal and institution building, personal growth laboratories and worker education program, quality circles, task forces and assignment groups, and managerial learning networks. Beside these the organizations have their own strategies to develop their people.

On the other hand, most of the people in this world are believers. They believe in different religions, like- Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam and so on. Every religion has its own teachings to develop human beings. Most of the teachings are alike and very similar. For instance, in Islam, a lot of teachings and guidelines are present to develop the human
beings as the best quality people. Among them Salah (prayer), Sawm (fasting), Hazz (pilgrim), Zakah (donation) etc. are remarkable. In this article the authors attempted to find out these guidelines and then categorize them into different heads of HRM.

Ample literatures on HRM are present to study both from traditional and Islamic perspectives, for examples- literature on leadership, motivation, selection and promotion and on like issues. Literatures on human resource development are also available, but those are from conventional perspectives and very few are from Islamic perspective. All of those are not within the knowledge of the author. For these reasons only few literature reviews are mentioned here.

6. Conceptual Contributions

Dimensions of HCD

Here the authors tried to define human capital development by mentioning some dimensions which are stated below:

Physical Development

To be capital one should have a very good physical structure. The physical development begins at the very initial stage of a fatal within the uterus. At the gestational time period a female parent is taken to take balanced diet so that the growth of the fatal can be secured. After delivery, the first food for the newborn is its mother’s milk, which is as food, nutrition, vaccines for creating prevention capacity and so along. And there is no parallel or equivalent or superior to its mother’s milk. In the Qur’an, Allah (swt) says that let the baby drink its mother’s milk for the full two years (Lokman). In the Qur’an, it is also mentioned that parents may take thirty months to give up the mother’s milk (Al-Bakarah). Family and relatives are mainly responsible for such type of development.

Moral/Spiritual Development

The personal development in Islam comes from spiritual development. There are shared principles and practices in the spiritual development of an Individual. Iman (faith), Ihsan (perfection), Ikhlas (purity of intent), Tawakkul (ultimate trust in Allah), Taqwa (piety) and the like are the various principles and Shuhadah (testimony to monotheism and prophethood), Salah (prayers), Sawm (fasting), Zakat (obligatory alms), Hajj (pilgrimage to Baitullah) etc. are some
of the practices of spiritual development of an individual. The Quran says: “O Believers! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and see that you do not die save in the state of submission to Allah”(Al Imran, 3:102).

Both the Family & Relatives and Friends, Schools & Society are equally responsible for such type of development.

Knowledge Development

Human beings are superior to other creatures because they have faculties and they can acquire knowledge and can do their all activities in this world according to their knowledge. So to be knowledgeable is as essential as feeding. In the Qur’an, Allah asks people to be knowledgeable. “Read/study/do research in the name of your Lord who has created you and created you from alaq” (Sura Al-Alaq, 1-2).

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, “It is the obligation for each Muslim to acquire knowledge” Muslim and Bukhari.

And definitely the knowledge should be true knowledge and able to make the man to remember their Lord. So the education system itself, either in family or in institutions, is responsible for such type of development. This knowledge must include both the theoretical knowledge and technological knowledge as well.

Skill Development

Skills are very important to do the things in right way, effectively and efficiently. Skill development is also emphasized in Islam. From Al-Qur’an we can know that Allah (SWT) taught Adam (AS) the name and utilities of the things and then asked him to disclose those in front of Allah and the angels (Al-Qur’an, 2:39). There is a provision of training session for mankind for one month each year to increase Taqowah (Al-Qur’an, 2:183).

Personal Development

The personal development in Islam comes from spiritual development. There are shared principles and practices for the spiritual development of an Individual. Iman (faith), Ihsan (perfection), Ikhlas (purity of intent), Tawakkul (ultimate trust in Allah), Taqwa (piety) and the like are the various principles and Shahadah (testimony to monotheism and prophet-hood), Salah (prayers), Sawm (fasting), Zakah (obligatory alms), Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah) and so on are some of the practices of spiritual development of an individual. Quran says to believers to
fear Allah as He should be feared, and not to die save in the state of submission to Allah (Al-Qur’an, 3:102).

Political Development

The political development in Islam depends upon equal participation in decision making process i.e. Shoora system. The verse from Quran reads who conduct their affairs by consultation (Al-Qur’an, 42: 38)

Social Development

The social development in Islam ensures equal status of human beings irrespective of their religion, region, caste, language and belief i.e. Izzah. Quran says to Human beings, We created you all from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another (Al-Qur’an, 49:13).

Organizational/Administrative Development

The organizational or administrative development in Islam means the shared role of efficient and effective system i.e. Nazm. In Quran we find, Hold fast together to the cable of Allah and be not divided (Al-Qur’an, 3:103)

Economic and Spatial Development

The economic or financial development ensures the sharing of wealth among people, i.e. Maal. Just as constipation is bad for stomach, concentration of wealth is disease for any economy. Quran says that whereas Allah has made trade lawful and interest unlawful (Al-Qur’an, 2: 275). On the other hand spatial development ensures the shared land among the people, i.e. Makaan. The Quran says that and will then cause you to settle in the land as their successors. That is the reward for him who fears to stand for reckoning and holds My threat in awe (al-Qur’n, 14:14).

7. Organizations Primarily Responsible for HRD

Family

Family is the first institution which is responsible for the development of human beings. From physical to mental and intellectual development, all depend on the taking care conditions of family members. Medical science tells us that the mental development of any child is
happened within its first three-five years of age. Within this time period if the family members can confront all the morale dealings in front of the infants, definitely their morality should be upgraded and if they enjoy within their household, their brain also be prepared accordingly. And wholly of these developments will facilitate them to be a resource in the future if other addictions are proper. Here family members should play the role model so that the children may learn all the best practices from them. In Islam, to build up a good family is mandatory and through the marriage of two people (male and female) we can only build such legal family where our youngsters will be birth and brought up accordingly.

**Educational Institutions**

After passing few years the children started to go to schools and other educational institutions. Hence, these institutions have a very serious role to develop the children in morally and professionally. The teachers of those educational institutions are the model to the students. Every time they attempt to simulate the activities of their instructors. So firstly, the teachers should be moral and ethical in their words and works. Secondly, the learning materials should be able to teach the pupils all the required knowledge to stay and work in this world with morality and sincerity. They should be able to light everywhere in this world to take away the darkness. Only proper training will aid them to behave thus. Thirdly, the friend circles in those institutions also affect the development of the students. Friends are easily motivated by the other friends. So teachers and parents both should be really deliberate around the friend groups with whom their children usually play.

**Employer Organizations**

After having knowledge from family and educational institutions’ students will go to the organizations to work. Hence, the employer organizations must have some duties and responsibilities to develop their workforce. The employees may have theoretical knowledge but they may not have the practical one. So, the organizations should arrange required no. of training and development programs to increase the skills of their employees according to their needs. Once upon a time organizations felt that to expend behind the development has been barely a cost. Now the concept has been changed. Organizations now feel that expenditure behind the training and development of their manpower is not a cost but an investment. For this reason human beings within the organizations are now treated as human capital. Here organizations also
have the responsibility to help the employees for their career development.

**Training Centres**

Ample training centres are now here and there to train and develop the human resources. At home and abroad, everywhere they are available. Their only one objective is to help the human being to be human resource according to the requirement of the target organizations. Sometimes, organizations may contact them to train their employees according to their job requirements. Most of the cases the organizations have now their own research and training centre through which they arrange the training programs for their employees.

**Religious/Spiritual Organizations**

Religious organizations and leaders are also responsible to develop the morality of human beings of that society. In this world, there is no religion which teaches the immoral to the people. So to be moral, people must be known to the religious command and instructions and they will have to follow these. If they can do this, only then it is possible to provide the honest and committed manpower to the workplaces.

**Comprehensive HCD Model in Islam (Newly developed)**

![Comprehensive HCD Model](image)

Figure 1: Comprehensive HCD Model

The authors have developed the model on the basis of their knowledge regarding HRM,
HRD and Islamic principles of HRM. Because people begin to learn from their parents first and then from others, the author would like to categorize total components of the model into three major area according to the relationship distance. Because every person is responsible and he/she will be asked about his/her duties and responsibilities, no party can avoid or ignore their responsibilities regarding developing human capital. Here the phases with their components are mentioned:

**Phase 1: Primary Phase- Family & Relatives:** Family and relatives include parents, siblings, close relatives and remote relatives

**Phase 2: Secondary Phase- Friends & Society:** Friends and society include neighbours, society and social culture, educational institutions, friends, community leaders and leaders in religion

**Phase 3: Professional Phase- Wider Environment & Other Organizations:** In this phase the organizations can give the final shape to the human capitals, but the basics should be developed/incorporated by the early two groups. Here, the players are employer organizations, professional organizations, other training organizations, technology, socio-cultural economy of the country and the world, local politics and world politics.

All of the factors named above are in some manner responsible for sustainable, holistic development of human capital.

**8. Limitations and Conclusion**

As the authors noted that the present work is an exploratory theoretical research rather empirical, the newly developed model is completely based on the available literatures to the authors and yet to be proven. Time was a real constraint to test the model empirically and in-depth knowledge of Islamic literatures was another main constraint. But despite of these restrictions, the writers have attempted to invest their utmost effort to produce some concepts of human capital development and a new theoretical account for this. Though this is the starting point, it would be the motivation for future researchers to guide further inquiry along this model or on the same.

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