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BOOK REVIEW

INTEGRATING CULTURAL VALUES TO EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT: A PARADIGM SHIFT

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I. INTRODUCTION

School is said to be the mirror of the society. It is the locus of knowledge development, research, invention and databank. It is the place where the learners are socialized into the culture of the state. It is the mandate of the school to transmit cultural values to the learners in order to produce responsible and upright citizens for the country. But the actual situation in school, the three thrusts of education such as teaching right knowledge, right values and right skills are not equally and sufficiently delivered. The teaching of moral values and skills is not given the focus. Parents are surprised to see their sons and daughters after finishing college education of being not refined in their behaviors. Then, these are the graduates who will work in the government agencies. They carry with them their ill-mannered behaviors which often become their habit. Low performance of public agencies is partly the influence of poor moral values among the employees and the inability of the school administrator to manage the culture of the organization.

This paper believes in the need to take a paradigm shift in the educational management from secular-centric to Islamic-centric and the integration of cultural values as a reform strategy to strengthen the administrative capacity and the morale of the teachers and the staff. The objective of this paper is to rediscover the cultural values which are relevant to the enhancement of the administration of schools particularly the tertiary level. This study is based on ethnographic approach, community immersion, and interview.

II. ISSUES ON LEAKY PIPES

Leaky pipes persist much in most government agencies including educational institutions. Taking portion of the funding illegally by different heads in the organization is described as leaky pipes which drain much the resources of the organization. The flow of funds does not reach the end users fully because of so many leaks in the administrative process. The leaky pipes are the kickback of the key officials who are involved in the program and project implementation. Small as it is but if they are piled one another, it becomes a big issue or turns into corruption. Leaky pipes in educational institution can take place in four spots such as public bidding award committee or PBAC, procurement of materials, travel, and celebration of founding anniversary.

PBAC. In the educational institution, the members of the PBAC are the director for finance, college engineer, budget officer, president of the faculty club, campus secretary, president of the supreme student government, etc. Their main function is to appraise the track record of the different bidders and the submitted lowest quotation of bidding during the scheduled meeting. In this process bribery comes in. Contractors have the tendency to bribe the members of the PBAC in order to win the bidding. The winning bidders will use the 10% budgetary reserve as bribe money for the PBAC members. Transparency often does not function if the whole members of the PBAC and the contractor entered into mutual understanding.

PROCUREMENT OF MATERIALS. Procurement also undergoes bidding process. Suppliers will submit the lowest quotation to win the award. Dirty game comes in. The

supplier may issue receipt with a jack up prices and those exceeds will go to the pockets of the school officials.

TRAVEL. There are school officials travel to attend seminar with fake document. For instance, they present an official invitation addressed to concerned person and use it as justification for requesting official travel. But in reality, the concerned person does not travel. He just takes the money and liquidates afterward with fake receipts and certificate of appearance.

Giving unnecessary travels to closed supporters and friends also drains much the financial resources of the school.

CELEBRATION OF SCHOOL ANNIVERSARY. Lavish spending on graduation and school anniversary is part of the leaky pipes. This is extravagance and no benefit at all. It only saps the financial strength of the school.

III. INTEGRATING CULTURAL VALUES

In the study of organization development, the school administrator must consult with his subordinates through the help of the consultant who will provide the mechanism of participation. Forum and workshop are the best mechanism to generate active participation. During the forum, the school administrator will provide the real state of the organization. He will identify the problems facing the organization, challenges, and the impact of the problems upon the performance of the organization. The consultant will also present the process of the organizational change in order to provide clues upon the members of the organization on how to carry out the organizational reforms. Three selected leaders from the rank and file shall be chosen to give reaction to the speech of the school administrator. At the same time, these three reactors will become the panel of discussant along with the school administrator and the consultant during the forum.

The forum is designed to give opportunity for the subordinates to express their sentiments, observations about the operation of the organization, feelings including grievances. However, all participants must observe cordial, etiquette, diplomatic way of discussion. Mentioning issues below the belt should be avoided. Mutual respect and understanding are the paramount rules to be observed.

All questions raised during the forum have to be documented by the professional documenter. Of course, the consultant will have to take note of all issues presented. The panel of discussants will also clarify all issues and problems. All participants, however, must see the problems from the standpoint of such person.

After the forum, the consultant will summarize the whole discussion in order to keep the participants on track and prepare them for the workshop. The purpose of the workshop is to encourage the participants for brainstorming on the issues and challenges facing the organization.

During workshop, the subordinates would be divided into small group composed of five to ten members. Each group selects a team leader and secretary. The consultant will provide the question for the team to analyze. Each team will present the output of its workshop. During the presentation, the role of the consultant is to clarify issues.

After analyzing the data, the consultant will process the data into information and will give feedback to the participants for review. Round two workshop will be organized. The workshop will follow the force-field theory of Kurt Lewin specifically the three steps sequential model of the change process: unfreezing, changing and refreezing.

1. Unfreezing. (Analyzing the present behavior). The issue here is how to improve the performance of the educational institution to make it responsive to the needs of the students and the society. Without satisfying the student services, school cannot

expect improvement of student performance. If the school administration tolerates leaky pipes student services are affected. In the context of Sulu environment, what is the way to alter the school administration. The elements of the school administration consist of the structure, the people or the faculty and staff, technology, and the school policies. In an interview with Dr. Hannbal H. Bara, the way to effect change is through the people because they are the active agent. They are the implementors of the school curriculum, school program and projects, conduct research and engage in instruction and extension services. But if they are not utilized well or they have low morale, their potential outputs are going to waste.¹

In a focus discussion, selected participants were asked to identify five restraining forces affecting the performance of the faculty and staff. These are the results:

1. Poor Islamic values
2. Low salary
3. Lack of preparation and readiness
4. Lack of nationalism
5. Poor school ambience

The participants were also asked to identify driving forces that can inspire the faculty and staff to improve their performance. Their answers are as follows:

1. Constant review of *iman*. There should be a regular *nasihat* and holding of *usrah*.
2. Giving incentives
3. Exposure to the Islamic concept of nationalism
4. Giving more trainings
5. Good school ambience

According to Kurt Lewin, any behavior is the result of an equilibrium between the driving and restraining forces. Decreasing the restraining forces is more effective way to encourage change than increasing driving forces. Program of planned change is directed toward removing or weakening the restraining forces and toward creating or strengthening forces that exist in the organization.² FGD participants however, suggested an effective management of the driving forces through ideological approach. This approach portrays the work in the government especially educational institutions as part of *ibadah* in which public employees render their service for the sake of Allah *Ta'ala* that sincere service is rewarded and bad service is punished. Looking government service as *ibadah* will change the mindset of public employees and will result in efficiency and effectiveness of their performance. The existing mindset can be transformed through Islamic orientation, self-evaluation through asking forgiveness to Allah, renewal of *iman* and holding of weekly *usrah*. The Prophet said: A moment divine reflection (*tafakkur*) is better than 60 years prayer. If employees are engaged habitually in *zikr* or *tafakkur*, *ikhkas* or sincerity will develop in their hearts. The *mukhlisin* (sincere persons) will become workaholic, committed to attain the goal of the organization. Sincerity to Allah will produce good manner and right conduct. If sincerity persists in man's heart, all restraining forces will fade away.

At this stage, review of the definition of educational management should be reassessed and a new definition reflective of the new emerging values be adopted. Educational management is the attainment of the goals of the school through sustained support and collaborative effort of the faculty and the management staff to manage the new culture of the organization.

¹ Interview with Dr. Hannbal H. Bara, Vice-Chancellor for Research, Extension and Innovation, December 23, 2022.

² Kurt Lewin

2. Changing. This is to introduce new values or new solutions to the problem of poor performance of the faculty and staff. The new values are not actually new. They are just neglected or misunderstood by many people. In most cases, ideas that are not taught in the university or not given currency in the academe are often held as insignificant. Media and the academic institutions give much important to secular values like separation between religion and politics. All professionals today are product of the secular schools. They are not acquainted with the traditional or Islamic values. This explains why there is ethical breakdown in leadership and management not only in Sulu but the whole country. This breakdown widens further the gap between theory and practice of administration. Deviation from ethics creates fault line in the practice of public administration. Ethics helps to operationalize theory and conformity of action to law.³

The new values are illustrated here in the diagram.

PANGAHAGAD (Belief System)	<i>Iman</i> or Islamic Faith
↓	
ISUK PANGADDATAN (Core Value)	<i>Taqwa</i> (Godfear)
↓	<i>Kaadil</i> (fairness)
↓ FIIL MARAYAW (Norms) ↓	<i>Kasampurna</i> (excellence)
	<i>Kasilasa</i> (affection)
	<i>Bakti</i> (reciprocity)
	<i>Kagawgut</i> (commitment)
	<i>Kasipug</i> (shyness)
	<i>Katatas</i> (patience)
BUNGA (Outcome)	<i>Martabat</i>

Pangahagad (Belief System). This is the belief system of the Tausug. It is an ideas or principles about belief in one God. In Islam, *pangahagad* is called *iman*. This is to believe in the unseen. According to Abdullah Yusuf Ali in his *tafsir*, there is no merit in faith in things that you are compelled to acknowledge when they actually happen. *Iman* is belief in things which you do not see with your eyes but you understand with your spiritual sense; if your whole will consent to it, it results in deeds of righteousness which are the evidence of your faith.⁴ *Iman* is a divine testing for *akhirat* or last day. Unfortunately, majority of the Tausug today does not understand nor internalize the meaning of *iman* or Islamic faith because this is not integrated in the school curriculum. Some people learned *iman* through hearing from their parents. In modern time, Tausug parents do not socialize their children into the culture of the society. In school, the teachers do not also give importance to the teaching of *iman*. The six articles of *iman* are mostly unknown to the young generation today. *Iman* literally means to know and to believe beyond doubt. In technical term, Nabi Muhammad (S.A.S.) defined *iman* as belief in the oneness of Allah, belief in the angels of Allah, belief in all divine books of Allah, belief in all prophets

³ Hannbal H. Bara, Guide to Islamic Administration, Jolo: Waqaf Foundation, 2007, p. 71-72

⁴ Qur'anic Commentary Number 983

and messengers of Allah, belief in the Day of Judgement and belief in *qadar* or predestination.

Iman was the first teaching of all the Prophets of Allah. Why this is very important in the life of men. Because, it is men's spiritual link to Allah. So that when men attain happiness and success, they will not exult but become humble for they know such success comes from Allah alone. When they face problem or difficulty, they will not grieve much for they know there is Allah for refuge and to seek help. A man with strong *iman* will develop strong political conviction in his heart. He will develop an inner strength and power. With inner strength, man can easily overcome all challenges. With inner strength man is determined to carry his mission. A leader with inner strength is capable and highly resolved to attain the goals of the organization.

If the person will reject *iman* or choose *kufr* (disbelief), he will slide from the truth and shall suffer the consequences of his disbelief. Says the Qur'an: "If anyone rejects faith, fruitless his work and in the hereafter, he will be in the rank of those who have lost (all spiritual good)." (Qur'an, 5: 6) People with disbelief work not for God but for their own interest only. They shall be deprived of Allah's blessings and *hidaya* or guidance. In contrast, the people with *iman* will develop *ikhlas* or sincerity in his work. Allah will guide his action to the straight path because of their *ikhlas* in their hearts. Mismanagement of the school stems from lack of sincerity of the people. Only administrators and professors with the character of *ikhlas* will render the service in accordance with the mandate and policies of the university. It is the nature of the people to work in accordance with their intention, their religion and their interest. Says the Qur'an: "Say: (Ya Muhammad to mankind): Each one does according to *shaklatihi* (i.e. his way or his religion or his intention) and your Lord knows best of him whose path (religion) is right." Qur'an, 17:84) Malaysian scholars today added two more functions of management. They added intending and the last is evaluating. Management is a process consisting of intending, planning, staffing, directing, coordinating and trusting. Intending means clear intention. Intention is done only for the sake of Allah in order to earn His pleasure and rewards in the Day of Judgement. Planning and action are not complete without trusting to Allah. It is a sense of acceptance of the will of Allah so that when the implementation of the programs and projects runs short of expectation the members of the organization should not blame each other. Rather they consult one another and rectify the error or mistake.

The seat of *iman* is the heart. Nabi Muhammad (S.A.S.) said: "Truly in the body there is a morsel of flesh which, if it be whole, all the body is whole and which, if it be diseased, all of it is diseased. Truly it is the heart."⁵ There are three kinds of heart or *qalb*:

1. *Qalbun marid* (sickly heart). This is the heart of the *munafiq* or hypocrite. These people are devoid of firm belief. They have doubt about the Day of Judgement, the truth of the message brought by the prophets, etc. They have three distinct characteristics: they are liars, they break promise and they will not fulfill *amanat* or trust. *Qalbun marid* is full of sickness such as *hasad*, *kibr*, *kufr*, *nifaq*, *shirk*, and *ghiba*.
2. *Qalbun mayit* (dead heart). Heart is dead if it does not remember Allah, lazy to perform prayer, etc. Reading of the Qur'an, doing *zikr*, prayer and listening to Islamic preach can revive the dead heart. This is the heart of people who lack knowledge about Islam.
3. *Qalbun salim* (sound heart). This is the heart of the believers who have *yaqin* in their hearts about the truth of Allah, the divine books, the Day of Judgement, etc. The people with *qalbun salim* are active in righteous work. This heart is full of *ikhlas*, *taqwa* and *ihsan*.

⁵ The Forty Hadith, Hadith Number 6

Isuk Pangaddatan (Core Values).

Taqwa is the core value which every Muslim is ought to attain. *Taqwa* is the fear of running counter to the will of Allah. It is akin to love of Him for we fear to offend Him. It results in right conduct.⁶ *Taqwa* is the fruit of long devotion or worship or daily submission to Allah. As the person continuously submits to Allah through performing the five pillars of Islam, he shall develop an awe or fear and reverend of Allah. Strong *iman* also produces *taqwa* in the heart of person and *taqwa* generates *husnul huluk* or good behavior. *Taqwa* is the fruit of *iman*. It is fearing Allah. It is to take pleasure in all the commands of Allah and to take pleasure in abstaining from all prohibitions of Allah. If the people develop *taqwa* in his heart, this will generate *fiil marayaw* or norms. Lack of organizational norms is the common problem of most public agencies in Sulu today. Norms are standard behavior that conforms to law and hence considered acceptable in the public. It is a principle of right action binding upon the members of a group and serving to guide, control, or regulate proper or acceptable behavior.⁷

One day Umar ibn Khattab (R.A.) asked Huzayfa, what is *taqwa*? Huzayfa said: "Have you passed a dilapidated bridge? Yes, Umar answered. I did pass with care to the extent of folding the sleeves of my shirt in order not to slip down. Exactly, Huzayfa said, that is *taqwa*. It is to take care of one's actions for fear of violating the laws of Allah. *Taqwa* will serve as the spiritual control for one's action. It will help public employees to conform their actions to laws and the norms of the office. *Taqwa* will generate *fiil marayaw* which are very relevant to educational administration. *Fiil marayaw* are the social norms of the Tausug. They are the social control which helps to harmonize the Tausug society.

Fiil Marayaw (Norms). There are seven norms useful to improve the performance of the educational administration in Sulu. These are the following:

Kaadil (fairness). All public employees must have a sense of *kaadil*. Mutual trust within the organization can exist smoothly if the whole employees exhibit *kaadil* in their dealing. The organization will develop healthy atmosphere and will prevent graft and corruption. Wide practice of *kaadil* will heal the leaky pipes of the organization.

Kasampurna (proficiency). This is called *ihsan* in the *Sunnah* of the Prophet. *Ihsan* means to worship Allah as through you are seeing Him and while you see Him not yet truly, He sees you.⁸ With this sense of attitude, a person will do his best because he knows Allah is watching. The organization will be saved from inefficiency, abuses of authority and prodigality of resources.

Kasilasa (affection). The *taqwa* of a person is not complete without exhibiting *kasilasa* to fellow human being. The *muttaqin* loves other freely for the sake of Allah. His love or concern for other bears no expectation. He does a favor as part of his *iman*. Wide spread practice of *kasilasa* will help the organization away from gossip, backbiting, disrespect, and envy. The members of the organization will become a healthy family.

Bakti (reciprocity/gratitude). It is part of *iman* of showing *bakti* to a person who does a favor for you regardless of the status of the person. If the subordinates render help to their boss, *bakti* should be given to them. *Bakti* can be in the form of gift or cash. The

⁶ Tafsir of Abdullah Yusuf Ali p. 833

⁷ Webster dictionary

⁸ Hadith

same *bakti* is given to boss if he does favor to his subordinates. *Bakti* is the Tausug tradition of giving service to a guru. It is a token of appreciation shown to guru.

Kagawgut (commitment). *Kagawgut* is a great social recognition in the Tausug tradition. It is an expression of strong determination to achieve the goal. Wide practice of this norm is very useful in the attainment of the goals of the organization. There are two approaches to develop *kagawgut* among the employees. First the school administrator should make the policies, goals, strategies of the organization apparent to the members so that they know how to support and express their commitment. Second, the school administrator should present the goals of the organization as part of strengthening Islam and the Muslims. Active participation in the organizational process for the sake of Allah is considered an *ibadat* which is rewardable with mighty rewards from Allah on the Day of Judgement. Public employees will become highly inspired and will exhibit high morale in the organization. They will realize the value of the Qur'an commanding the Muslims: "Help one another in righteous and piety. But help you not one another in sin and rancour. Fear Allah for Allah is strict in punishment." (Qur'an, 5:2)

Kasipug (shyness). *Kasipug* is also the fruit of *iman*. The person who is imbued with *iman* has *kasipug* to Allah to do bad things. He has *kasipug* to commit undesirable actions before the people. The Prophet said: If a person after committing sin and feels *kasipug* and ask immediately forgiveness to Allah, is an indication he has *iman*. In Islam, *kasipug* is called *haya*. This norm is really useful in strengthening the consciousness of the employees to play role in the organization development. It is great social control to discipline the public employees.

Katatas (patience). This is called *sabar* in Islamic literature. Either in large organization like university or small as family unit, *sabar* is required for the whole members. It is even said that in upholding or guarding *iman*, it needs *sabar*. Every person must have *katatas* in his struggle or work. This is the reason why the school administrators must expound to the members of the vision, mission, goals, strategies, structure and principles of the organization so that the members will become encourage to cultivate *sabar* in their hearts. The person will exhibit his *sabar* if direction and objectives are clear to him. The *sabirun* or the *matatas* are among the people that Allah loves. They are constant in their mission, commitment and works for the welfare of the organization. The Prophet said: there are three types of *sabar*. *Sabar* in fulfilling the command of Allah, *sabar* from abstaining the prohibitions of Allah and *sabar* in facing calamities. *Sabar* in fulfilling the mandates of the organization is also considered *sabar*.

Bunga (Outcome). The level of observance of the three stages of *pangahagad*, *isuk pangaddatan* and *fiil marayaw* will show the level of *martabat* that a person may attain. Attaining *martabat* in the society is the most coveted goal of every Tausug. Attaining *martabat* through power or high position or influence in the society is not the real object of *martabat*. Attaining *martabat* through accumulating wealth and children is also not the real object of *martabat*. Real *martabat* is through good behavior and show of *taqwa* to Allah. *Martabat* is a Sufi term describing the stage of worship and submission to Allah. In this discourse, *martabat* refers to observance of the three layers of the *pangahagad* of the Tausug. Anyone who satisfactorily observes the whole belief system and its norms is a considered a person imbued with *martabat*. People can see and feel this. Spontaneously, people will have high regard and respect to people with *martabat* regardless of his social status in the society and in the organization.

3. **Refreezing (Reinforcing the New Behavior).** At this stage, the school administrator will develop training module for effective training. All faculty members and staff will undergo series of training for familiarization of the new values that the organization wanted to promote. The consultant will develop a primer on Integrating Cultural Values to School Administration for distribution to the members of the organization.

Step 1. Lectures on Cultural Values and Islamic Ethics. Experts are invited as panel of discussants. Experts on the topics are also invited to discuss before the participants. Open forum will follow.

Step 2. The participants will be divided into small groups for workshop. The consultant will prepare the mechanic for brainstorming. For instance, each group will be asked to identify the restraining and driving factors affecting the introduction of the new values. The objective here is to anticipate problems that might become obstacle to the implementation of the integration of the cultural values to school administration.

Step 3. Pledge of Commitment. A solemn ceremony will be organized where all participants will pledge to actively observe the new values and strongly support new governance of the school.

IV. PARADIGM SHIFT

The integration of the traditional values to educational management requires a paradigm shift from secular-oriented approach to Islamic-oriented approach. This is the process of transforming the *aqida* (creed or mindset) of the school officials into conformity with the teachings of Islam. Employees constitute the living and indispensable elements of the organization. They are the main players and unless they are reformed, all reforms will fail. What is therefore needed is the moral uplift of the individual by an ideology which changes his entire outlook towards life and motivates him to act rightly in accordance with certain eternal values. The ideology should promote brotherhood.⁹

The latest management concept the Muslim scholars have expounded is the management by Islam (MBI). Abrar Ansari defined MBI as “an Islamic-centric management approach for God-conscious professionals. It offers a balanced approach in implementing, managing and sustaining personal and organizational roles and responsibilities. It is a governance model that provides a positive spiritual dimension to existing management principles for restoring the balance in everyday management decision making processes; enjoining that which is good and forbidding that which is wrong.”¹⁰ This framework is concerned not only the return of investment but also emphasizes investment for the *akhirat*. All good works done for the sake of Allah will not only yield worldly benefit but they are considered investment for the *akhirat*. This framework strongly motivates employees to render their services sincerely, effectively and efficiently.

MBI has five building blocks known as SALAM methodology. These are the following:

- S – sense of purpose
- A – applying the framework
- L – learning organizational wisdom
- A – accepting the flexibility in practice, and
- M – mastering the process

1. Sense of Purpose. The first step in the MBI roadmap is defining organizational goals of each of its members. “And we did not create the heaven and the earth and that

⁹ Muslim author

¹⁰ Abrar Ansari, Management by Islam

between them aimlessly ... (Qur'an, Sad:27) "To each is a goal to which God turns him; then strive together (as in a race) towards all that is good. Where so ever you are, He will bring you together. For He has power over all things." (Qur'an, 2: 148)

2. Applying the Framework. "It is He who sent to you (step by step) in truth the book confirming what went before it; and He sent down the law (of Musa and the *Injil* (of Isa) before this as a guide to mankind and he sent down the *Furqan* (of judgement between right and wrong)." (Qur'an, 3:3)
3. Learning Organizational Wisdom. Wisdom is called *hiqma* in the Qur'an and this refers to the commandment and prohibitions set up by Allah. Policies, duties and responsibilities and the prohibitions prescribed by the organization are therefore called *hiqma* or wisdom. Wisdom can be also "gained through contemplation and the ability to combine intelligence with trust in Allah, knowledge and experience."¹¹
4. Accepting the Flexibility in Practice. The fourth building block of MBI is accepting the flexibility in how we manage and govern our organizations. Even natural law allows for flexibility in implementation and practice. Flexibility in practice is having the courage and humility to admit mistakes made, to redress wrongs done and to initiate change when the time warrants it. Flexibility in practice also means the acceptance of decent respecting alternate opinions and the encouragement of diversity of ideas within the framework to realign strategies to accomplish goals.¹²
5. Mastering the Process. The fifth building block in MBI is mastering the process maintaining humility in moments of triumph and success and reverence when experiencing economic growth and financial profitability.¹³

CONCLUSION

Paradigm shift in the educational management from secular-centric to Islamic-centric is indispensable in order to facilitate the integration of cultural values as a reform strategy to strengthen the administrative capacity and the morale of the teachers and the staff. The full application of the Islamic centric-management in the management of school requires reorientation among the faculty and staff and the school administrator about the concept of management by Islam or MBI. All school administrators should be acquainted with the five building blocks of MBI, called SALAM methodology. The essence of this management approach is to realize the meaning of success in this life and in the hereafter so that all members of the organization can sincerely submit themselves to the divine framework prescribed by Allah. Abrar Ansar said that sincere submission induces the ability to decipher right from wrong and good from evil, thus enabling our ability to counsel.

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¹¹ Ibid p.

¹² Ibid p. 5

¹³ Ibid p. 8

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