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# ORGANIZATIONAL SITUATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT FIRMS: PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTIONS IN THE LIGHT OF ISLAM

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## ABSTRACT

Being a Muslim, it is our responsibility to obey the rules and principles defined by our religion (Islam) in all the walks of life. Without a doubt, Islam is a complete religion and it has addressed every aspect of life in a detailed manner. In this scenario, whether it is a matter of personal life, social life or professional life, Islam gives appropriate guidelines for all the aspects of life. In addition, we learn these principles and rules from Quran and Hadiths. In fact, it becomes our obligation to follow whatever is written in the Quran and Hadiths. But, in our daily lives, we have a large number of situations where we ignore these religious sayings. In fact, these situations occur in our lives so frequently that we have become used to these situations. This paper addresses some of these situations with respect to organizational environment where we ignore Islamic values and principles over other unimportant activities. In this paper, we have addressed these issues with respect to software development firms. The basic purpose of addressing these issues is to make software development firms and their employees responsive of their religious duties while performing their duties.

## Keywords

Organizational Situations; Hadith; Islamic Values;

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The objective our paper is to understand the ethical behavior of Muslim software engineers in an effort to make them responsive of many immoral practices i.e. Design methodology/approach, property violations, software intellectual, general software improvement and software piracy. This paper scrutinizes the moral values presented in code of conduct from an Islamic perspective through studying some important verses of The Holy Quran and Hadiths of Prophet (P.B.U.H). Estimates the benefits of this expected Islamic code of ethics is presented by surveying how software engineering students, software engineering professionals, software development engineers and CEOs would stick to it. Though, in the context of a software development firm, there can be a large number of aspects which are intentionally ignored by the majority of employees and each of these aspects can create significant issues. For instance, ignoring the importance of gender diversity in the workplace alone can cause serious significant issues. However, due to time



limitation, we will not go into the detail of these situations and resulted issues. The basic objective of this paper is to identify these minor faults and address them in the light of Islam. In the second section we will present the suggestions to deal with these situations in the light of literature.

## 2. SCOPE OF WORK

The basic purpose of this study is to examine real-life situations that occur in daily professional life while working in software development firms. This paper discusses the situations that are ignored in the daily professional lives and that should be considered in the light of Islam. These situations are derived from personal experiences gained while working in different software development firms of the Pakistan. The scope of this research does not include the collection of data and performing any statistical analysis on the data.

## 3. SITUATIONS IN WHICH ISLAMIC VALUES ARE IGNORED

### 3.1 Violations of Patents and Intellectual Property

Many Software house holders, software publishers, CD or DVD producers as well as quite a few individual freelancers violate copyrights and intellectual property laws by copying data, CDs, DVDs, videos, images, logos, designs, computer software, etc., thinking that there is no harm in it and this is not against Islam. Such desecration of copyrights and intellectual property laws is against Islam. Preparing such programs requires much effort, incurs high expense and employs many skilled and trained workers and specialists for doing this. So, according to Shariat, it becomes normal for such companies to reserve the right of reproducing this software and to avoid others from any form of misdemeanor in this matter.

*Ali (R.A), "Take knowledge and it would not harm you from where it comes." (Al-Sakhawi, Al-Maqasid Al-Hasanah).*

Like there are tenets in Islam for the use of substantial things, so there are also rules for the use of intellectual assets. The computer program is managed through the contracts that the owners or sellers make with the buyers.

*Allah says in the Quraan "O you who believe, fulfill the agreements." (Surah Al-Maidah: 1)*

*The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said, "Muslims must stand by their agreements, except an agreement that makes Haraam (unlawful) what is Halaal (lawful) or make Halaal what was Haraam." (At-Tirmidhi, Hadith No. 1272)*

It is understood that it does not formulate any difference whether the agreement is made between Muslims themselves or between Muslims and non-Muslims. Such software should be used according to the conditions of an agreement or what is normally accepted as an Urf (a common custom) among the people of that industry.

### 3.2 Avoiding what is harmful

In the race of earning more and more, not only in software houses, People are in hustle to exceed from others. The means they adopt are legal or not, they just don't care. Rather they just are running toward materialistic life even by hook or crook.

*The Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) said: "That what is legal is clear, and that which is illegal is also pretty clear. Between the two is that which is vague, which most people are unaware. One who avoids the unsure protects his faith and his respect." (Riyadh-us-Salaheen, Hadith no 588).*

*The Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) was asked that what type of earning is best, and he replied: "A man's work with his own hands and every lawful business transaction." (Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith 846).*



### 3.3 Politics in Workplace

Politics in working environment is very common nowadays. Politics at workplace is the key problem in any business company because the individuals who violate their working relationships, wasting time and resources for personal advantage at the cost of ignorance of team or company. Politics at workplace can have more serious effect on major business processes such as making strategies, budgeting, performance appraisal, and leadership. It happens when individuals involves politics at workplace, it delay information flow of a company. Information can be indistinct, misleading, in order to gain the personal advantage for the short-term.

*Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) as narrated Al ‘Make your character good for the people” ( Muwatta, Volume 47).*

*"And spend your material in the cause of Allah. And not make your own hands contribute to your devastation; But do good, for God loves those who do good" (Al-Baqarah, 2: 195).*

### 3.4 Equality and Diversity

*“All human race is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no lead over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any lead over an Arab. Learn that every Muslim is brother to every Muslim and that the Muslim comprises one brotherhood. Nothing should be lawful to a Muslim which belongs to a fellow Muslim until it was given unreservedly and willingly. Do not do inequality to yourselves....”Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W), Last Sermon.*

Generally in Software houses a project manager is allocated a much more area than other web developers. Though the difference between them is less, Still There exists inequality even in salary rate and incentives.

Even in some cases the employees doesn’t even get their salary on time, which itself is bad impact for software houses.

*On Judgment day, the Prophet (P.B.U.H) will be witness against “One who employs a worker and gets the full work done by him but doesn’tpay him his wages” (Abu Hurayrah and Sahih al Bukhari, hadith no. 3.430).*

### 3.5 Ignoring the Duties Towards Azaan

The common issue found was not responding to azaan, and keep talking during it.

*Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri:Allahsaid, “Whenever you hear the Azaan, say what the Muazzin is saying.*

It is obligatory on every Muslim to 1). Respect the azaan by stopping conversation. Even reading the Quraan. 2). Stay focus on the azaan, 3). Repeating what the muazzin says

### 3.6 Humility

When people are working together they do start taunting and humiliating people in a certain way that is purely forbidden in Islam. The use of abusive language is prohibited as well which is increasing day by day.

*“The true servants of Allah, the Most Gracious, are those who walk on the earth in humbleness, and when the bad-mannered address them, answer with words of peace” (The Holy Quran 25:63).*

*The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said, “Shall I tell you about the people of heaven? They include every vague unimportant modest person, and if he takes Allah’s promise that he will do that thing, Allah will fulfill his promise by doing that. Shall I notify you about the people of the hell? They consist of every unkind, aggressive, arrogant and proud person” (Narrated by Haritha Bin Wahb vol8, Sahih Al Bukharihadith 97).*

### 3.7 Working Women

The women that work in software development firms are turning out to be more modernized. Their dressing standards are falling. As a matter of fact they are losing their precious dignity. They think that they can earn more by exposing, which is totally wrong concept. It is a commonly seen trend that the women working in software development firms wear so



fashionable dresses in order to make them more visible. They wear tight dresses which expose their body and wear expensive jewelry.

*Wealth is not due to a lot of money, but wealth is the wealth of the self (Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) as decided upon--mutafakkunghalai).*

*And order the Muslim women to lower down their sights a little and guard their chastity and show not their adornment but as much which is itself apparent and remain putting their head coverings over their bosoms. And disclose not their adornment but to their husbands, or to their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or to their or the of sons husbands or their brothers or the sons of their brothers or the sons of their sisters or the women of their religion or their handmaids who are the property of their hands or servants provided they are not men of sexual desire or the children who are unaware of the private parts of the women; and put not their feet forcibly on the ground that hidden adornment may be known. And repent to Allah, O Muslims all together, haply you may get prosperity (24: 31).*

### 3.8 Revealing Secrets of Others and Backbiting

Gossiping and backbiting is a very popular time pass in workplaces. Wasting time and not doing the duty assigned is a sin and backbiting is categorized as a major sin.

*"God orders you people to return things entrusted to you to their lawful owners, and if you judge between people, to do so with fairness" (An-Nisa, 4:58 -Quran).*

*"Every spirit is held in oath for its actions" (Al-Muddathir, 74:38- Quran).*

### 3.9 Professional Jealousy

Jealousy in workplaces is very common and its cure is almost impossible. Jealousy drives away man's faith. Jealousy is a catastrophe for religion. Sometimes it so happen that a man to whom God has given a reward becomes an opponent of either God or of that reward and as a result becomes an agnostic.

*The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) said: Verily there are enemies of the heavenly rewards. It was asked who is an opponent of Allah's reward? He replied: One who became jealous of those whom god has given reward.*

### 3.10 Trust in Company Communication

Trust is the most significant morals of ethical regulation in business dealings. Reliance is an ethical asset and task serving on a Muslim in the performance of his affairs. It requires honesty in job and clarity of intention from each person. A Muslim dealer will always focus on his "Akhira" for worldly wise gains. He will avoid trickery, deception, and other doubtful means in selling his products. Muslim will develop the trust level by publicized the pros and cons of product to the consumer, so that customer purchases the product in full satisfaction.

*"O, you believers! Do not betray Allah and the Messenger, nor knowingly, betray your trusts" (8:27 Holy Qur'an).*

## 4. SUGGESTIONS

In the above section, we have identified some of the important situations where Islamic values are ignored. These are only a minor part of the situations which are ignored in the majority of software development firms. These situations are also justified through the Quran and Hadiths. Now this section presents some of the general suggestions that can be useful in avoiding these and other similar situations:

Without a doubt, we are living and operating businesses in an Islamic country that is built on the basis of Islam. That's why it is our primary obligation to learn and implement Islamic principles in all the walks of life. According to Dr. Israr Ahmad, the condition of a country and people living in it cannot be made better until the people of Islamic society adopt real faith as well as true conviction (or Iman) as described in the Holy Quran and explained by Prophet (P.B.U.H). In this scenario, the belief must be a deeply-felt conviction that is capable of changing the entire system of ambitions, values, and



behavior on the side of Islam instead of a mere dogma which has little or nothing to do with the real-world situations of people's lives. However, people of the society can gain Iman by comprehending, reading, and pondering over the meaning of Holy Qur'an with a sincere search for truth. In fact, being a Muslim it is our obligation to read Quran and learn the basic values and principles. Though, from the childhood we have been learning all these principles and values in Quran and other books but we fail to implement them in real-world scenario due to which we are unable to establish a fruitful environment which could benefit the society and people living in the society. In fact, if people learn this values and develop a real faith it will surely have a positive impact on the organizational work. According to Shakil, the Islamic values have significant positive impact on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment and motivation. Another study conducted by to determine the impact of Islamic values on organizational attributes shown that the implementation of Islamic system in the organization has a positive impact on job performance. Thus, the companies should implement Islamic values into practice for the reason that these values ensure the continuous and ultimate accomplishment of the organization.

Being a Muslim, our second obligation is to remain obedience to the Almighty God. In the Holy Quran, this obligation is referred as Ibadah. In order to understand the true meanings of Ibadah we need to integrate two apparently unconnected ideas: one is obedience, surrender, submission; while the other is used for adoration, love, devotion. This compliance should be with an essence of enthusiastic dedication and love for the creator. It is an admitted fact that people always need something or someone to whom they could admire, love, and adore. In this scenario, their insufficient awareness of the one being deserving for all their admiration, love, and adoration take them towards other, imperfect choices. In fact, people start loving different ideas, perspectives, societies, nation or races as an ideal. But actually, the teaching of Holy Quran is that those people are actually faithful who love the Almighty God over everything and everyone else. Hence, when we start loving ALLAH, it becomes easy for us to obey him. Also, we frequently make mistakes and overlook, commit a sin. In this scenario, we should instantaneously realize our sin and look for forgiveness.

Being a Muslim, our third obligation is to spread the teachings of Islam to the whole humanity. Basically, preaching the teachings of Islam to the other people is not only the duty of a Mulla, but it is actually an obligation of anyone who claims to be a Muslim. As Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has ordered, "Convey on my behalf, even if it is only a single verse (of the Qur'an that you know)."

***"You are the best of people raised for the (guidance of) mankind; You enjoin the good, forbid the evil, and believe in Allah" (3:110).***

***"And indeed We have made the Qur'an easy for direction and guidance, but is there anyone who will take advice?" (Sura Al-Qamar 54, verse # 17).***

***"The best among you are those who learn (and comprehend) the Qur'an, and then teach (and propagate) its message." (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 4, Hadith # 4739).***

It is clear from the above discussion, the organizations must adopt some mechanisms to spread the teachings of Islam. In fact, it is an obligation like earning and it should be run in parallel with working in the context of software development firms. As discussed above, people in software development firms remain engaged in several immoral activities such as intellectual property issues, talking during Azaan, especially for women wearing fashionable dresses. However, in some cases people might forget to follow what does Islam say about this or they have not read the Quran with Urdu translation so they may be unaware of the meanings. At the present, the majority of software development firms frequently conduct trainings and workshops in order to help their staff members learn about new technologies but they don't put any effort to conduct training programs for improving the knowledge of their employees on religious aspects. In fact, if these organizations attempt to develop real faith and imaan in their employees they can play a significant role in the success of these organizations. At the present, many researches are being conducted to determine the impact of religious values on organizational attributes and some of the researches have been conducted to determine the impact of Islamic values on



organizational attributes. These researches have shown positive impact of implementing Islamic values in the organizational settings.

As discussed above, it is not the responsibility of only Mulla or top authorities to communicate Islamic values among others but it is an obligation of anyone who claims himself to be a Muslim. In the Pakistani software industry, the majority of staff members is Muslims. In fact, we have selected only a few organizational attributes which are heavily ignored in the software development firms and there will be a large number of other attributes (which are not discussed due to time limitation) that are regularly ignored in organizational settings. For instance, each of the situations/attributes discussed above is justified through the Quranic ayah or hadiths. Being a Muslim, everyone must keep in mind the Islamic values while carrying out specific tasks. However, it is the primary obligation of top authorities of the software development firms that they help develop an environment where their employees could share their religious thoughts frequently. They should conduct proper trainings and workshops by calling well-known Islamic scholars from the community. They should ensure the communication of Islamic values and principles in a smooth and friendly manner that no one feels insulting. For instance, in case where women are wearing fashionable dresses or people talking during Azaan, the organization should put some calendar or chart showing the translation of Quranic verses on this matter. In this way, these employees can recall about their responsibility as being Muslim.

## 5. FUTURE WORK

Due to shortage of time, we could not perform a survey from the software development industry. In the future, we want to conduct a survey from the industry. In the future, we want to conduct a detailed study which will include analysis of all the possible situations which are ignored in the context of software development firms. We will collect data through questionnaires and a statistical analysis will be performed on that data in order to derive some useful patterns, and in the light of that analysis some suggestions will be made.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The research has discussed some of the key situations which are under looked in software development firms. Due to the shortage of time, we have just focused on a few situations while other important situations/attributes are left for the future work. The discussion on the selected situations shows significant drawbacks from the religious perspective. In fact, each situation/attribute is justified with considerable justification through Qurani Ayah and Hadith. Being a Muslim, following Islamic principles and values is our first obligation and if we follow these principles and values is our first obligation and if we follow these principles and values effectively it can play a significant role in the success of any organization. This obligation is equally important for both the employees as well as management.

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