

Al-Ghazali on the head, heart and hand tripartite, and its organisational implications

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ABSTRACT

The 'heart' analogy is always used by many traditions, as well as contemporary research and practice. However, the term has been used incoherently, which can potentially be detrimental to research and practice. The infamous head, heart and hand tripartite, for example, are referring to cognition, affection and psychomotor respectively. This paper posits that the heart is not mere emotions and affections, but rather, plays a central role in organisational moral development. The work of Imam al-Ghazali is employed to re-introduce the term 'heart' defined within the worldview of Islam, and its importance in organisational life in achieving prosperity. Only with this immaterial and spiritual heart can human recognise Allah *Ta'āla*, rather than solely using the 'head' or rational. Additionally, a successful individual is the one that is able to develop their head, heart and hand holistically. Furthermore, the state of the heart, especially its purity, is important as it affects oneself, as well as others. The purified, diseased and dead hearts have their own respective implications to organisational (im)moral development: purified hearts contribute to the formation of the virtuous organisation, while the dead and corrupted hearts to the corrupt and hypocritical organisation. The diseased heart, a state between the two extremes of purified and dead hearts, would then have the potentials to lean to either side. Hence, the need for active process of purification of the heart within the organisational settings.

Introduction

The heart analogy has always fascinated scholars and practitioners alike, and is often used in management and organisation studies literature. However, definitional issue to the term arise as writers, researchers and politicians uses them loosely, and can thus cause confusions. Many that did not delve in the topic would use the term in relation to other interchangeable concepts. The most common association is 'emotion'. The infamous

tripartite head, heart and hand is often equated to cognition, affection and psychomotor (Gazibara, 2013), and can be traced back to Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (d. 1746-1827), a Swiss education reformist (Brühlmeier, 2010), who call for a more holistic approach to education. Similarly, in marketing, the idea of getting the share of customers' mind and heart is present (Kitchen & Laurence, 2003; Kotler, 2003; Leavy & Gannon, 1998; Wood, Pitta, & Franzak, 2008). The notion of 'heart share' is made distinct from 'mind share' or market share,

where it refers to appeal to people's emotion rather than cognition or finance. Arlie Hochschild's (1983) *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* also focused on emotion, but specifically on emotional labour, "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labour is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value" (p. 7). However, there are no definitions provided for the term 'heart'. Association between the heart and emotion is common, but they are not one and the same, and should be made distinct, as will be argued later on.

Other related constructs to the 'heart' include mores, cores, virtues, ethics and so on. For example, in Robert N. Bellah and colleagues' (1996) *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, the 'habits of the heart' refers to 'mores' of the American people, following the work of Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (1969). In these works, 'mores' "seem to involve not only ideas and opinions but habitual practices with respect to such things as religion, political participation, and economic life" (p. 37). The leadership literature also has many mentioned of hearts. Joanne B. Ciulla, editor of *Ethics: The Heart of Leadership* (1998), argued that ethics and morality are at the heart of leadership. Leadership here is viewed as "a complex moral relationship between people, based on trust, obligation, commitment, emotion, and a shared vision of the good" (p. xv), and ethics is ingrained in these relations. The 'heart' of leadership then denotes the 'core' of leadership. In *The Quest for Moral Leaders: Essays on Leadership Ethics* (2005) edited by Joanne B. Ciulla, Terry L. Price, and Susan E. Murphy, the focus is on both leaders and leadership, where the 'hearts' and 'minds' of leaders are examined. Here, the heart of leaders "includes their virtues, vices, emotions, and religious beliefs" (p. 2), and the mind of leaders refers to how leaders think about morality (p. 4). However, the 'heart' itself is not discussed in depth, but rather the term is quickly associated with other concepts such as ethics, emotions, virtues, and so on. The celebrated book *The Leadership Challenge* by Kouzes and Posner (2007) took a slightly different meaning. Instead of focusing on the self, the authors focused on other people. The authors outlined a number of leadership practices, which includes to "encourage the heart" of their subordinates. In their writings, leaders should "encourage the heart of their constituents to carry on", which can be done by "recognising contributions" of individuals and "celebrating values and victories". Although Kouzes and Posner's work did not define the 'heart' per se, the analogy 'heart' here refers to followers that have the potential to be motivated and uplifted, which then feeds into the overall success of their organisation. Similarly, Dotlich, Cairo and Rhinesmith's (2010) conception of head, heart and

guts referred to setting the right strategies, empathise with others and take risks respectively.

There is one particular work that explored the concept of 'heart' rather significantly within the management literature. Michael Maccoby's (1976) *The Gamesman* provided a proper definition of the heart to differentiate between the heart and the mind. According to the author, "the heart is the seat of consciousness, in contrast to conceptualization, which is in the head" (p.180). He referred to Kierkegaard's (1961) *Purity of Heart is to Will One Thing*, and posited that the heart's purity would affect how and what individuals know. This is because the heart, unlike the head, "is not neutral about knowledge" (p. 180). Cowardice in the heart, for example, would result in avoidance of certain knowledge. The author then outlined 9 qualities of the head¹ and 10 qualities of the heart.² Although the author did not disclose about the methodologies in deriving these qualities, he did identify that two of his sources are Christianity, in particular, Kierkegaard's work, as well as the interview findings of 250 managers from 12 major companies in the US. The synthesis between Christian intellectual tradition with contextualised organisational setting is meritorious. However, there are epistemological issues that need to be addressed to ensure applicability and generalisability. Say, would the qualities of the head and heart be consistent if the interviews are conducted in a different setting, e.g. in Asia? Would the findings be applicable to other religion?

From above, it can be seen that the term 'heart' is not treated consistently. There are ontological and epistemological issues arising from such diverging views. But one thing is clear: religion must be in the equation when talking about the heart. Major religions placed great emphasis on the 'heart'. Even Pestalozzi's holistic education that talks about head, heart and hand is clear "for whom the individual ought to be a whole person: God, himself and his native land (i.e. society and the state)" (Brühlmeier, 2010, p. 7). The removal of religion, intentionally or unintentionally, would potentially lead to a distortion and malformation. By providing a clear definition of the 'heart' would provide the needed 'construct clarity' useful to further management research (Suddaby, 2010), especially in relation to religion and spirituality. Hence, the aim of the paper is to re-introduce the 'heart' defined within the worldview of Islam, and its importance in

¹ The 9 qualities of the head are: ability to take the initiative, satisfaction on creating something new, self-confidence, coolness under stress, cooperativeness neatly packed, pleasure in learning something new, pride in performance, flexibility, and open-mindedness.

² The 10 qualities of the heart are: independence, loyalty to fellow workers, critical attitude to authority, friendliness, sense of humour, openness/spontaneity, honesty, compassion, generosity, and idealism.

organisational life. The worldview of Islam is specifically chosen for its epistemological consistency, and thus have fundamental elements that are "permanently established," (p. ix) along with their intricate inter-connections, as explained by Syed Muhammad al-Naqib al-Attas (2001) in his book *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*. These elements "act as integrating principles placing all our systems of meanings and standards of life and values in coherent order as a unified supersystem forming the worldview of Islam" (p. 36). The paper starts with defining the heart before moving on to its organisational implications and future research direction.

Heart defined

Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad Al-Ghazali³ (d. 1058-1111) presented a clear and concise definition of the heart (*qalb*) in his *Ihyā' Ulūm ad-Dīn* (Revival of the Religious Science). He explained: "Whatever the expression 'heart' occurs in the Qur'an and in the Sunnah its intended meaning is that in man which discerns and comes to know the real nature of things" (2007, p. 11). The definition of the 'heart' is shared with three other terms: spirit (*rūh*), soul (*nafs*) and intelligence (*'aql*). Each of these four terms has two major meanings: the first meaning is a common definition shared by all four terms, which is the above definition, i.e. the perceiving and knowing essence of human, and the second meanings differentiate between each other. With regards to the first meanings, the spirit, soul, intelligence and heart all refers to "that in man which discerns and comes to know the real nature of things", and can be used interchangeably, so long as the meaning is maintained. Regarding the second meaning that differentiates, each term carries their own specific meanings and cannot be used interchangeably: the 'heart' is the biological and material heart that pumps blood all over the body, is pine-coned shaped, and houses the immaterial heart (p. 5-6); the 'spirit' refers to a very refined substance, which gives power of sense perceptions throughout the body (p. 7-8, 164); the 'soul' is the "principle in man which includes his blameworthy qualities" (p. 8), such as greed; the 'intelligence' is "an expression for the quality of knowledge whose seat is the heart" (p. 9). Al-Ghazali also informed that the 'soul' and 'intelligence' have many other meanings, but was not disclosed as it did not fit the purpose of differentiation between the four terms. So here, the term 'heart' can be both be interchangeable and

³ Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali is a prominent Islamic jurist, theologian and mystic. He was born in Iran in 1058, and died in 1111. He is known as the 'proof of Islam' (Hujjat al-Islām). Among his renowned work is the *Ihyā' ulūm ad-dīn* (Revival of the Religious Science), a 40-volume collection on the principles and practices of Islam.

uninterchangeable, depending on the meaning implied. In this paper, the focus is on the spiritual and immaterial heart, which is the perceiving and knowing essence of human.

This definition is crucial as it does not allocate knowledge and learning to only the head, which is often is the case. Rather, the heart is an important instrument to discern the real nature of things. It is the seat of knowledge (p. 39). This is one of the characteristics of the human heart to differentiate from the heart of animals (p. 22).⁴ So, the knowledge that is meant here is not only knowledge acquired through senses, but beyond (p. 22-23).⁵ Thus, Muslim scholars over the millennium had come up with various classification of knowledge, crucial for "preserving the hierarchy of the sciences and with the delineation of the scope and position of each science within the total scheme of knowledge" (Bakar, 1998). Maccoby's (1976) and Kierkegaard's (1961) conception of the heart as "the seat of understanding" is similar here. The following are characteristics of the heart as explicated by Imam al-Ghazali:

▪ Kingship & decision-maker

The heart is king, and the body the kingdom. As king, he is provided with armies, servants and helpers that fills his kingdom, illustrated by al-Ghazali (2007) as follows:

"So the perceptive part of man dwells in the heart, as a king in the midst of his kingdom. The imaginative faculty whose seat is in the front of the brain acts as the master of his couriers, for the report of sense perceptions are gathered therein. The faculty of retentive memory, whose seat is the back of the brain, acts as his keeper of stores. The tongue is his interpreter and the active members of his body his scribes. The five senses act as his spies, and he makes each one of them responsible in certain domain. Thus he sets the eye over the world of colours, hearing over the world of sounds, smell over the world of odours, and so on for the others. These are the bearers of tidings which they collect from their different worlds and transmit to

⁴ The other characteristics that differentiate between human and animal is free will.

⁵ It might be worth mentioning the "heart-brain" found through scientific advancement in neurocardiology. Armour (1994) coined the term to refer to the "complex intrinsic nervous system that is sufficiently sophisticated to qualify as a 'little brain'".

Armour, J. A. (1994). *Neurocardiology: Anatomical and Functional Principles*. New York: Oxford University Press.

the imaginative faculty which is like the master of the couriers. The latter in turn delivers them to the keeper of the stores, which is memory” (p. 28-29).

This description is useful to understand the relationships between the head, heart and hand. Sense knowledge from the ‘hand’ (i.e. the body parts other than the brain and heart), and knowledge from the brain are presented to the heart, i.e. the king, for deliberation. The king then sets forth the relevant actions, as a response to external or internal stimuli:

“The keeper of the stores sets them forth before the king who selects there from that which he has need of in managing his kingdom, in completing the journey ahead of him, in subjugating his enemy by whom he is affected, and in warding off from himself those who cut off his path” (p. 29).

The illustration above showed that even though each of the faculties and senses has autonomy, the overall welfare of the body is determined by the heart, i.e. the king and the ultimate decision-maker. The decision-making process of the heart is not arbitrary, but rather, concerns on moral and ethical issues, as evident in the following *hadith*:

The Prophet (May peace be upon him) said to a man who approached him. “You have come to ask about righteousness? Consult your heart. Righteousness is that about which the soul feels at ease and the heart feels tranquil. And wrongdoing is that which wavers in the soul and causes uneasiness in the breast, even though people have repeatedly given their legal opinion [in its favour].”

The *hadith* plainly shows the authoritative position of the heart over rationale in decision-making, particularly on what is moral and ethical. This statement is still within mainstream research in management and organisational studies. As mentioned before, *The Quest for Moral Leaders: Essays on Leadership Ethics* (2005) edited by Joanne B. Ciulla and colleagues associated the heart of leaders with “virtues, vices, emotions, and religious beliefs” (p. 2), which concerns morality and ethics. Additionally, the overriding of rationale in decision-making is also well-documented in the concept of ‘intuition’ (see, for example, Khatri & Ng, 2000; Sadler-Smith, 2008; Sonenshein, 2007). This characteristic of the heart is not undermining the role of rationale in decision-making, but rather, highlighting the special characteristics of the heart, that if the knowledge is not reflected in the heart, i.e. the individual failed to recognise the evidences, then no matter what evidence that has been put forth, the person will not deem it to be the ‘right’ decision.

Figure 1 summarises the role of the heart as the decision-maker.

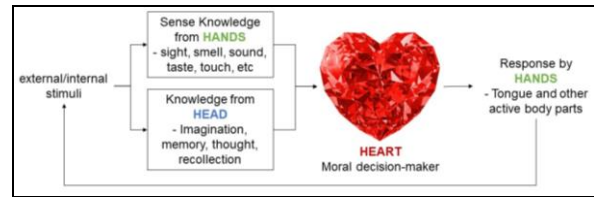


Figure 1. The Head, Heart and Hand Relations According to al-Ghazali

Furthermore, the heart will be accounted for every intention, decision and action made by the body. In a well-known *hadith*: “(All) actions are based upon intentions (explicit or implicit),” and every intention has its roots in the individual’s heart. As al-Ghazali (2007) explained regarding the accountability of the heart as king:

“If the king does [good,] he is successful, happy, and thankful for the blessings of Allah. But if he neglects all of these things, if uses them for the welfare of his enemies which are appetite, anger, and other swiftly passing pleasures, and in the building of his path through which he must pass, while his own country and his permanent abode is the world to come – then he is forsaken, wretched, ungrateful for the blessings of Allah, being one who makes ill use of the armies of Allah and forsakes His path. So he deserves hatred and exile in the day of overturn and return. May Allah protect us from such” (p. 29).

▪ **States of the heart: pure, dead & diseased**

Al-Ghazali further explained that the heart has three states: pure, dead, and diseased. The highest is the healthy, polished and purified heart. The Qur’an described this heart as being guided (64:11), pleased (49:7), relaxed (39:23), firmed and strong (18:14), steadfast (8:11), assured (13:28; 8:10), and so on. It is understood to be free of character defects, vices and spiritual blemishes. The highest state that a healthy heart can achieve is the state of *taqwa*, roughly translated as piety, a very significant concept in the life of a Muslim. Qutb (d. 1906-66) articulated that *taqwa*:

“...is to have a sensitive conscience, clear feelings, a continuous concern, vigilance and alacrity, and a yearning for the correct path in life. It is a feeling that is ever alive, a feeling of being aware of life’s temptations and pitfalls; and the ambitions and hopes, and the worries and fears that come with it. It is a feeling of being able to discern false hopes and unwarranted fears that one

associates with individuals or powers that could neither bring benefit nor cause harm” (p. 28);

“...is an inner feeling, a state of mind, a source of human action and behaviour. It binds inner feeling with outer action, and brings man into constant contact with God, in private and in public. This contact extends into the deeper recesses of meaning and consciousness, penetrating barriers of knowledge and feeling, making acceptance of the belief in the unseen a plausible and natural outcome and bringing total peace and tranquillity to man’s soul” (p. 31).

The lowest state of the heart is the dead heart, referring to the fully corrupted and immoral individuals. The Qur’an referred to the dead hearts in many ways: sealed (2:7), covered (6:25), hardened (2:74; 5:13), wrapped (2:88; 4:155), sinful (2:283), heedless (18:28), distracted (21:3), disunited (59:14), deviated from truth (3:7), full of regrets (3:156), hypocritical (9:77) and so on. The heart will only call towards following carnal passions and appetite excessively (12:53). A person with a dead heart has some aspects of the heart’s ability of understanding and comprehension being cut off or sealed, especially when it comes to morality and ethics. Moral consciousness behind decisions and actions are consciously or sub-consciously unheeded. So, even though the physical heart still acts as a blood pump, the greater capability of the heart, which is to perceive wisdom, is gone. Connotations such as being heartless and inhumane resonate here. They have no intention to become good, but may use their cunningness to fool others to appear good. A number of verses in the Qur’an illustrate this, such as:

{Do they not travel through the land, so that their hearts (and minds) may thus learn wisdom and their ears may thus learn to hear? Truly it is not their eyes that are blind, but their hearts which are in their breasts}(22:46)

The verse above is just one of many where hearts are mentioned in seeing the reality of the world, and in seeking knowledge and wisdom in different places. The blindness of the heart, or in other words, the non-perception of the mind, would lead to lack of wisdom. Even if the other senses and faculties are sound, if the heart is blind, one would not be able to identify what is right. Moral consciousness is absent in the dead hearts.

The third state is the diseased heart, which refers to the layperson having a mixture of virtues and vices (i.e. good and bad dispositions). They would alternate between the two extreme states of the

heart mentioned above. The reproaching-self (75:2) blames him/herself for his/her own bad deeds, and often tries to go back to the right path by purifying and curing his/her heart from spiritual diseases and blemishes. The diseases of the heart have their respective cures. An example of a contemporary Islamic scholarship on cures and prescriptions to the diseases of the heart can be found in the book *Purification of the Heart* by Hamza Yusuf (2012), which is a commentary of Shaykh Muhammad Mawlud al-Ya’qubi’s (d. 1844-1905) poem called *Matharat al-Qulub* (Purification of the Hearts), a manual on how to purify the heart. The author outlined over 20 spiritual diseases, which include: miserliness (*bukhl*), wantonness (*batar*), hatred (*bughd*), envy (*hasad*), ostentation (*riya’*), seeking reputation (*sum’a*), negative thoughts (*su’u az-zan*), vanity (*’ujub*), fraud (*ghish*), anger (*ghadab*), heedlessness (*ghafl*), rancour (*ghill*), and arrogance (*kibr*). Another important disease is *wahn*, which the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him explained that it is the “love of the world and dislike of death.”⁶ All the treatments to these spiritual diseases centre on true knowledge of Allah *Subhānahu wa Ta’āla*.

▪ Purification of the heart

The labels of pure, dead, and diseased hearts refer to only ‘states’ of the heart. Al-Ghazali (2007) further elucidated that the state of the heart is always in a flux because of multiple factors rapidly influencing the heart all the time (p. 152-160). The following *hadith* illustrates the many temptations affecting the heart:

“Hudhaifa (may peace be upon him) said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) observing: Temptations will be presented to men’s hearts as reed mat is woven stick by stick, and any heart which is impregnated by them will have a black mark put into it, but any heart which rejects them will have a white mark put in it. The result is that there will become two types of hearts: one white like a white stone which will not be harmed by any turmoil or temptation, so long as the heavens and the earth endure; and the other black and dust-coloured like a vessel which is upset, not recognizing what is good or rejecting what is abominable, but being impregnated with passion.”⁷

⁶ The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: The people will soon summon one another to attack you as people when eating invite others to share their dish. Someone asked: Will that be because of our small numbers at that time? He replied: No, you will be numerous at that time: but you will be scum and rubbish like that carried down by a torrent, and Allah will take fear of you from the breasts of your enemy and last enervation into your hearts. Someone asked: What is *wahn* (enervation). Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him): He replied: Love of the world and dislike of death. (Sunan Abi Dawud no. 4297).

⁷ Sahih Muslim, Book 1, Hadith 267 (USC-MSA web English reference)

The black mark or stain mentioned in the *hadith* refers to the spiritual diseases of the heart for which there are cures and treatments that can be administered to rectify them. Hence, the need for purification of the heart. The process of purification is the process of continuous: 1) struggle against vices of the soul, and 2) self-training of inculcating virtues in one's life (Sidani & Al Ariss, 2014).

Al-Ghazali (2007) systematically categorised the many virtues and vices within human based on human natural qualities. He explained that human has four kinds of qualities: qualities of the Pig, Dog, Sage and Devil (p. 17-21, 31-32). Qualities of the Pig refers to appetite, the Dog refers to anger, and the Sage refers to intellect. The earlier two qualities have the potential to assist in the heart's journey towards becoming a virtuous person, given that the Sage controls them accordingly. However, these two qualities can also hinder the heart from becoming virtuous, and joins with the Devil quality to work towards becoming vicious. The path to immorality only happens when the Sage is subjugated by the other qualities. The following are vices that resulted from following the three lowly qualities, as explained by al-Ghazali:

“From obedience to the pig of appetite there result the following characteristics: shamelessness, wickedness, wastefulness, avarice, hypocrisy, defamation, wantonness, nonsense, greed, covetousness, flattery, envy, rancour, rejoicing at another's evil, etc. As for the obedience to the dog of anger there are spread thereby into the heart the characteristics of rashness, squandering, haughtiness, boasting, hot temper, pride, conceit, sneering, disregard, despising of creatures, the will to evil, the lust of oppression, etc. In regard to obedience to the Satan through obedience to appetite and anger, there results from it the qualities of guile, deceit, craftiness, cunning, deception, disguise, violence, fraud, mischief, obscenity, and such like” (p. 35).

The Sage's role is then to reveal the Devil's deceptions and schemes, and to control and manage the Pig and Dog qualities in the best possible manner. If the Sage does this successfully, then equity would manifest in the kingdom of the body and prosperity comes. The Sage needs to keep the Dog and Pig within the golden mean, which would result in the virtues of courage and temperance respectively. Consequently,

“...his heart becomes the abode of such lordly qualities as knowledge, wisdom, the

comprehension of the real nature of things, the knowledge of things as they really are, the subjugation of all by the power of knowledge and insight, and worthiness to advance beyond all creatures because of the completeness and majesty of his knowledge. Then too he dispenses with the worship of appetite and anger, and, through holding in check the pig of appetite and placing him back within his proper limits, he acquires such honourable qualities as chastity, contentment, quietness, abstemiousness, godliness, piety, happiness, goodly aspect, modesty, sagacity, helpfulness, and such like. By holding in check the power of anger and conquering it, and putting it back within its proper limits, man attains to the qualities of courage, generosity, gallantry, self-control, patience, gentleness, endurance, pardoning, steadfastness, nobility, valour, dignity, and others” (p. 35-36).

The result of keeping to the golden mean between the extremes of intellect, predator and appetite is then justice. Umaruddin (2003, pp. 197-204) summarised al-Ghazali's classification of the many virtues and vices, based on al-Ghazali's main ethical treatise, *Mizan al-A'mal* (see Table 1). Note that the table is not exhaustive of the many virtues and vices, but rather, it serves as a template depicting moral and immoral development. The path towards purifying oneself would then require not only the actions of the heart, but also the head and hand collectively. The head, alongside the heart, is needed to acquire information and knowledge of how to purify oneself, and the hand required to activate the cures, e.g. making regular donations to remove the vice of greed.

Development:	DEFICIENT	GOLDEN MEAN	EXCESS
Attributes:	Manifested vices	Manifested virtues	Manifested vices
SAGE The Intellect	FOOLISHNESS Inexperience Stupidity Mania	WISDOM Efficient administrative ability Clearness of vision	CUNNINGNESS Craftiness Deceitfulness
DOG The Predator	COWARDICE Meanness Shirking Self-abasement Shamelessness Abasement	COURAGE Generosity Bravery Self-respect Endurance Forbearance Firmness	RASHNESS Lavishness Audaciousness Boasting Self-love Pride Vain
PIG The Appetence	Stinginess Disgracefulness Flattery Wicked glee at another's misfortune	TEMPERANCE Self-restrains Modesty Shyness Forgiveness Patience Contentment	Greed Shamelessness Extravagance Hypocrisy Wantonness Barbarity Envy
JUSTICE			

Table 1. Al-Ghazali's Classification of Virtues and Vices.

Source: Umaruddin (2003, pp. 197-204)

Organisational implications & future research

There are many implications that can be derived from a deeper understanding of the heart based on a solid ontological foundation, as well as future research endeavours.

▪ Virtues & vices in organisation

Research on virtue ethics in management and organisation research are becoming more prominent over the years within Western academia. Ferrero & Sison's (2014) systematic literature review of virtues ethics articles in business and management journals revealed that there is a sustained growing interest in virtue ethics since 1987 to 2014. This is because virtue ethics offers "a developmental dynamic absent in both utilitarianism and deontology," and thus provide "a more integrated, balanced, and nuanced framework in order to normatively evaluate human action" (p. 376). Some of the notable conceptual and empirical studies are as follows: Robin & Reidenbach's (1987) 'Social responsibility, ethics, and marketing strategy: Closing the gap between concept and application', Solomon's (1992) 'Corporate roles, personal virtues: An Aristotelian approach to business ethics', Koehn's (1995) 'A role of virtue ethics in the analysis of business practice', and Moore & Beadle's (2006) 'In search of organizational virtue in business: agents, goods, practices, institutions and environments.' These works can be categorised into Aristotelian (e.g. Solomon's paper) and non-Aristotelian schools (e.g. Moore & Beadle's paper based on MacIntyrean framework, others used Thomas Aquinas, Hume and so on).

Research on vices is also present. Within the management literature, vices may refer to those that "diminish or block the ability to pursue and extend excellence at the activities internal to managing" (Beabout, 2012). Some of the vices in managerial settings that Beabout mentioned includes hastiness, thoughtlessness, negligent, indecisiveness, insidiousness, fraudulence, covetousness and so on. Brown & Starkey's (2000) proposition regarding ego defences, such as denial, rationalisation, idealisation and fantasy, being barriers to organisational learning are also example of vices in a person that inhibits learning. There are 44 other ego defences, on top of the four utilised by Brown & Starkey, identified by Laughlin (1979) in his book *The Ego and Its Defences*.

Notwithstanding these developments, the Muslim intellectual tradition also has scrutinised virtue and vices intensively. As mentioned above, the process of purifying one's heart refers to the inculcation of virtues and the struggle against vices. The study of purification of the heart has many names, but is

always "understood as the study of the right dispositions (virtues) that underlie the acts prescribed by the Law" (Hourani, 1985, p. 136). The field can also meld well with other non-Islamic perspectives, as long as the process of Islamisation of knowledge occurs. Al-Ghazali's approach, for example, had synthesised Islamic theology and Greek philosophy creatively, to which Fakhry (1994) commented it as the "most articulate synthesis of the fundamental currents in Islamic thought, the philosophical, the religious, and the mystical" (p. 193). There is then much opportunity to utilise the framework of heart purification into contemporary organisational research in similar fashion to the Western counterpart. As an example, al-Ghazali's (2007) exposition about the continuous purification of the heart (p. 152-160) would frame individual moral and immoral development together more dynamically. In comparison, Carroll's (1987) classification of moral, amoral and immoral management styles took a somewhat passive stance to moral development because the amoral manager is posited to "slip" into a moral or immoral style due to their inconsideration of ethical issues in decision-making process. Such passive stance lacks active consideration of ethical issues by individuals, as well as their inner struggles when making decisions. There are indeed many avenues for future research in virtue ethics from an Islamic perspective.

▪ Virtuous & wise leaders

Leadership is also an area of concern when discussing about decision-making, and undoubtedly an important component in organisation. They play an important role in driving moral organisational development forward. Hence, they need also to purify their hearts and make decisions for their organisation towards creating a virtuous organisation conducive for the worship of Allah *Subhanahu wa Ta'ala*. The need for knowledgeable and wise leader is also stated in the Qur'an:

(And their prophet said to them, "Indeed, Allah has sent to you Saul as a king." They said, "How can he have kingship over us while we are more worthy of kingship than him and he has not been given any measure of wealth?" He said, "Indeed, Allah has chosen him over you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature. And Allah gives His sovereignty to whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing [in favor] and knowing.") (2:247)

The Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him is knowledgeable and wise, adorned with many virtues, including courage, temperance and just, as prescribed by the Shari'ah. He, peace be upon him, is the role model for contemporary leaders, especially

Muslims, to emulate. Also explained that Islamic leadership style is positively superior for its inclusion of spirituality, emphasising more on responsibilities (*amānah*) rather than social status, and its balanced consideration of this world and the Hereafter (Rafiki, 2020).

Even Western academia also pay attention to wisdom and virtues for leaders and leadership. Their conception of wisdom is particularly of interest. Many argued that there is abundant data, information and even knowledge available, but an apparent lack of wisdom. T. S. Eliot, a 20th century poet with a Nobel Prize award for literature, said a famous quote: "Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?" (1985, p. 7). Senge & colleagues (2005) quoted a senior officer from the United Nation during the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Austria that calls for wisdom to solve issues around the globe:

"I've dealt with many different problems around the world, and I've concluded that there's only one real problem: over the past hundred years, the power that technology has given us has grown beyond anyone's wildest imagination. But our wisdom has not. If the gap between our power and our wisdom is not redressed soon, I don't have much hope for our prospects" (p. 187).

Similarly, Nonaka & Takeuchi (2011) raised similar concerns about the general contemporary managers:

"Our studies show that the use of explicit and tacit knowledge isn't enough; CEOs must also draw on a third, often forgotten kind of knowledge, called practical wisdom. Practical wisdom is tacit knowledge acquired from experience that enables people to make prudent judgements and take actions based on the actual situation, guided by values and morals. When leaders cultivate such knowledge throughout the organization, they will be able not only to create fresh knowledge but also to make enlightened decisions" (p. 4).

The call for virtuous and wise leaders would then involve the proper development of head, heart and hand in order to manifest virtues in one's life. To identify wise leaders, many researchers have come up with measures to help with the task: Ardel's (1999; 2003) Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (reflective, cognitive, and compassionate); Baltes and colleagues' (2000) Berlin Wisdom Paradigm, covering rich factual knowledge, rich procedural knowledge, lifespan contextualism, relativism, and uncertainty; Webster's (2003) Self-Assessed Wisdom Scale on three categories, which are self-related (e.g. self-efficacy), other-related (e.g. empathy), and cognitive (e.g. inductive reasoning); Levenson and Aldwin's (2005) Adult Self-

Transcendence Inventory, containing 35 items, of which 10 on alienation and 25 on self-transcendence; and Sternberg's (2004) WICS model, which stands for wisdom, intelligence, and creativity synthesised. Additionally, McKenna, Rooney & Boal (2009) established "wisdom principles" as a meta-theoretical basis for evaluating leadership, which are five principles: use reason and careful observation; allows for non-rational and subjective elements when making decisions; value humane and virtuous outcomes; are practical and oriented towards everyday life; and are articulate, understand the aesthetic dimension of their work, and seek the intrinsic personal and social rewards of contributing to the good life. These are just some measures and identifiers of wisdom within Western academia.

There are also other conceptions of wisdom derived from various tradition, such as: Japanese concept of *toku*, Indian concept of *yukta*, Islamic concept of *hikmah* and Malay concept of *kebijaksanaan*. Is research on wisdom and subsequently, on virtues, be a collective intellectual endeavour shared throughout the world? Possibly, yes. Nasr (1975) sees that only in the bosom of philosophy, the love of wisdom, can "East and West meet" (p. 29), with the condition that 'philosophy' transcends beyond mere logical exercise. Al-Ghazali's work that utilised Aristotle's is a good example. Extending beyond logic has always been part and parcel of *hikmah* (wisdom) in Islam. As Nasr (1975) explained, wisdom is "wedded to religion and the spiritual life and is far removed from purely mental activity connected with the rationalistic conception of philosophy that has become prevalent in the west since the post-Renaissance period" (p. 37-38). It is "the means whereby man is saved from his wretched state of the lowest of the low and enable to regain the angelic and paradisaic state in which he was originally created" (Nasr, 2006, p. 37), which also implies that there is a vision of truth transcending the individualistic order derived from the Truth (Nasr, 1975, p. 146).

On the other extreme end, the corrupt and hypocritical leaders would lead to the creation of the corrupt and hypocritical organisation. The leaders have dead hearts filled with vices. The narcissistic (Campbell *et al.*, 2011) and unethical leaders (Brown & Mitchell, 2010) are examples of contemporary conceptions of vices in leadership. However, the authors do not posit that leaders are corrupt definitively. Rather, they called for a balanced and critical treatment of such concepts. For example, Campbell *et al.*'s (2011) systematic review on narcissism in organisation found that "narcissistic leadership is associated with both bright and dark side of behaviors" (p. 275). On one hand, they have charisma and strong social skills to influence others to achieve risky organisational transformation. On the other, they exploit others, have poor

relationships, and often conducts unethically to achieve their desire. The author then cautioned researchers “to avoid the temptation to view narcissistic leadership as an either-or phenomenon (good vs. bad, effective vs. ineffective, bright side vs. dark side),” and critically examine the construct, its activation in real life and its outcomes to the organisation. Achieving the golden mean (see Table 1) is thus imperative to ensure that one’s ‘narcissistic’ nature can actually be developed further to become a virtue (e.g. self-respect, courage). The same can be said with other vices. More research is needed on how to ensure the golden mean is achieved within the organisational context specifically.

▪ Organisational vision & strategic change

The heart also plays a major role in organisational change. Organisations change happens either as a response to external stimuli, or to fulfil its obligations to the society, or both. In regards to an organisation’s societal obligations, the organisational entity per se is not entirely accountable, but rather, the responsibility falls upon the collective agents driving the organisation forward. The reason being is that obligations of worshipping Allah *Ta’āla* and of vicegerency⁸ are placed upon the shoulders of humanity, not upon inanimate ‘organisation.’ Thus, organisational purpose, vision, mission, intentions, strategies and activities must revolve around these two obligations. Another way to articulate the organisational purpose is to use the *Maqāsīd* (objectives) of the Sharī’ah in order to fulfil the obligations to Allah *Ta’āla* and to the society. As a result, the organisational objectives or missions can be articulated to contribute towards the preservation of Faith, Life, Intellect, Progeny and/or Wealth, depending on its organisational capabilities. Ultimately, the pleasure of Allah *Ta’āla* is sought after. This is different from secular management, where social accountability refers to fulfilling the wants and desires of their superiors, working group, the organisation, the society, or the international community (Logsdon & Yuthas, 1997; Reidenbach & Robin, 1991; Snell, 2000; Spitzeck, 2009). To other faith-based organisation, they would have an extra layer of spirituality and/or religious motivations to their organisational activities, similar to an Islamic organisation.

⁸ The two verses regarding obligations are: Surah 51 verse 56 {And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me }, and Surah 2 verse 30 {And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority." They said, "Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?" Allah said, "Indeed, I know that which you do not know. }

However, the disparity between organisational visions and personal ones are difficult to separate. So, how does one ensure that personal whims and desires are minimised, and the true vision of Islam manifested throughout the organisation? This is where the heart, as well as the head, comes in. A clear and purified heart visions with the light of Allah *Ta’āla*. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: “Beware of the intuition of the believer. Verily, he sees with the light of Allah.” Additionally, the harmonisation between head and heart, between reason and intuition, is well-recorded within the Islamic intellectual tradition. Nasr (2006) explained that the tradition

“...has created a hierarchy of knowledge and methods of attaining knowledge according to which degrees of both intellection and intuition become harmonized in an order encompassing all the means available to man to know, from sensual knowledge and reason to intellection and inner vision or the ‘knowledge of the heart’” (p. 95).

There is harmonious relationship between revelation, intellect, reason, and intuition within the worldview of Islam. Such harmonisation is important to ensure personal desires are kept under control, and that one moves within the organisation only towards fulfilling the set obligations. Clarity of vision is also an important element for true development. As al-Attas (2001) explained, progress is a “definite direction” that is aligned to a moral end (p. 39), and this is true development. Hence, the need for leaders with purified hearts to spearhead organisational moral development. If the direction is indefinite or vague, or if the direction is aligned to immoral ends, then this is not progress and not true development. Such is the case for leaders with dead or diseased hearts, which would then lead towards creating a corrupted workplace.

The process of moral strategic renewal is also imperative towards fulfilling the two obligations. Strategic renewal is a multi-levelled process, involving individual, group, organisational and socio-environmental levels (Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999; Schilling & Kluge, 2008). It also involved both feedforward (i.e. from individuals and groups to the organisation) and feedback processes (i.e. from the organisation to the people within), thus creating a non-linear cycle of change. With *moral* strategic renewal, virtuous individuals play an important part in actively changing the organisation to become more virtuous, and in turn, the virtuous organisation would facilitate the moral development of individuals within the organisation. However, if the organisation is corrupt, then the individuals within will also be potentially corrupted through various processes, such as rationalisation, socialisation and institutionalisation of corruptions (Ashforth &

Anand, 2003). The active re-creation of the virtuous learning cycle within the organisation by groups of virtuous individuals is thus imperative to ensure continuous moral strategic renewal. The absence of such cycle will lead to the formation of the vicious learning cycle, which then lead to perpetual organisational corruption. Further empirical research is needed to illustrate these virtuous/vicious cycles that involve many organisational elements (e.g. vision, mission, strategies, structure, culture, etc).

Concluding remarks

The spiritual heart plays an important role in learning and decision-making process. It is the seat of knowledge and understanding. In the path towards Allah *Ta'āla*, the heart king has to make decisions in managing the bodily kingdom. The king will then need to synthesise sensual knowledge from the hand and cognitive knowledge from the head, combined with moral knowledge in the heart. Purifying the heart is an important activity as it affects decision-making. Its purity is proportionate to the level of moral consciousness, with the highest state is achieving *taqwa* or piety, the purified and virtuous heart. However, the heart is also capable of immorality and corruption. This is the case for the diseased and dead hearts, possessing weaker moral consciousness, or none at all.

Essentially, the virtuous individuals have many virtues that will benefits themselves and their respective organisation, as they are able to utilise their heads, hearts and hands towards achieving prosperity and the good life. Leaders with purified hearts are even more imperative as they possess the power and authority to lead the organisation towards becoming more virtuous, able to fulfil the organisation's role in achieving the *Maqāsid* of the Shari'ah. They play a crucial role in creating and sustaining a virtuous learning cycle to support the virtuous organisation.

However, absence of such virtuous learning cycle results in the formation of its counterpart, which is the vicious learning cycle. This cycle perpetuates immorality and corruption within and around the organisation. The organisational culture would be fundamentally negative, toxic and detrimental to employees within, and may also be perpetually detrimental to the organisation. Additionally, both of these cycles can exist within simultaneously within the same organisational setting. Hence, the virtuous individuals have to actively combat all corrupting elements, whether it is from themselves, in others and/or in the organisation.

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