

TIME MANAGEMENT AND JOB PERFORMANCE: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS FROM ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Time is an important “*amanah*” or trust bestowed from Allah (*swt*) to human beings. Everybody has a fixed amount of time in this world. Utmost care should be taken and befitting attempts should be made to use time as it is meant to be. But then how to optimally use time? From the Islamic perspective, are there effective guidelines for the usage of time? Furthermore, does Islam teach us how to enhance our job performance by capitalizing time? In short, this study aims to answer these pertinent questions. This is done via face-to-face interview sessions involving ten selected Muslim interviewees with PhDs and those having at least five years of teaching experience. The responses were analyzed using a qualitative thematic approach. The analysis is based on the rich opinion data from the interviewees and the findings are rooted on Islamic principles. The study found that a Muslim’s time management starts by offering *salats* at their designated times. The interviewees recommended to set priorities on the task based on importance, have proper schedule, and meet deadlines. The study also found that good time management enhances job performance. From literature, though research on time management from the conventional perspective is abundant, studies in this area especially from the Islamic perspective is rather scanty. Consequently, the present research could be considered as an exploratory one. The paper finally recommends that further researches could be undertaken on similar topics and highlights certain avenues that could be pursued quantitatively.

Keywords: Islamic perspective, job performance, time management

INTRODUCTION

According to The New Encyclopedia Britannica (2007), “time” is a continuum that lacks spatial dimension. Time exudes philosophical interest and is also the subject of mathematical and scientific investigation. It is perhaps a common sense that, even in the absence of consciousness, events would still occur in an order that could be described using the relations of before and after a certain “time” frame. The measurement of time involves establishing a precise system of reference for specifying when an event occurs (i.e., specifying the epoch and establishing a standard interval of time). Furthermore, according to Webster’s New World College Dictionary (2018), time is “the specific, usual or allotted period during which something is done.”

Clegg (1999) reiterates that time management is the art of arranging, organizing, scheduling, and budgeting one’s time for the purpose of generating excellent productivity. Time management has also been defined (Georgia & Petros, 2015) as the interrelation of five independent variables which include the various tasks people perform, their frequency, the degree of accomplishment of those tasks, the use of time management techniques, and time management style (from monochronic to polychronic). In fact, there are numerous books, courses, workshops, day-planners, and seminars on time management, which teach individuals and corporations how to be more organized and more productive. Time management has become crucial in recent years, especially when the world has become a very competitive place and people are becoming very materialistic with their worldly pursuits.

Woodward and Geissler (1999), through an empirical research, identified the management skills required to be successful as managers. The respondents, who were managers, said that the new entry-level managers must have the following skills: leadership, problem solving, decision making, and time management. Njagi and Malel (2012) found a statistically positive correlation of 0.674 between time management and job performance. The researchers found that employees’ poor time management practices negatively affect their job performance. They concluded that since there is significant positive correlation between time management and job performance, therefore, adequate training should be provided to the managers on time management.

Al-Jeraisy (2008) explains that the issue of time is a permanent matter of discussion. Its conceptualization varies according to motives and the nature of the required functions and activities. Also, the wider cultural context directly and indirectly determines the relationship between man and time. Al-Jeraisy (2008) considers time as the scarcest resource. If it is not managed properly, he believes that nothing else will be properly managed. Good management of time is important both for economizing on costs and for proper utilization of resources. Inadvertently, in spite of its preciousness, time is the most wasted resource and the least concerned element at both the organizational and individual levels. In Islam, time is one of the most valuable resources that people have. Al-Jeraisy (2008) maintains that every Muslim has certain duties and responsibilities towards the Almighty Allah (*swt*), and for the society. These responsibilities involve disseminating knowledge and rendering services to the *ummah* and their proper discharge necessitates that each of them be allocated its due amount of time. Al-Jeraisy (2008) also asserts that a Muslim’s life involves two elements i.e. worshiping and earning a living. This is primarily based on Allah (*swt*)’s revelation in the Qur’an:

“I have only created jinns and men that they may serve Me; no sustenance do I require of them, nor do I require that they should feed Me. For Allah is He Who gives (all) sustenance, Lord of Power steadfast (forever).” (Adh-Dhariyat, 51:56-58)

This means that whatever a Muslim does and when done in accordance with the Qur’an and the Sunnah, then it will be considered as an act of worship. Such worship must be done sincerely to seek the pleasure of Almighty Allah (swt) alone. Everyone should use his/her own time (including “free time”) in doing beneficial things, especially those that will bring them closer to Allah (swt) and earn His mercy and forgiveness. Indeed, Allah (swt) specifically dedicates a Surah in the Al-Qur’an entitled “Al-Asr (Time)”:

“That I swear by the time, most surely man is in loss except those who believe and do good and enjoin on each other truth and enjoin on each other patience.” (Al-Asr, 103: 1-3)

Hence, in the Islamic sense, everyone needs to understand the concept of time management so as to complete his/her tasks effectively and at the same time acquire the pleasure of Allah (swt). In dealing this issue, the researchers of this study have embarked upon this qualitative research by interviewing ten Muslim scholars to find out their views on time management from the Islamic perspective. Henceforth, it is expected to fulfill the objectives of this research which are as follows:

- To obtain personal views on time management from the Islamic perspective;
- To solicit how the interviewees manage their own time in their daily lives; and
- To investigate qualitatively the relationship between time management and job performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Time Management

One of the critical issues in management today is how to manage one’s time. Time is a very unique commodity. It cannot be borrowed, rented, or bought. It is irreplaceable and execution of anything requires it. It is found that proper management of time increases efficiency, personal and professional satisfaction and decreases stress (Claessens et al., 2007). In essence, time management is vital for the overall well-being of people.

Macan et al. (1990), in their pioneering work, found that the respondents who obtained higher time management behaviour scores, experience less ambiguity concerning their role, less somatic tension, greater satisfaction in job as well as life and higher overall performance. They also discovered four factors that define time management behaviors. These factors are: 1) Setting goals and priorities, 2) Mechanics - planning, scheduling, 3) Perceived control of time, and 4) Preference for disorganization.

Konig and Kleinmann (2005) found that people become most active in carrying out their projects when deadlines loom. This phenomenon is known as ‘time discounting’ which is the main cause for deadline rush. They also observed that, in general, people prefer smaller but sooner reward over larger but later reward. This typical behaviour of people is more accurately portrayed by a hyperbolic function rather than an exponential one. This observation has also been supported by earlier researchers like Koch and Kleinmann (2002). On a related topic, several researchers (Bond & Feather, 1988; Francis-Smythe & Robertson, 1999) explored the relationship between dispositional characteristics and time management. Propensity to procrastinate, impatience, polychronicity (multi-tasking) are treated as dispositional characteristics that were found within employees that they studied. A number of

time management researchers have found negative correlation between job performance and these dispositional characteristics, in particular, procrastination and polychronicity (Liu et al., 2004). Though these researchers cited here carried out their work in the early days of time management research, still they remain relevant to the present time.

Sarfraz (2017) dispels the myth that transformational, transactional, and other types of leaders have similar time management skills. The researcher connected eight time management categories (scheduling, start here, prioritization, time management strategies, concentration and focus, self-motivation, general time management, and goal setting) with nine leadership styles (transformational, charismatic, ethical, transactional, participative, strategic, servant, spiritual, and authentic) based on each style's nature. The researcher concluded that the linkage between leadership style and time management skills can bring greater understanding on the parts of the leaders and on how they should design their leadership strategies.

Another study has been conducted linking time management and academic performance. Karakose (2015) found positive correlation between medical students' time management skills and their academic performance. In particular, the author found that female students demonstrated superior skills in time management compared to their male counterparts.

Research on time management in academic setting also suggests that building school principal's time management capacities may be a worth-while strategy for increasing higher priority tasks and reducing stress (Grissom et al., 2015). Those researchers empirically examined the status of time management among school principals and linked time management to key outcomes of school principals by surveying 300 school principals in the USA.

Kouali and Pashiardis (2015) conducted empirical research on Cypriot Primary School principals and found three different time management profiles, namely centralized monochrons, procrastinative managers and decentralized polychrons. They concluded that those principals who adopted decentralized polychrons managed time better than others. Alvarez Sainz et al. (2020) found that students lacked sound time management skills. They concluded that it is the educational system that should ensure developing these skills among students. The authors also contended that students paid attention to short-term planning and lacked habits and attitudes for the long term goals.

Time Management and Job Performance

A number of researchers have also investigated the relationship between time management and job performance. In particular, Abduljabbar et al. (2012) investigated the above relationship for the administrative staff of the Tenaga National University of Malaysia. By means of a survey on 220 respondents, the researchers found positive relationships between time planning, time attitude, and job performance. However, as expected, there is a negative relationship between time wasters and job performance. Green and Skinner (2005) conducted a survey on 233 participants and found that through training on time management, the majority of the respondents recorded significant improvement of performance in the following areas i.e. planning, prioritizing, and assertiveness.

Tawiah et al. (2018) found in their cross sectional study that in Ghana many employees have poor time management skills and consequently their productivity was low. In other words, to improve productivity in the industrial sector of Ghana, the employees working there must pay attention how they are using their time in the workplace. Further, to organize or execute any event successfully, good time management is essential. By means of an empirical study on 65

event managers in Malaysia, Ahmad et al. (2012) found significant positive correlation between time management and job performance, especially in the context of event management. Most of their respondents said that time management can affect job performance.

In a recent study, Kenayathulla et al. (2019) found that there was a significant gap between the skills possessed by the graduates and the skills required in the industry. The researchers recommended that the graduates should be equipped with the twenty-first century required skills including problem solving, decision making, risk taking, correlation, organization, and time management.

In another related research, Afsaneh et al. (2019) investigated the extent time management skills are associated with self-efficacy. The researchers found that poor time management, planning and organization skills had negative impacts on self-efficacy.

Religious Stance on Time Management

The Qur'an stresses the value of time in many ways and contexts. For instance, deeds and their means, administration and organization, the universe and creation, and creation-creator relationship are all closely related to time, belief and worship. Allah (swt) stresses these interrelationships via the following Surahs and Ayahs in the Al-Qur'an:

"Surely, the number of months according to Allah is twelve (as written) in the Book of Allah on the day He created the Heavens and the Earth, of which there are four sacred months." (At-Tawbah, 9:36)

"The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance, and the Criterion (of right and wrong). And whosoever of you is present and witness the month (moon) let him fast in the month." (Al-Baqarah, 2:185)

"Establish worship (prayers) at the going down of the sun until the dark of night, and (the recital of) the Qur'an at dawn. Lo! (the recital of) the Qur'an at dawn is ever witnessed." (Al-Isr'a, 17:78)

The Qur'an accentuates on overseeing time, by relating it to the movement of the day and the night. Allah (swt) says in the Qur'an:

"Behold! In the creation of the Heavens and the Earth, and the alternation of Night and Day, there are indeed Signs for men of understanding." (Al-Imran, 3:190)

Ibn Mas'ud narrated that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

"A man shall be asked concerning five things on the day of resurrection: concerning his life, how he spent it; concerning his youth, how he grew old; concerning his wealth, how he acquired it, and in what way he spent it; and what was it that he did with the knowledge that he had." (At-Tirmidhi, 2007: 2416)

The above hadith implies that time management is important, beneficial and effective for individuals and organizations where people work. Time is a valuable resource and our attitude to it and the way we use it makes the difference between success and failure, fitness and poor health, peace of mind and anxiety or depression (Jone, 1997). Indeed, the amount of time i.e. daily, monthly or yearly is the same for all. It is said that those who care for their time are the ones who make great achievements in their personal and professional lives to the extent that they felt that as if time is not enough for doing all what they want to do. In contrast, those who do not care for achievements are the ones who consider time to be of little

value (Al-Jeraisy, 2008).

Admittedly, even though there are ample studies on time management from the Islamic perspective but very little work has been done relating time management to job performance. Therefore, the main objective of the present research is to explore the concepts of time management from Islamic perspective and relates it to job performance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data collection in a qualitative research starts with developing a set of relevant questions pertaining to the main objective of the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Since the main objective of the present research is to qualitatively investigate the relationship between time management from Islamic perspective and job performance, hence a set of questions relevant to the objective was derived. Basically, the questions were rooted on the literature on time management, job performance, and time management from Islamic perspective. To ensure the face validity, the set of questions was shown to two professors from the authors' university – one having specialisation in Human Resource Management and the other in Islamic Revealed Knowledge. Both of them gave some suggestions for only minor adjustments of the questions.

A purposive sampling technique was used to collect data for the present research. The selection criteria used is that the interviewees are PhD holders and have at least five years of teaching experiences. The reason for this is to ensure quality feedback from well-educated people who are experienced enough and can share their views and ideas on the research topic. According to Saunders (2016), the minimum number of non-probability sample size for semi-structured/in-depth interviews is 5 to 20. Following this guideline, ten academicians from the authors' university who fulfilled both the criteria were contacted. They were contacted personally and explained the main objectives of the research. When agreed, appointments were made. Face-to-face interview sessions were conducted in the respective offices of the interviewees. The demographic details of the interviewees are as follows: Among the 10 interviewees, seven were male and three female; six were Associate Professor/Professor in the Faculty of Management Sciences and four Associate Professor/Professor in the discipline of Islamic Studies and all of them possessed more than five years of teaching experience. Furthermore, among the interviewees, four were holding administrative positions (Dean/Director/Deputy Dean).

Each interview session lasted about 25 minutes. The sessions were tape recorded with prior permission of the esteemed interviewees. Later the interview data were transcribed manually. Braun and Clarke's (2006) following six steps of the thematic process were applied to analyse the data.

1. *Familiarising yourself with data*: Familiarisation of the data for this study was achieved through repetitive reading of the 10 interviewees' transcriptions.
2. *Generating initial coding*: Initial coding was systematically carried out by the researchers which resulted in generating 81 codes from the entire data set (Tables 1-4).
3. *Searching for themes*: Codes were arranged and sorted into potential themes. Altogether 14 themes were generated.
4. *Reviewing themes*: Themes identified in step three were reviewed and revised.
5. *Defining and naming themes*: The themes were named as shown in Tables 1-4.

6. *Producing the report*: The themes are discussed in the following section

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results are based on the qualitative data collected from the interview sessions in response to eight questions asked. The details are provided in the following subsections.

i) What are your views on Time Management from the Islamic Perspective?

The question was intended to find out general Islamic perception on time management. From the collected data, the researchers observed that all of the interviewees agree on the idea that time is the most precious thing given by Allah (*swt*) to mankind and that is why every activity a Muslim performs must abide to certain time whether it is the five times daily prayers, fasting, Hajj, Zakat, and so on. Furthermore, the interviewees believe that since every ritual especially prayer has to be on specific time, performing prayer on time will lead to managing time properly. One statement is the following:

- Time management is important. Muslim's time management starts by prayer time management. All other works get the timing according to that. (Respondent (R) -5)

Overall, according to the interviewees, a Muslim will manage his time better as he has to arrange, organise and schedule his life activities in cognizance with the prayer times. This means that they have to arrange, organise and schedule their lives in response to prayer times. This will eventually lead to proper time management in real life.

Likewise, Qur'an also reveals that many acts of worships are connected with time. For instance, Allah (*swt*) determines in the Qur'an with regards to the beginning of the month of fasting (*Ramadhan*) as in *Al-Baqarah*, 2: 185 (previously stated).

The Qur'an has also given prominence to manage time, by establishing a connection between the motion of the day and the night. Allah (*swt*) reveals:

"Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of Night and Day, there are indeed Signs for men of understanding." (Ali-Imran, 3:190)

Again, Allah (*swt*) warns that whoever neglects time are those who are in peril (*Al-Asr*, 103:1-3). Indeed, Time is obviously an important *amanah* to a human being from Allah (*swt*).

The following are some of the responses on the question asked with regards to time management from the Islamic perspective:

- The five times prayer, fasting, Hajj and Zakat are all time-bound activities
- Muslims' time management starts by prayer time management
- Islamic rituals are according to proper timetable
- Time is a blessing from Allah and people are instructed to preserve it and are held responsible for its usage
- Time management plays an important role by allowing an individual to pray according to the right time

Coincidentally, the above views expressed by the interviewees have been supported by Al-Jeraisy (2008), who contends that poor management of time has detrimental effect in people's life and they must value time as it is an important *amanah* from Allah (*swt*).

ii) How do you manage your time in your working place? Please share with us your experiences.

In response to the above question, overall, the interviewees shared three aspects, namely 1) Prioritisation of daily activities, 2) Maintaining proper schedule, and 3) Meeting deadlines of the activities. The existing literatures also confirm these findings (Machan *et al.*, 1990, Saifullah & Kleiner, 1988). For example Saifullah and Kleiner (1988) too recommended the following set of behaviours: challenging goals, keeping a time log, setting priorities, doing one major thing at a time, and eliminating time wasters. The first two of the three items mentioned above are also included in the set of 8 management categories discussed by Sarfraz (2017).

Two pertinent statements shared by interviewees are provided below:

- Managing time for me, usually I prioritize all what I do, what requires most attention is to be done first. (R-3)
- Time management to me is an essential for any kind of success or any failure. Managing time comes to all activities, obligations, options, all what we do in life. (R-8)

The common responses matched against Themes of the present research are herewith summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Interviewees' practices on managing their time in workplace

| Responses | Theme |
|---|------------------------------|
| Set the priority based on the importance I make a list of my works Arrange the activities according to importance I prioritize works I plan work the previous night | Prioritisation of activities |
| Proper schedule Follow my schedule and diaries to manage time I maintain my routine Use scheduler for managing time Allocate each task in a time frame | Maintaining proper schedule |
| Meet the deadlines Put deadlines against the activities in the to-do-list | Meeting deadlines |
| I do multitasking | Others |

Checking the complexity and size of the work

iii) What are the effects of time wasters towards achieving higher job performance? Please share your opinion.

Majority of the interviewees conveyed that poor quality of work is the direct effect of time wasters in achieving higher job performance. One interviewee said:

- Obviously the effects of time wasters are negative with respect to job performance. It prevents timely completion of job and hampers productivity. (R-2)

They further commented that wasting time will lead to bad impression to the management and less recognition among the peers. On the other hand, some interviewees opined that the direct effect of time wasters is increased workload and mental stress.

Surprisingly, the response of one of the interviewees was positive. His comment is provided below:

- Time waster is never good for any kind of job performances. A newsman must properly maintain a timetable to reach office, take his or her assignment, attend the program and report it on time at the office so that it can be aired on the news bulletin. Apart from that, there is an informal practice in most of the newsroom which could be considered as time wasters in other profession. But it is not considered a time waster in the media because by attending a pure gossip time sometimes ideas for very good reports and programs are generated. So if you have to incite your creativity, a time waster like gossip can be very useful, at least in creative professions. (R-1)

The complete set of responses is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Effects of time wasters on job performance

| Responses | Theme |
|---|----------------------|
| Poor quality Less accuracy Prevents timely completion of job and hampers productivity Stress Low performance Overlapping of tasks Messy and at the same time sacrifice the quality Affect the skills and less output | Poor quality of work |
| Bad impression for the management Less recognition if job is not done on time | Bad impression |
| Burden will be too much at the end of Workload | Heavier workload |

Mental stress

Mental stress

Things will be out of control

Apparently, there is dearth of studies specifically linking time wasters with employees' job performance. Abdulwodod (2017) finds three time management factors, namely time planning, time attitude, and time wasters that are significantly related with students' academic performance. Specifically, students must be kept themselves away from time wasters in order to enhance their academic performance.

iv) Would you please state some activities which you prefer to engage yourself to utilise your time effectively for better job performance?

The main purpose of this question is to find out activities of interviewees regarding time management which are associated with the understanding of how they manage their time in the Islamic way as well as their job performance.

Most of the interviewees think that through Scheduling they can maintain their time effectively which includes arranging works based on importance, using to-do-list, and using alarm. One of the interviewee's comments is the following:

- Scheduling, allocating time for each task ahead of time, delegation of routine tasks to the subordinates more to allocate maximum possible time to the priority tasks. Keep Meeting times short and precise to avoid wastage of time, use digital platforms to save time which also ensures that the time is effectively utilised. (R-10)

Another interviewee (R-3) emphasised:

- Praying *Subuh salat* with *jama'ah* (congregation) to start the day
- Recitation of *Surah Yassin* helps improve job performance

For this question, some of the interviewees also stressed about maintaining a diary or sticky notes, knowledge of work (respective subject, others' work), practicing the routine of early to bed and early to rise as their main activities for utilising time properly. Therefore, key points mentioned by the interviewees are:

- Early bed and early rise
- Prayer

There are some other activities also mentioned by the interviewees that are worthwhile to provide here:

- *Physical exercise*
- *Spending quality time with family*

The complete set of responses is provided in Table 3.

Table 3: Interviewees' responses on their preferred activities

| Responses | Theme |
|--|---|
| Scheduling Allocating time for each task ahead of time Allocating maximum possible time to the priority task Arranging work and start with the most important one first Update to-do-list Use to-do-list Use alarm | Scheduling |
| Praying <i>Subuh salat</i> with <i>jama'ah</i> (congregation) to start the day Maintain prayer times 5 times <i>salat</i> with <i>jama'ah</i> Recitation of <i>Surah Yassin</i> that helps improve job performance | Prayer |
| Maintain a diary Use sticky notes in the PC or workstation Mark on the calendar | Maintain a diary or sticky notes |
| Studying on respective subject. Knowledge about others' work and several documentary and reports | Knowledge of work (respective subject, others' work) |
| Early wake up Early bed time | Early to bed and early to rise |
| Physical exercise Communicate clear goals and expectations Share information Encourage open communication Trust Sense of belonging Focused and determined in accomplishing job Use of digital platforms to save time which also ensures time management. Keep Meeting times short and precise to avoid waste of time Spend quality time with family Clear about what you want Start doing research work | Others |

The above findings are also corroborated by Al-Jeraisy (2008), according to whom, if a Muslim observes his/her religious duties including praying *salats* at their designated times, then he/she is on right track in managing time.

v) Based on your experience, do you think that the employees of various organisations need to improve their Time Management skills?

Most of the interviewees believe that employees of various organizations need to improve their time management skills. This is especially so for newly-joined employees. Here is the comment of one interviewee:

- Yes, I think it is necessary especially for the freshies who are new to the job environment. Moreover, the senior and experienced staff also need to improvise their time management skills as they need to be the role model for the juniors. (R-7)

The above view is also supported by Abduljabbar et al. (2012). However, about twenty percent of the interviewees believe that employees do not need to improve their skills on time management and organization should have confidence on the abilities of their employees. The following comment from an interviewee illustrates this point:

- No, I don't think so. Better job performance depends on trust, job prospect and combination of qualified people in an organization. (R-10)

Nevertheless, one of them thinks that employees need to focus more on developing their way of life. Conducting one's life obviously has to follow the rules of the Qur'an and Sunnah. For example, every Muslim knows time is limited in his lifetime and he has to spend life according to his goal which is acquiring the pleasure of Allah (*swt*). Therefore, they do not need extra training on time management as they are well equipped since their time of birth about how to deal with time. The following comment from an interviewee highlights this point:

- I do not believe in the topic of time management skills. I believe in developing human capacity following rules given by Allah which will ultimately lead to better management of time. If a person knows his capacity and constantly pushes it, it will definitely lead to proper management of time. (R-5)

Njagi and Malel (2012) found that in general, employees need to enhance their time management skills; hence, they recommended management of organizations to provide adequate training on time management to their employees.

vi) Do you think that the Clock-in (CI) and the Clock-out (CO) system can improve job performance?

The main purpose of asking this question is to know whether the CI and the CO policy, that has been adopted across organizations, improves employees' job performance. It is important to note that more than half of the interviewees think that this system has no impact at all on employees' performance and it is used just to keep record. Instead, some interviewees advised to focus more on accountability, trust, and inspiration for better performance.

- I think the CI-CO system should be used in different contexts at different levels to make it effective for better job performance. The organization should try to create accountability among the new and existing staff so that the employees can use the working hours with full productivity and also not feeling the sense of imprisonment,

boredom and fatigue. Besides, it is also important that the employees can have work time flexibility with the consent from the management as well. (R-1)

Furthermore, quite a few of the interviewees think that the CI and the CO system are appropriate only for low level jobs. One such comment is the following:

- Not always. It depends on the type of the job. If it is mechanical or clerical job then the CI and the CO system might improve job performance. However, in the area where creativity is required, flexible time is more desired. (R-6)

vii) Please express your opinion about the relationship between time management and job performance from the Islamic Perspective

Regarding the relationship between time management and job performance from the Islamic perspective, all of the interviewees responded in the affirmative. The most common comment was related to praying *salat* on time which leads to better time management. The point shared and raised by one interviewee that demonstrates the relationship between time management and job performance is provided below:

- In Islamic perspective, it is expressed that wasting time is not a good practice of life. The Almighty, the Creator in the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) called upon Muslims to utilize time properly. In few verses, it is expressed and even the messengers of Allah (*swt*) have publicly expressed several times saying that we have to be accountable for the time that has been given to us. It will be a matter of punishment if we cannot explain how we have utilized our time. Clearly time management and productivity/performance are inter-related. (R-3)

Some more statements made by the interviewees are shared in the following:

- Time is an *amanah* (trust) for which a person is accountable to Allah (*swt*). By bad time management, if a person performs badly, he is not making his salary fully *halal*. (R-10)
- The relationship between time management and job performance is positive. On top of that, a Muslim's time is a trust for which he has to be accountable on the Day of Resurrection. (R-6)

Another interviewee opined that if human beings have the mentality to serve mankind then the conventional idea about job and time management does not apply. This type of Muslims does not need extra care about managing their time only in job; rather they manage their time in all aspects of their life. The following comment elaborates this idea:

- In Islam, job is something which will bring meaning to human life (both for himself and others), environment and animal life, in short the whole universe; it is not like the "9 to 5" job to earn a living which brings no value to human life rather than just money. We believe money will come as a by-product given that people work towards getting Allah's blessings here and thereafter. And as Muslims, it is our job to be number one in whatever we do, so definitely there is no place for wastage of time. (R-7)

viii) What are the factors that motivate an employee or employees in achieving better Job Performance? Please express your opinion from the Islamic Perspective

Diverse opinions were received on this issue. Generally, interviewees assigned more importance on intangible factors rather than tangible ones. On Islamic aspect, interviewees think that Islamic psychology plays an important role in time management. This point is exemplified by the following comment:

- This is a general question which has various answers from many different dimensions. I would like to say, financial and non-financial factors motivate an employee or employees in achieving better job performance. In terms of Islamic point of view, maybe religiosity is a considerable factor where Islamic psychology plays an important role for time management, which may bring a better job performance. (R-9)

In addition to the above, some common tangible factors including promotion, bonus, reward etc. were also articulated.

- Reward either monetary or non-monetary or recognition drives people for job performance. It is scientifically tested. However, it is also proven that equity in terms of pay or good environment also drives people for job performance. Both the perspectives are supported in Islam. As a religion, Islam is always a big supporter of equity, justice and fairness. (R-5)

The full range of responses by the interviewees are as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Factors that enhance job performance from the Islamic perspective

| Responses | Theme |
|---|--------------------|
| Trust worthiness Value Culture Mind-set to serve people Cordial environment Quality leadership according to Islam Islamic psychology Positive appreciation Shared understanding Equal & just treatment of employees Commitment towards the company and one's own-self Accountability for the company Encourage open dialogue and suggestion from all to solve a problem Family time and other personal times should be considered Respect | Intangible Factors |
| Reward either monetary or non-monetary and bonus Let the employees enjoy a share from the profit Promotion | Tangible Factors |

Recognition

Less work but more quality

Effectiveness of all these factors was corroborated by earlier researchers (Islam & Ismail, 2008). In particular, Islam and Ismail (2008) emphasized on providing monetary rewards, timely promotion, cordial working environment, fair treatment to all employees. In a similar research, Sharma and Dhar (2016) found that perceived organizational support and procedural justice had positive relation with affective commitment which, in turn, had significant relation with employees' job performance. In another study conducted by Hidayah (2015), it was found that training and development and proactive personality can enhance employees' job performance

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This qualitative enquiry on time management and job performance from the Islamic perspective has produced a number of important findings. According to the responses received, time management is definitely related to job performance. It is concluded from Islamic perspective that, a Muslim's time management starts by offering *salats* at their designated times. Time is widely considered as *amanah* from Allah (*swt*) and everybody would be questioned on the Day of Judgement on how he/she spent time in this world. It is suggested to pray the *Subuh* prayer in *jama'ah* to start the day and keep away from all kinds of time wasters. Some interviewees also suggested spending quality time with family members.

Interestingly, many of the findings here are consistent with the findings obtained from the conventional perspective of time management. For example, maintaining a to-do-list with deadlines attached with the activities and prioritizing the tasks according to their level of importance are, by far, important guidelines for time management. Interviewees were also asked regarding the factors that can enhance job performance. Once again, many of the items shared are consistent with the general findings of other earlier researches. For example, in order to enhance employees' job performance, the following are some of the factors shared by the interviewees: equity in terms of pay, good working environment, quality leadership according to Islam, positive appreciation, equitable treatments for all, and giving monetary incentives. The interviewees were also of the opinion that the CI and the CO system are not suitable for white collar jobs but are more appropriate to clerical or menial jobs. The latter is where timely attendance is vital, such as workers' presence at the productive time in a factory. As for academic institutions, lecturers should be given leeway to be creative and generate knowledge useful for the whole humanity. Hence, the CI and the CO system are not suitable for them.

Finally, the researchers of this study contend that further researches should be conducted on the same topic of study by adding more research questions and increasing the number of interviewees (instead of just ten). Focus Group Discussion (FGD) can also be organized to validate the findings of the present research. Also, due to a general dearth of quantitative researches on time management from the Islamic perspective, more researches should be conducted using questionnaire survey and analyzing the results statistically.

Acknowledgement: The authors are grateful to the Ministry of Education, Malaysia for the Research Initiative Grant, RIGS15-118-0118. The authors are thankful to their research assistants Rezbin Nahar and Md. Muhibbullah for their valuable assistance in preparing this article. The researchers are also grateful to the interviewees participated in this research.

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