

The Implementation of Islamic Management Practices at MYDIN.

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ABSTRACT: *As a retail hypermarket, MYDIN offers a variety of similarly ranged products as the international hypermarket at the lowest prices amongst its competitors. It has a loyal customer base of various races that exist harmoniously in Malaysia, and it is an alternative-shopping destination for their daily necessities. Regarding the growth of the Muslim population each year, it is suitable to have halal products. Nowadays, MYDIN is a one stop centre for all locals and foreigners. With the tagline Why pay more? Buy at wholesale prices! MYDIN has successfully positioned itself in the market place. The aim of this concept paper is to see how far the management of MYDIN has implemented Islamic Management practices in their business until the owner has become a legendary Muslim business tycoon in Malaysia.*

Keywords—*business retail, hypermarket, Islamic Management, Malaysia, practices*

I. INTRODUCTION

Islam is a system of belief that included not only man's relationship with God, but Islam provides all mankind to all human with codes that regulate their entire way of life. It consists of 'AQIDAH (Faith and Beliefs), SHARI'AH (Rules and Regulation Safeguarding Practices and Activities) and AKHLAQ (Personalities, Behaviors, Moralities and Ethics).

Islamic Management can be defined as an emerging discipline which deals with the management of organizations from the perspective of the knowledge acquired from the revealed and other Islamic sources of knowledge and results in applications compatible with the Islamic beliefs and practices (Kazmi, 2005).

According to Othman (2010), Islamic Management is the integrated activities of thinking, planning, organizing, leading and controlling, interconnected with decisions, involving the use of resources like human, financial, time, information and physical with the objectives of attaining the goals of Maqasid al-Shariah. The objectives of Maqasid al-Shariah are to safeguard and protect the religion (Ad-Deen), physical existence (AL-Jasad), soul and mind/intellect (An-Nasab/Al-Muruuah) and property/wealth/resources (Al-Maal). In Islamic Management context, the objective of the organization should follow the objective of Shariah Islamiah. Thus, it will lead human being for the success in this world and hereafter.

In 2016, the population of Malaysian are around 31 093 000. As a multiracial country, 60 per cent of Malaysians practice Islam. Based on the significant increase in Muslim every year, the implementation of Islamic management is very important. The aims of this study are:

- i. to investigate how far MYDIN apply Islamic management practice in their business and
- ii. to provide an understanding that Islam Management practice helps individuals become successful people.

II. PRINCIPLES OF ISLAMIC MANAGEMENT

The principle is the foundation or basis of an idea into a tree, or the implementation of actions. In the context of Islam, the principles act as the foundation for the implementation of administrative or management activities to achieve the goals that have been set by the organisation. Islamic management is a specific approach regarding Islamic principles, which guide the managers while managing their organisation (Mohamed, Nur Afifah, & Abdul Kadir, 2014). The principles of an Islamic state involve the following principles-*Al-Ubudiyyah, Al-Syura, Al-Hurriyah, Al-Musawah* and *Al-Adalah*.

The first principle in Islamic Management is *Al-Ubudiyyah*. *Al-Ubudiyyah* an organizing principle involving the main principles of human information and as a servant of God. All the activities of an individual and all activities within the organization should stick to the concept of devotion to God Almighty. This concept means that a Muslim should be obedient to the messenger of Allah and stay away from all prohibitions. Belief in the Oneness of God is the foundation of an Islamic devotion towards God. (Ahmad Ibrahim Abu Sin, 1991). It

has been cited in Surah Al-Nahl: “And Allah said (O mankind!): “Take not ilahain (two gods in worship, etc.). Verily, He (Allah) is (the) only One Ilah (God). Then, fear Me (Allah *Īá ĪáÇää*) much [and Me (Alone), i.e. be away from all kinds of sins and evil deeds that Allah has forbidden and do all that Allah has ordained and worship none but Allah]. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and (all that is in) the earth and Ad-Din Wasiba is His [(i.e. perpetual sincere obedience to Allah is obligatory). None has the right to be worshipped but Allah]. Will you then fear any other than Allah?”(Holy Qur’an, 16:51-52).

Every human being is a Caliph appointed by God to inhabit the earth. Ahmad Ibrahim Abu Sin (1991) believed that Islam has laid the guidelines for a leader, manager, administrator entrusted by God to understand the following concepts *Ubudiyyah*. If the concept *ubudiyyah* if properly understood and appreciated, then this element can have a positive effect on the formation of character and culture of the organisation created.

The second principle in Islamic Management is *Al-Syura*. Its importance is confirmed expressly in the Qur'an can be confirmed by the Sunnah of the Prophet and his companions practices. It is also an important element in everyday life. Between the interests of *Al-Syura* in conjunction with management are- *Al-Syura* practice make decisions for the better based on logic, a decision made in accordance with the views of many better than a view (M. A. Muqtedar Khan, 2002), *Al-Syura* will strengthen the decisions made as a result of a more mature discussion and in-depth and *Al-Syura* is a place to take advantage of those who are knowledgeable, experienced and skilled. Thus, each of them potentially will feel that they are respected and valued, especially when the discussion and make decisions together.

The third principle in Islamic Management is *Al-Hurriyah*. This principle stems from the fact of recognition of human freedom had since he was born. Therefore, Islam opposes any form of slavery without any reason except slavery to Allah S.W.T. Islam guarantees freedom of the human rights aspects of humanity that it involved the following things-move, study, have and find the treasure, speech, think and religion or religious practices and beliefs professed (Abdul Hai Madani, 2011). Freedom in Islam is secured to each individual taking into account three things. First, do not interfere with the freedom of others or the public interest. Public interest takes precedence when there is a clash of the interests of individuals. Second, freedom does not interfere with the interests of the organization, which means the interests of the organization shall take precedence over the interests and personal liberty. Third, freedom does not conflict with the values and principles of Islam. If contradictory, then freedom will be automatically canceled. Freedom in Islam, especially in the context of an organization is an award that symbolizes the freedom of the rights of the individual as long as it does not violate the limits set by Islam. Freedom in this case also opens the creativity and openness advocated by Islam, which will contribute towards the betterment and organizational excellence.

The fourth principle in Islamic Management is *Al-Musawah*. *Al-Musawah* means similarities and equality in Islamic perspective. This equation is related to the fact that man is descended from the one that came from Adam a.s. Practice, responsibility and devotion to distinguish between humans. Implementation of the organisational equation involves four main issues. First, all workers must receive equal, especially in terms of regulations and laws. Second, all employees must be treated and respected from the point of humanity because every human being has dignity, trends and the nature and taste of its own. Third, the equation must also be applied in terms of opportunities and facilities provided to each employee can feel the same opportunities and rights. Fourth, the division of labor must take into account humanitarian aspects and equality. *Al-Musawah* the management principles of Islam, which symbolizes prosperity of Islam and its systems. The approach of Islam is not based on skin color and ancestry, but built on the basis of equality in the context of the organisation are all given equal stature to serve and contribute their efforts to advancing the organisation.

The fifth principle in Islamic Management is *Al-Adalah*. Islam is a religion that emphasizes justice. Justice in Islam refers to the right, namely entitlement to the right and put something in place (Siddiq, 2003). According to Mawardi (in Rasid, 2008), justice is truthful, honest and trustworthy; keep clear of illegal things, away from sin and *syubhah*, calm in any circumstances whatsoever and dignity. Justice is the cornerstone of any form of management practices that are implemented with the involvement of the following things:

- a. Justice should be practiced in the hiring process so that workers who have met the criteria and eligibility requirements.
- b. Justice should also be implemented in the division of tasks so that task is left to a decent considering the talent, potential and strength.
- c. Justice must be implemented in sentencing not based on the position or favouritism.

III. BUSINESS PRACTICES AT MYDIN

MYDIN is a familiar name to Malaysians as a successful retail business and the company's story is inspiring us. From a small family business, set up as the first hawker in Penang in 1940 and then continuing to Kelantan. Mr MYDIN started the business with a small shop in Kota Bahru, Kelantan, Malaysia in 1957 (Dato' Hj Ameer Ali, 2016). Life was tough as Mr MYDIN had only a bicycle as his transport to order goods from Thailand and make some deliveries to his customers in the scorching heat and heavy rain. After 20 years,

Syarikat MYDIN Mohamed started up a new branch in Kuala Terengganu. At this time, MYDIN was widely popular in the east coast of Malaysia. In 1989, the second son of Mr MYDIN, Dato' Hj Ameer Ali, who was the managing director of the company, brought the family business to the next level with his first shop (third branch) in Jalan Masjid India at Kuala Lumpur. With ten years of experience working in the banking sector, he gained a lot of experience and knowledge that would help him to manage their family business. MYDIN was expanded from being a retail business merchant to a gigantic hypermarket (Maheran, Filzah, & Norezan, 2009). Dato' Haji Ameer Ali started the third branch in Jalan Masjid India after renting a 600 square foot shop lot with a loan of RM200, 000 and merchandise worth RM100, 000. He put MYDIN as a target to be the purchasing power of the Muslim community. In 1991, due to the escalating business turnovers and rapid expansion in size, the family business was converted from a sole proprietorship to a private limited company. In 2000, the company officially registered its name as MYDIN Mohamed Holding Berhad, with Mr MYDIN as its Chairman and all of his four sons as the board of directors.

Currently, MYDIN operates 107 outlets nationwide inclusive of 23 hypermarkets, 16 emporiums, 3 bazaars, 49 minimarkets (MyMYDIN), 11 convenience shops (MyMart) and 5 franchise outlets (MYDIN Mart) operating throughout Peninsular Malaysia (www.MYDIN.com.my). MYDIN is currently in the process of expanding its market to the Sarawak. With the number of employees reaching more than 8500 people, MYDIN is the leading wholesaler and retailer that provide the best value to its customers.

MYDIN's business activity is in retailing and wholesaling. The products range from food lines, household goods, and soft-line and hard-line items. Hard-line products include hardware, electrical, stationery, porcelain, and toys. Whilst soft-line comprises textile and fabric products. The food line includes confectionery, drinks and beverages, delicatessen and dairy products. MYDIN operates its business based on *halal* concepts and stresses on honesty, sincerity, and good discipline in all aspects of its business.

In doing business, there are special guidelines and standards that all Muslims must follow. It means that business and ethics are interrelated (Muzammil). As Allah said: "*Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much*" (Holy Qur'an, 33:21).

The person should earn a profit by doing a 'clean' business. In order to build a good business, the leader must apply all the practices of Islamic Management that will drive the business into lawful business as intended by Shariah (Abeng, 1997). Islamic ethics deal with a relationship between man and Allah, fellowmen and other creatures. The business activities must avoid all the gambling, lotteries, and production and sales of alcohol distribution. It has been cited in Surah Al-Maidah: "*O you who believe! Intoxicants and gambling, sacrificing to stones, and divination by arrows are an abomination of Satan's handiwork. Eschew such abomination, that you may prosper*" (Holy Qur'an, 5:90).

MYDIN is the first choice as business premises for shopping for customers of all races in Malaysia. For example, the shop located in Sinar Kota, located in the capital of Kuala Lumpur is often visited by employees of Nepal, Bangladesh, and Indonesia. It is the field for a casual meeting amongst them. Nevertheless, there are some things that make MYDIN approachable by every community in Malaysia. The uniqueness of MYDIN makes it as the first choice for locals and foreigners for shopping and other activities.

3.1 Halal concept

MYDIN plans to become a leading wholesaler in the world with competitive products, and as a *halal* wholesaler in Malaysia. MYDIN plans to offer a better service than its competitors, providing the best products of network quality at the lowest prices each day. MYDIN is doing business based on the concept of *halal*. Being Muslims and a Malaysian-owned company, MYDIN is running the business strictly based on the *halal* concept. In line with the increasing number of Muslim residents each year, the knowledge about the issue of *halal* food is viewed seriously by customers. The customers are looking for the *halal* products and MYDIN is providing *halal* products only. It is an obligation or fardhu kifayah to provide *halal* goods and services for fellow Muslims to buy (Dato' Haji Ameer Ali, 2016).

Therefore, to guarantee the *halal* of the products, a *halal* certification body is needed to examine food processes, food preparation, slaughtering, ingredients used, cleaning, and handling and processing down to transportation and distribution, before finally certifying that a food product is based on *halal* standards (Latif, Mohamed, Sharifuddin, Abdullah, & Ismail, 2014). All the manufacturers and suppliers of MYDIN must have *halal* certification, signed by a *halal* logo, as a way to inform and reassure that their products are *halal* and Shariah compliant (Shafie & Othman, 2006). Within the organisation, the management conducts an internal audit every month to ensure the procedure and process of work complies with the Shariah.

Islam asks its followers to eat *halal* food. It has been cited in Surah Al-Baqarah: "*O mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and good on the earth, and follow not the footsteps of Shaitan (Satan). Verily, he is to you an open enemy*" (Holy Qur'an, 1:168).

3.2 Mas'ulliyah as a responsibility to community

MYDIN's tagline is very cliché: *Why pay more? Buy at wholesale prices!* However, MYDIN's slogan has become the symbol of prudence. At the same time, it is able to attract more customers who want to get goods at lower prices. Islam encourages its followers to be thrifty in spending. It underlies the well-being and economic strength of the country (Yusuf 'Ali, 2009). Therefore, Islam expects every believer to be thrifty in all spheres of life and circumstances. It has been cited in Surah Al-Israa: "Verily, *spendthrifts are brothers of the Shayatin (devils), and the Shaitan (Devil - Satan) is ever ungrateful to his Lord*" (Holy Qur'an, 17:27).

MYDIN is well known as an importer, wholesaler, distributor, and retailer. MYDIN gets the goods from within and outside the country, such as from Bangladesh, China, France, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom. MYDIN being able to offer a much lower price than its competitors could indirectly increase the economy and the living standards of the local people. Although MYDIN outlets offer goods at prices more reasonable, it does not mean that the goods sold at MYDIN are of less quality as perceived by certain competitors (ww1.utusan.com.my, 2007). Ironically, a low price does not necessarily mean poor quality goods. The philosophy of MYDIN is to offer wholesale prices to customers that come from different segments of the population, such as housewives, night market traders, retailers, and sellers of clothing, which can only be implemented through the concept of cost reductions when customers buy in bulk. Customers today are very sensitive to price fluctuations and they need products that have value for money. Since the prices without GST-savings campaign was conducted in 260 networks including MyMYDIN and Kedai Rakyat 1Malaysia (KR1M) (www.utusan.com.my, 2015), MYDIN has been willing to absorb RM15 million of the total monthly benefit proceeds of sales to ensure that customers can buy goods at the same price after GST when the cost of tax payments by 6% of GST will be borne by the company through a strategic plan that has been drawn up.

According to the tagline, 29 outlets of MYDIN had earned the recognition of Fair Price Shop Awards (AKHP) in 2014 (Anugerah Kedai Harga Patut 2014 anjuran KPDNKK, 2014). The award was organised by the Ministry of Domestic Trade, Cooperatives, and Consumerism on 7th July 2003. This award is given to dealers who ensure that the quality, value and service provided to users meet the requirements and needs of the users at an affordable price.

3.3 Musyawarah

The element of *Al-Syura* is very important (M.A. Muqtedar, 2002). In the retail line, meetings and discussions are important elements in the daily activities at MYDIN in resolving any arising matters. On the other hand, for critical matters, Dato' Haji Ameer Ali practices the concept of *Al-Syura*, whereby the opinion from more knowledgeable and expert people will be consulted before any decision is taken. Regarding the critical matter, no ad hoc or quick decision will be taken. The selection of a location for business operations is another critical strategic decision. For any decision undertaken, MYDIN is always ready to bear the consequences. Based on experience, making a good decision is a product of knowledge of the subject matter related to what we have to decide on. The open door policy practiced at MYDIN encourages the employees to meet the top management of the company at any time. Before the trading and exchanging of shift workers, managers will give a briefing to ensure that the message conveyed by the higher authorities can be delivered. All the staff are encouraged to be punctual especially when they have a meeting and in terms of submitting a report to the head of the department. The openness of Dato' Haji Ameer Ali, who always cares for the welfare of his employees, has caused him to be likable. In fact, the culture of togetherness like a big family is also felt by the new workers.

3.4 Al-Musawarah/ Equality

MYDIN has provided opportunities for groups with OKU or disabilities to work there. MYDIN has initiated a programme with the OKU to help them improve the country's economy. It was a bold action taken by the management of MYDIN to take their work with confidence in their ability to do the job entrusted to them. MYDIN found that workers with disabilities are able to provide a high commitment comparable to a normal human if given the chance. Up to now there are 31 staff members of people with disabilities who work in 7 MYDIN outlets nationwide.

Equality is achieved when recognizing the rights of all members of society and reflects the principles of justice based on the Constitution of Malaysia. This code of ethics is said to be practiced in MYDIN due to the appreciation and recognition to all the employees who excel without discrimination and without favouritism. To raise employee morale or confidence-building, MYDIN shows pictures of the best workers in certain months within their department. Every worker has the opportunity to display his picture if he/she does a good job. There is no gender issue. The employees practice the concept of *itqan* whilst doing their best because of Allah since the work is considered as *ibadah*. *Itqan* is Arabic word which means perfection (Abdi O., Ahmad Faris, &

Azweeda, 2009). It is a creation for achievement and excellence, which comes through working hard and never giving up. Therefore, in selecting new employees, the management keeps the criterion of *salat* or prayer as very important. In every interview session to recruit new employees, the candidates are asked questions to see their level of understanding and willingness to be committed to the Islamic principles, rules, and regulations. Muslim employees should adhere to the basic requirement in Islamic dressing for covering the *aurah* whilst working.

3.5 Al-Amanah/ Honesty

In Islam, being honest is a requirement. Mr MYDIN instilled this value to all his children. If our suppliers send more than the quantity ordered, MYDIN will return the balance to the suppliers and not close one eye and take the over-supply. Dato' Haji Ameer Ali said, "If you earn it that way, you will lose it. What is not due to you will not stay with you". According to Mohamed, Nur Afifah, & Abdul Kadir (2014), *barakah* of the *Rizq* is very essential. *Barakah* is the extra and additional outcome (*Rizqi*) that is provided by Allah because of good deeds and actions that we have done before. Giving in charity is an easy way to increase the *barakah* in *rizq*. The Prophet (saw) swore by Allah SWT that when a slave of Allah gives *sadaqah* (charity), it does not decrease the amount of wealth in the least. It may decrease in number but the *barakah* is increased and you would be able to do more with the remaining amount. Also, through giving *sadaqah*, Allah puts *barakah* in other parts of your life (Usman, 2013). Muslims are encouraged to give constantly in charity. It has been cited in Surah Al-Munafiqun: "And spend (in charity) of that with which We have provided you, before death comes to one of you and he says: "My Lord! If only You would give me respite for a little whilst (i.e., return to the worldly life), then I should give Sadaqah (i.e., Zakat) of my wealth, and be amongst the righteous [i.e., perform Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah)]." (Holy Qur'an, 63:10). The Prophet Muhammad once said that "nobody's assets are reduced by charity". This can be seen in the various activities and programmes of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) involving the community which have been practiced and organized by MYDIN in order to enhance its image to public. *Itqan* or perfection of action is part of honesty. Being thorough in doing something is an obligation of all Muslims (Syeikh Munawar).

Amongst these activities are those for single mothers, orphans, and people with disabilities (OKU). Many events have been conducted by MYDIN, such as *buka puasa* and shopping for *baju raya* during the festive season and things for back to school (Maheran, Filzah, & Norezan, 2009). MYDIN also helps victims of the war in Gaza and Rohingya.

3.6 Salat

During *salat*, parasympathetic activities increase and sympathetic activities decrease (Hazem, Fatimah, Noor Azina, & Wan Azman, 2014). Thus, regular *salat* practices may help promote relaxation, minimise anxiety, and reduce cardiovascular risk. This is how important *salat* is to Muslims. Hence, the *salat* reminds people of Allah and keeps them from all forms of evil. It has been cited in Surah Al-Ankabut: "Recite (O Muhammad) what has been revealed to you of the Book (the Qur'an), and perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat). Verily, As-Salat (the prayer) prevents one from Al-Fahsha' (i.e., great sins of every kind, unlawful sexual intercourse, etc.) and Al-Munkar (i.e., disbelief, polytheism, and every kind of evil wicked deed, etc.) and the remembering (praising, etc.) of (you by) Allah (in front of the angels) is greater indeed [than your remembering (praising, etc.) Allah in prayers, etc.] And Allah knows what you do" (Holy Qur'an, 29:45).

It is a normal scenario at MYDIN that during prayer time, the call to prayer-*azan* echoes through a loudspeaker. This has not been made by any hypermarket in Malaysia except for MYDIN hypermarket. Simultaneously, all sales transactions' over the counter payment will pause to honor *azan* and resumes when *azan* is finished. At that point, MYDIN customers flocked to the *musolla* or prayer room to pray in a congregation. The prayer room is large and clean and also fully equipped with facilities to provide comfort to all customers and employees. In producing workers that are honest and trustworthy, MYDIN provides sufficient time and places for their employees to perform their religious duties such as time for prayer. *Salat* is much related to the punctuality issue, he has often observed his staff when it comes to prayer time, especially Zohor (Maheran, Filzah, & Norezan, 2009). Most of the staff did not keep the *salat* time and always *prayed* at the end of the time. This is a poor reflection of discipline. As we know, prayer is the foundation of religion. If we keep praying, we will certainly strive for success. Success here is very subjective.

IV. CONCLUSION

In managing the business, it started with setting the organisational objectives, vision and mission, company's value, code of conduct and ethics, the process of decision making, recruitment, employees training, and development and strategies. Islamic management provides a positive impact on the performance of employees as well as the organisation. Although all of the Muslim employees do not have the same background of Islamic teaching, it is very important to MYDIN to be creative in dealing with the employees so that they can have a better understanding of Islam. *Tazkirah* and *Usrah* (discussion and talk) sessions can be held by

management in order to enhance and continuously remind their Muslim employees regarding Islamic understanding and knowledge.

The implementation of Islamic management will help the organisation to not only gain profits but also improve values through the behavioural reflection of the people within the organisation. The whole performance will influence the organisation, internally and externally (Mohamed, Nur Afifah, & Abdul Kadir, 2014). According to Dato' Haji Ameer, he believes that the elements of discipline, honesty, sincerity, loyalty, resourcefulness, and thrift in business are the ingredients of their success as a great Muslim business entrepreneur. There is a positive relationship between Islamic management practices and profit gains in a company.

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