

The Prevailing Organizational Culture from the Perspective of the Quran and the Sunnah: Case Study of an Islamic Charity Association in Palestine

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Abstract

The reality of the occupation and the repeated offensives the Palestinian people lived through every day across Palestine doubled the number of orphans. The resulting political and institutional need for the effective management of institutions that care for orphans in various governorates increased. This study aimed to identify the most important features of organizational behavior derived from the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet, according to which work is carried out in the Dora Islamic Society for Orphan Care. The research problem was chosen to identify the main challenges facing this charity in managing its operations and to explore the strategies it uses to overcome these challenges. The study used the descriptive approach to study the descriptive case, which is the charity. The study used the interview tool, so the questions and topics that were discussed were developed, and answers to their questions were obtained with the charity's team through interviews. The work of the charity stems strongly from the legal foundation of the disposal of (clean) money for the benefit of orphan care. The charity has become a reference for hundreds of needy families and a point of trust for them. The results indicated that the prevailing organizational behavior in the charity is linked to the Sharia rulings, and each procedure is tried according to its legislative principles. The team was genuine and reflective of strong trust internally, as well as a strong relationship between the servant leader style of the CEO and the rest of the team members.

Keywords: Islamic Charitable Organization, Organizational behavior, Organizational culture, Orphans

INTRODUCTION

The preservation of human beings in their religion, selves, progeny, intellect, and wealth is among the most important objectives of the noble Islamic law. Islamic law has surrounded humans with great care, safeguarding all their rights, ensuring them, and nurturing many of those facing difficulties such as the sick, the disabled, orphans, and others so that they do not feel lacking and do not develop a sense of social isolation.

Orphans have received a significant share of this care, with the preservation of their rights, maintenance, encouragement to care for them, and protection of them in all aspects of their lives, given their vulnerability, fragility, and difficulty in asserting their rights, and the greed of those coveting their wealth. Despite the rapid development we are experiencing in the world around us in various technological, social, competitive, and other aspects, civil and non-civil organizations are striving

hard to develop themselves and radically change their structure in line with these changes to preserve their identity and continuity.

Human resources are among the most important strategic components of an organization. Charitable associations are at the forefront of civil society organizations supporting government work due to their vital and effective role in our Palestinian society and their contribution to developmental and relief projects that alleviate the suffering of our people under the longest occupation in history. Charitable associations historically formed a distinct Palestinian part of civil society in the absence of a unified national government and an effective legislative council. They played a significant role in the Palestinian development process (Al-Buhaisi, 2009:2), as these organizations took it upon themselves to contribute to the building and establishment of the independent Palestinian state. Civil organizations have been tasked with a developmental role by providing social, developmental, educational, and health services (Al-Mashhrawi, 2008: 63).

The significance of the topic lies in its review of compliance aspects with Sharia provisions in applying organizational behavior standards associated with the name "Islamic" for orphan associations and the extent of consistency in application with the slogan from a Sharia perspective. Notably, in Palestinian society, due to the occupation and recurrent wars experienced daily by the Palestinian people in all places of Palestine, the number of orphans has multiplied, resulting in policy and institutional needs for effective management of institutions that sponsor orphans in various governorates. Political changes in the Palestinian arena, especially during the division between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, led to changes in the reference points for work and appointments of presidents of these charitable associations, negatively affecting performance, and service continuity, and increasing doubts and organizational errors. This required many years to rectify and retrieve the components of organizational behavior cherished by people and beloved by the dedicated teams of these associations devoted to providing care services. The results of this study can help in developing best practices for managing Islamic charitable associations for orphans, which can improve the quality of care provided to orphans and other vulnerable groups.

Organizational Behavior (OB) in Islamic charitable associations for orphans encompasses the study of how these organizations function and manage their personnel, volunteers, and stakeholders to fulfill their objectives (Dincer, 2014). Understanding OB in such associations is crucial, given the unique challenges they face. One of the primary challenges is the constraint of resources. Islamic charitable associations often operate with limited financial resources, necessitating efficient resource allocation, and management to meet the needs of orphaned children

effectively (Al-Mashhrawi, 2008). Moreover, cultural diversity within these organizations can present challenges in communication and collaboration, requiring strategies for fostering inclusivity and understanding among diverse team members and stakeholders (El-Borai & Aabedeen, 2005). Effective leadership is another critical factor in navigating the complexities of organizational behavior in Islamic charitable associations for orphans. Leaders must demonstrate strong ethical values, empathy, and a servant leadership approach to inspire and motivate team members toward the organization's mission of caring for orphaned children (Dincer, 2014). Furthermore, ensuring accountability and transparency is paramount in maintaining the trust and confidence of donors, beneficiaries, and the broader community (Al-Bahisai & Aabedeen, 2005). Islamic principles emphasize honesty, integrity, and accountability in financial transactions and organizational governance, necessitating robust mechanisms for financial reporting and oversight. By navigating these challenges thoughtfully, these organizations can continue to serve their noble mission of caring for orphaned children while upholding the values of compassion, integrity, and social responsibility.

A noteworthy case study conducted on an orphanage in Turkey, adhering to Islamic principles, sheds light on the practical challenges and strategies for managing organizational behavior in such settings (Dincer, 2014). This study provides valuable insights into how the organization addresses issues related to leadership, communication, cultural diversity, and resource management while upholding its mission to provide care and support to orphaned children. In conclusion, understanding and addressing the complexities of organizational behavior in Islamic charitable associations for orphans require a comprehensive approach that integrates principles of Islamic ethics, effective leadership, accountability, and transparency. By navigating these challenges thoughtfully, these organizations can continue to serve their noble mission of caring for orphaned children while upholding the values of compassion, integrity, and social responsibility. Another study explored the challenges and opportunities facing Islamic non-governmental organizations in Bangladesh, including those supporting orphans, and discussed strategies to overcome organizational behavior issues (Ali & Tasnim, 2018). Additionally, a study of the Islamic Relief Worldwide organization, a UK-based charity supporting orphans and other vulnerable groups, analyzed the organizational behavior of the organization, identified the challenges it faces in managing its employees, volunteers, and stakeholders, and studied the managerial challenges and opportunities facing Islamic charitable organizations (Ali & Ahmed, 2015).

According to official statistics, approximately 2.3% of children aged 0-17 years are orphans (due to the death of the father, mother, or both), with 2% in the West Bank and 2.7% in Gaza. Meanwhile, 2.2% of children aged 0-17 years live with only their mother, with their fathers still alive, with 1.8% in the West Bank and 2.7% in Gaza, according to 2019 data (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2021). Through reviewing previous studies, some challenges facing Islamic charitable associations for orphans in terms of organizational behavior have been noted:

Limited Resources: One of the main challenges facing Islamic charitable associations for orphans is limited available resources, which can create difficulties in managing their operations and programs, potentially affecting the morale of their employees and volunteers.

Cultural Diversity: Islamic charitable associations for orphans often have employees and volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds. Managing diversity can be challenging, and institutions need to create an inclusive environment where everyone feels appreciated and respected.

Communication: Effective communication is essential for the success of any organization, including Islamic charitable associations for orphans. These organizations may face communication challenges due to language barriers, cultural differences, and limited resources.

Leadership: Effective leadership is essential for the success of Islamic charitable associations for orphans. Leaders need to establish a vision for the organization and inspire employees and volunteers to work towards it. However, finding and retaining effective leaders can be challenging for these organizations.

Accountability and Transparency: Islamic charitable organizations for orphans need to ensure that their operations are transparent and accountable. They need to keep accurate records, comply with relevant regulations, and report their impact to stakeholders. However, doing so can be challenging, especially in areas with limited transparency and weak governance. **Political Pressure (Safe Space for Work):** Orphan care associations, as part of civil society institutions, need a degree of independence in their work, away from political pressures and/or interventions, and should not be a stage for inter-factional political battles.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study followed the descriptive-case study approach in conducting the research, which is the appropriate method for diagnosing the situation of the Charity Association for Orphans in Dura. The researcher used interviews as a tool to collect information. The researcher conducted three visits in 2 months (interviews) with

the association's staff, each lasting two hours, during which many aspects related to the study problem were reviewed.

The study tool was designed based on the researcher's review of educational literature and aspects of orphan care in Islamic law. The tool included the following questions:

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Case Study History - Dura Orphan's Association

The "Dura Islamic Orphan Care Association" is a non-governmental charitable organization established on 01 Safar 1416 AH, corresponding to 01/06/1995 AD, and registered as a branch affiliated with the Islamic Charitable Association - Hebron, supervised by a nine-member Committee. On 19/02/2004 AD, the association obtained a license from the Palestinian Ministry of Interior under the name [Dura Islamic Orphan Care Association] with registration number [DR-519-C]. The association's building is in the Sanger suburb on the main street of Dura-Hebron, consisting of four floors of varying sizes ranging from (500m² to 1000m²), housing the association's headquarters and its various departments. The association's activities cover the southern area of Hebron Governorate [the cities of Dura and Dahiriya, their villages, and the Fawwar refugee camp], with a population of approximately (160,000) people according to the 2021 population census of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. The association owns properties of various sizes, donated by benefactors, some of which have been reclaimed, with efforts directed towards developing and reclaiming the rest as financing opportunities become available, to serve as a sustainable source for the association's projects and activities. The association's activities fall within the framework of humanitarian and social charity work (relief, educational, health, recreational). It enjoys a good reputation because of its effective performance accumulated over the years within the Palestinian community despite challenging circumstances, earning the trust of governmental and non-governmental institutions, thus deserving to operate beyond its social circle. The association's relationships continue to intertwine and grow with national academic institutions, especially institutions of higher education, including [Al-Quds University - Abu Dis / South Branch, Al-Quds Open University - Dura Branch, College of Islamic Sciences - Dahiriya, Hebron University, Palestine Polytechnic University], serving the educational journey, especially for orphan students and those in need. The association maintains close ties with charitable and humanitarian organizations abroad, implementing seasonal and emergency projects throughout the year with their support and coordination. It is

an active member of the Charitable Associations Union - Hebron since its establishment and registered under number (1999) in the humanitarian work system of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Development and International Cooperation Affairs.

Association's Message

Based on children's right to a dignified life, education, health, and conscious upbringing, the association focuses on caring for children who have lost one or both parents for any reason, whether due to death, divorce, or migration. This is done by providing social support, education, and healthcare services, taking their hand, developing their abilities, preparing them, and raising them with an Islamic upbringing that aligns with the teachings of our tolerant Islamic faith.

Association's Objectives

Achieving social solidarity and instilling hope in the hearts of both rich and poor in the community, in accordance with the saying of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." As well as providing comprehensive care for orphans (educationally, academically, medically, socially, and recreationally) and preparing them academically or vocationally. In addition to supporting families who have lost one or both parents or those who are poor and in need, by offering financial sponsorship and providing continuous psychological support and economic assistance through income-generating empowerment projects. Besides these, it aims to establish shelters for orphans to provide comprehensive and integrated care for orphaned and deprived children.

Organizational Structure

The association's departments are managed by a qualified functional team, which initially comprised (3) employees when the association was established in 1995. The total number of employees now stands at (36), including both male and female staff members. The administrative board, consisting of seven volunteer members, oversees the association's programs and activities and formulates its general policies. Regular meetings are held for this purpose in accordance with the internal regulations of the associations. As mentioned in the noble Hadith, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "Seek the assistance of those who are competent in their fields" (A'-Mutairi, 2010).

Beneficiary Groups

The association sponsors orphans from the southern region of the Hebron Governorate (the towns of Dura and Dahiya, their villages, and the Al-Fawwar refugee camp), in an area estimated to have around (160,000) inhabitants. The number of orphaned families exceeds (500) households, in addition to about (200)

impoverished and needy families, supporting over (3,500) orphans and needy individuals.

Key Projects Implemented by the Association

Key projects included: Orphan Sponsorship Project, Comprehensive social care (livelihood, educational, health, rehabilitative, recreational, etc.) according to available resources, Quran memorization circles, also , Back-to-School initiative (school bags, stationery, school uniforms, daily expenses), Literacy and remedial education, Holiday projects (Eid gifts, clothing, Iftar meals, food baskets, sacrificial meat). In addition to Feeding orphans (Aqiqah, vows, charity), Maintenance and renovation of orphan homes and improvement of their living environment, Economic empowerment projects, and summer camp projects, In addition to relief, education, awareness, and recreational support programs.

Organizational Structure and Departments

The administrative body (Board of Directors) is considered the apex of the institution's hierarchy. The president and members are elected by the General Assembly of the association every two years in accordance with the law. The Board of Directors consists of (7) volunteers known for their integrity and good societal reputation, overseeing various aspects of the association's performance. The Administrative Manager (Executive): Executes the decisions of the Board of Directors, implements various charitable projects, and supervises the daily operations of the association's departments. The Public Relations Department: Manages external relations of the association, and seeks funding sources from individuals, charitable and official institutions locally and internationally. Additionally, materials and the association's activities through media prepare brochures and informational materials and maintain communication with orphan sponsors to keep them informed of the association's achievements. Human Resources affairs: Handles employee files, leave permits, and departures electronically and manually, in addition to archiving daily correspondence.

Dura Charitable Home for Orphans: Provides comprehensive care for orphans while they study at the association's school, offering them complete care, including food, clothing, education, and continuous health supervision. The residential center has been suspended since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic due to financial constraints faced by the institution. Al-Sadik Charitable Elementary School: Established in 1995, the school comprises ten classes from first to tenth grade, with (303) students for the current academic year 2020/2021, including (125) orphans and impoverished students. The educational process at the school is supervised by both the various supervisory authorities of the Ministry of Education - Southern Hebron Directorate, and the educational supervision committee

affiliated with the association, to monitor the daily performance of the school community and enhance it, achieving the desired goals of the educational process.

The Orphan Department: Oversees orphan affairs and sponsorships, and prepares periodic reports on each orphan's status for the individuals and institutions sponsoring them locally and abroad.

Accounting Department: Manages and organizes all financial affairs of the association, receives, and disburses sponsorships and aid within an advanced accounting framework, audited by a certified accounting firm. **The Warehouse Department:** Maintains the association's supplies and physical assets, provides orphans with necessities throughout the year, and accepts donations of materials, devices, clothing, etc.

Association Funding Sources

The association relies on the following funding sources for financing its programs and various activities: Grants and aid from wealthy individuals and benefactors among the expatriate sons of the southern Hebron region. As well, as cash and in-kind donations and gifts from benefactors, donors, and institutions inside and outside the country, Zakat, and orphan sponsorships.

Association's Bylaws:

The association operates according to a legal bylaw signed by relevant authorities, thus deriving its legal reference to perform its work and achieve its goals.

Strategic Plan for 2023:

A strategic action plan covering all aspects of the association's planned activities for 2023 was reviewed and shared by the association.

Technical and Financial Reports:

Periodic financial and technical reports of the association were reviewed, but for data preservation purposes, they were not included in the study.

Highlight 13: The Legal Scope of the Association's Work:

Example 1: Investment of Orphans' Funds:

The Dura Islamic Association invests its assets in agricultural land projects, as well as in ongoing construction projects. Investing in orphan funds is a means prescribed by Sharia to preserve and increase these funds so that they are not consumed by Zakat, especially if they meet the conditions of obligatory Zakat. Therefore, it is directed by Sharia for guardians or trustees to invest these funds. The decision to invest orphan funds in the association is based on the legitimacy of investing orphan money. Imam Malik narrated from Umar ibn al-Khattab: "Trade with the property of orphans so that it is not consumed by Zakat." This hadith

indicates the obligation of Zakat on the property of orphans and advises their guardians to engage in trade to prevent the Zakat from consuming the wealth.

Example 2: Receiving Volunteer Charity as a Source of Funding for Orphan Care Programs:

Many charitable organizations use volunteer charity as a source of funding for orphan care programs, despite the obligation of Zakat. This is to ensure continued funding for the needy, even if one source of funding dries up, there are alternative resources available. The legitimacy of volunteer charity is established in our religion for orphans as well.

Example 3:

Firstly: The division of Labor Principle: The organizational structure and departments within the association demonstrate specialization and division of roles. The principle of specialization is evident in the Quran, as demonstrated when Joseph offered his services to oversee the treasures of the land to the ruler of Egypt. This specialization granted to Joseph after gaining trust serves as an example of the Quran's endorsement of specialization.

Secondly: Delegation of Authority and Responsibility:

Administrative organization requires a hierarchical authority structure where power flows from the top down. However, authority in Islamic organization does not imply tyranny or exceeding the limits set by Allah and His law. Islam warns against injustice and authoritarianism. The Prophet Muhammad called for the defense of the oppressed. Thus, the Islamic management model emphasizes service-oriented leadership, humility, fairness, and God-fearing. Islam forbids oppression and advocates for the rights of the oppressed.

Thirdly: Hierarchical Organizational Structure:

The administrative structure of the Dura Islamic Association for Orphan Care is pyramid-shaped. Islam emphasizes the differences in human capabilities and responsibilities according to their knowledge. The Quran states that Allah raises to degrees those who have believed and those who have been given knowledge. The Islamic organizational model acknowledges varying levels of knowledge and capabilities among individuals.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Islam's profound concern for orphans is reflected in its emphasis on preserving their dignity, humanity, and integration within Muslim society. This care is evident in numerous legislative texts that underscore kindness and support for orphans. Examination of funding sources in Islamic law reveals a wealth of options, reflecting Islam's commitment to ensuring diverse financial

support for orphans to shield them from vulnerability due to financial scarcity. The Dura Association for Orphans exemplifies these principles by adhering to Sharia principles, ensuring transparent financial management for the welfare of orphaned children. Over time, the association has evolved into a vital lifeline for hundreds of needy families, earning widespread trust in the Dura region and its surrounding villages. The organizational culture within the association is characterized by authenticity, fostering strong bonds of trust among team members. The leadership style of the executive director, characterized by servant leadership, cultivates a highly functional dynamic within the team. The sense of fellowship among the administrative team, nurtured over more than two decades of collaboration, mirrors that of a close-knit family with shared objectives and a willingness to undertake tasks collectively, regardless of their complexity. This enduring spirit underscores the association's commitment to providing comprehensive care and support for orphaned children, guided by the principles of compassion and solidarity.

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