

Fundamentals of Qalb: The Impact on Muslim Project Managers

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Abstract—Recently, in the concept of contemporary project management, the fundamentals of qalb have not been emphasized as one of the most important elements that a project manager must have. The focus was more on the knowledge of skills, tools, and techniques on how to ensure that projects can be completed on time, the quality and the cost that have been set. If observed carefully, the fundamentals of qalb are also important for all project managers, especially the Muslims. This is because the fundamentals of qalb are the determinants of one's behavior or work. In relation to this issue, this study was conducted to achieve two objectives. The first objective is to identify the fundamentals of qalb that must be applied by Muslim project managers; and second, is to analyze the impact of its application on Muslim project managers. To achieve these two objectives, this study deployed the method of document study and qualitative content analysis method. As a result, the fundamentals of qalb that must be applied by Muslim project managers are faith (iman), knowledge of Islam and control of nafs which are interconnected with one another. In addition, it is also to strengthen the practice of hisbah and tazkiyyah al-Nafs. Hence, the qalb principles that have been applied will create a Muslim project manager who believes in Allah SWT, with integrity, noble character and avoids misconduct.

Keywords—Fundamentals of Qalb, Impact, Muslim Project Manager

I. INTRODUCTION

In general, the contemporary project management that guides and becomes the reference for all project managers today emphasizes on the skills, tools and techniques on how to manage a project with the aim of ensuring that the project managed can be completed on time, cost and quality that has been set and thereby fulfilling the client's demands. This can be seen through the definitions given by the Project Management Institute in [1].

According to PMI in [1], project management is the knowledge related to tools, techniques, and skills on how to achieve the project requirements. At the same time, PMI in [1] also highlighted that in project management, emphasis should also be given to the processes of project management such as initiating, planning, execution, controlling and monitoring, and closing to make sure projects can be completed based on the estimated time given, quality and

cost which has been set and meets the requirement of the client.

Other researchers have also mentioned the same thing. Among them are [2] and [3]. These researchers agreed that project management is a complete guide to procedures, techniques, tools, and methodologies on how to manage projects. Additionally, [4] highlighted that tools and methodologies in project management are very important in any organizations to create business value and help them move beyond a position of competitive disadvantage.

Based on earlier discussions from the previous scholars, it is clear that contemporary project management has not stressed the fundamentals of qalb as one of the most important element to be practiced by a project manager. Through observations, it is undeniable that today's contemporary project management which is the guide to all project managers has been completed with guidelines and procedures on how to manage a project. However, it is believed that the application of the fundamentals of qalb is also very important and essential. This is because, if there is no application of qalb foundations, the perpetrators, especially project managers involved in project management, will be exposed to various ethical issues. For example, an increasingly serious corruption cases involving project management actors. [5] reported that the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission had arrested corrupt directors and contractors in providing project tenders with an estimated cost of millions of ringgit. Not only that, in the [5], it was reported that the DBKL project management executive director was charged with bribery involving RM4.4 million assets.

Referring to the cases of corruption, the question is why is the unethical act possible among project management actors? What is the cause? Views from scholars such as [6], [7], and [8] will be able to answer the question. The scholars believed that the unethical acts that occur in human beings are attributed to their qalb. They are in a bad state filled with greediness, materialistic and overly interested in worldly interest. In this regard, project managers should care about the fundamentals of qalb within themselves. This is mainly because qalb is the king or ruler in them who will influence their behavior [7], [9], [8].

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this literature review section, there are two themes discussed that are directly related to this study. The first theme focuses on the fundamentals of qalb. And the second theme focuses on the practices of hisbah and tazkiyyah al-Nafs. Further discussion on the two themes is as follows

A. Fundamentals of Qalb

Qalb is a term originated from the Arabic language which is defined in the Malay language as the heart or conscience. It can be divided into two forms [7]. The first form is the physical body (heart) and the second, the spiritual heart. The physical body refers to a lump of long rounded flesh and lies on the left chest with a certain task, and inside it, there are cavities with black blood as the source of the spirit, while the spiritual *qalb* refers to something subtle and *rabbaniyah* (divinity). It also shows the nature of the man who has the ability to know and understand all the commandments and prohibitions of Allah SWT and also who will be tortured and prosecuted for all his bad deeds.

According to [9], *qalb* is the king of organs and organs are the people of *qalb*. [10] stated that *qalb* is also a human spiritual center that serves as a source of internal inspiration, creativity and shapes the feelings of love. For more obvious purposes, Muhammad Syukri Salleh [8] (2003) indicated that the *qalb* is the king or ruler in the human being that will affect their behavior. Therefore, this *qalb* can be seen either in the form of reward or sin [11]. This is in line with the hadith of Prophet Muhammad SAW:

“Beware, in the body, there is a piece of flesh; if it is sound, the whole body is sound, and if it is corrupt the whole body is corrupt, and hearken it is the heart (qalb)” (Muslim History, Hadith No. 1599).

Based on the hadith, it is clear that *qalb* in human beings is the determinant of their character and personality. If their *Qalb* is good, their character and personality will also be good. However, if their *Qalb* is damaged, then their character and personality will be evil. Therefore, to ensure that the character and personality of an individual are good, they must instill the fundamentals contained in the *qalb*. Among them are faith, knowledge, nafs [7]; [6].

The fundamentals of *qalb* in Figure 1 is closely related to each other. According to [6], *qalb* becomes ill when it is lack of faith. Therefore, faith is essential to *qalb* in order to avoid one from following the desires of Satan's whisper. Faith refers to believing and permitting the existence of Allah SWT that is pledged verbally and proven by deeds. Faith is important because it gives the purpose of *qalb*'s belief that affects one's thinking and behavior. To improve one's faith, they need to have knowledge. Knowledge is a science related to Islam that makes it easy to execute all the commandments of Allah SWT and not deflect from Islamic foundation. At the same time, with that knowledge, one is able to study and issue a law that coincides with the teachings of Islam [12].

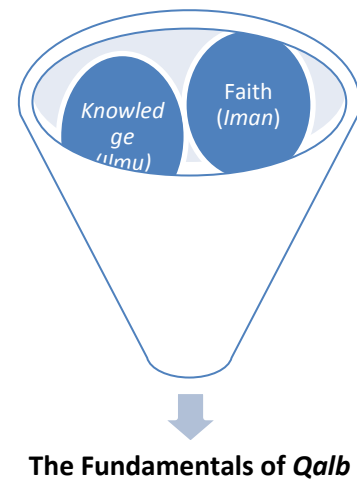


Fig. 1. The Fundamentals of Qalb

Apart from that, faith and knowledge are also important to give every person the awareness of their status on this earth as a caliph (leader) and also the servant of Allah SWT [8]. According to [8], one's *qalb* should be educated with faith and devotion to Allah SWT to facilitate them in order to maintain their status. At the same time, evil desires need to be refined so that it can be improved to a better level.

Furthermore, with the stability of faith and knowledge, one will be able to control himself from doing something that is according to lust. In other words, one is able to control his lust from doing negative things. Action according to lust is strictly prohibited by Allah SWT based on His word which means:

[We said], "O David, indeed We have made you a successor upon the earth, so judge between the people in truth and do not follow [your own] desire, as it will lead you astray from the way of Allah" Indeed, those who go astray from the way of Allah will have a severe punishment for having forgotten the Day of Account (Chapter of Sad, 38:26).

The Word of Allah SWT clearly shows that Allah SWT prohibits a person to follow their lust because the act causes them to make a decision that does not coincide with the Sharia of Allah SWT.

Hence, anyone especially Muslims should always make their faith, knowledge, and nafs as their foundation in life. They should always increase faith in Allah SWT as well as to increase their knowledge of what Allah Almighty has ordered and forbidden. Thus, they are able to control their lust from performing unethical actions. In addition, they can also protect their status on this earth as a caliph and servant of Allah SWT.

B. The Practice of Hisbah and Tazkiyyah al-Nafs

The practice of hisbah and tazkiyyah al-Nafs is a mechanism that is able to reinforce the *qalb* foundations that have been discussed earlier. Hisbah practice touches on two things: the first practice is to do deeds that are ma'ruf and second, the prohibition of doing wrong deeds, mungkar [12]. Through this practice, one's *qalb* will always drive steadily and consistently for more righteous, honest, trustworthy, sincere, justice, patient and persevering and avoid the disgraceful traits.

Furthermore, hisbah practice also explains the muhasabah al-Nafs which is the practice that calls upon people to constantly count or self-control in doing something. The practice is based on the sense of inner self through the process of appreciation and application of the values of trust and responsibility as caliphs and slaves of Allah SWT.

Tazkiyyah al-Nafs is the mechanism that ensures qalb is always in a good state. The practice of tazkiyyah al-Nafs refers to one's efforts to cure their qalb of all forms of mental illness and bad qualities. The good qalb will create good leadership and leads to fine properties, while the bad qalb will create the characteristics of mazmumah in a person's leadership [13].

According to, the practice of tazkiyyah al-Nafs is to purify humanity from all disgrace and heart disease such as takabbur, riya', jealousy, greed and love for the world. At the same time, it is also possible to express the qualities of mahmudah thus to reveal one's noble character.

Besides that, [14] also highlighted that tazkiyyah al-Nafs is also the instruction in the form of prohibitions and restrictions. The instructions refer to the care of seven parts of the body - eyes, ears, tongue, abdomen, sex organs, hands, and feet. In order to complete the practice of tazkiyyah al-Nafs, one should always preserve the sanctity of the seven parts of all acts contrary to the Islamic law. The abuse of these body parts has a bad impact on the leader himself either in the world or in the hereafter based on the word of Allah SWT which means:

And We have certainly created for Hell many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock; rather, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless" (Chapter of al-A'raf, 7:179).

Finally, in order to practice the tazkiyyah al-Nafs, every person must perform worship with a sincere qalb for Allah SWT or in other words, someone who does something good without any sense of arrogant in himself. This is because worship accompanied by the nature of ujub and arrogant is a practice that is not accepted by Allah SWT. In that case, the qalb will not grow a righteous deed unless it cleanses itself from the bad deeds such as treachery, envy, dread, arrogance, and others.

III. DISCUSSION

This study is a qualitative study derived from existing documents as suggested by [15]. According to [15], researchers conducting qualitative studies can use data from existing documents in the development of theory and research in local and global contexts. This is mainly because the data from the document can contribute to the process of early conceptualization and data collection. The documents are derived from journals, articles, webs, books, and theses [16]. However, the data for this study is limited to documents that only discuss the basics of *qalb*. After that, data collected will be analyzed using qualitative content analysis methods. Qualitative studies are highly desirable to be analyzed using qualitative content analysis methods [15]. Moreover, the qualitative content analysis method is also a research method that produces a conclusion that makes the

data more systematic and organized by identifying specific features of a particular subject [15].

IV. DISCUSSION

This section will analyze and discuss the impact of applying the fundamentals of *qalb* such as faith, knowledge, and self-control which is confirmed by the practice of *hisbah* and *tazkiyyah al-Nafs* among Muslim project managers. Analysis and discussion will be based on literature review discussed previously. Further discussion is as follows.

A. The Impact of Qalb Basic Principles Among the Muslim Project Managers

The application of the fundamentals of qalb such as faith, knowledge, and control of nafs is seen to have had a positive impact on Muslim project managers. This is because, with the existence of faith and knowledge, it can provide awareness to Muslim project managers about their status on this earth, as slaves and also the caliph of Allah SWT [8]. In other words, in managing any kinds of projects, Muslim project managers can protect their status as servants and caliphs of Allah SWT with the foundations of qalb in them because they have faith and knowledge about Allah SWT.

Muslim project managers will also be able to control themselves from performing actions in accordance with their desires if they are based on the principles of qalb by strengthening their hisbah practices. This is consistent with the views given by a few scholars. For example, [17] explained that with the stability of faith and knowledge, one will always be able to control himself from doing an act of lust. [18] stated that a person who practices hisbah will always be persistent and consistent in order to create a cautious, honest, trustworthy, honest, fair and patient and avoiding the disgraceful nature. This is in line with the meaning of hisbah which is the practice of doing the things that ma'ruf and leaving the wrong doings [12].

Furthermore, with the fundamentals of qalb and the strengthening of hisbah, it is also capable of producing more responsible Muslim project managers. This is because hisbah is closely related to the muhasabat al-Nafs which is the practice that calls upon all leaders to always count or control themselves from doing something. The practice is also a reflection of the inner sense of self in the leader through the process of appreciation and application of values of trust and responsibility. With this practice, the Muslim project managers will be more responsible for the projects they manage.

The next positive impact with the application of qalb foundations and reinforced by tazkiyyah al-Nafs practice in Muslim project managers is to produce outstanding Muslim project managers. This is because the practice of tazkiyyah al-Nafs is one's practice to cure their qalb of all forms of mental illness and bad qualities. The good Qalb will produce good leadership and create mahmudah qualities, while the bad qalb will build the characteristics of mazmumah in a person's leadership skills. According to [19], the practice of tazkiyyah al-Nafs is to cleanse a person from all disgusting traits and heart disease such as takabbur, riya', jealousy, greed and love for the world. At the same time, it is also possible to express the traits of humankind and thus to reveal the noble character of a person.

In conclusion, it is clear that when a Muslim project manager is guided by the principles of qalb and strengthened by the practice of hisbah and tazkiyyah al-Nafs, he can make himself a believer in Allah SWT, able to maintain his status on this earth as a servant and caliph of Allah SWT, being a more responsible project managers and always demonstrating a noble character in managing the projects.

V. CONCLUSION

Overall, it can be concluded that the fundamentals of qalb such as faith, knowledge and good passions which are strengthened by the practices of hisbah and tazkiyyah al-Nafs play an important role in the development of project managers, especially the project managers who are self-motivated and responsible in the work of the slave and Caliph of Allah SWT. Qalb acts like the king of the rulers inside every project managers and must always be together with the practice of hisbah and tazkiyyah al-Nafs. Therefore, it is clear that the fundamentals of qalb are also important to be applied by all project managers, especially Muslim project managers in the management of this contemporary project. This is because it can create project managers who are able to control themselves from negative attitudes and thus overcome the ethical problems that often involve project managers in managing contemporary projects such as corruption.

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