

Determinants Of Business Success: An Analysis Of Islamic Perspective

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ABSTRACT

There exists misconception among some Muslims on the relationship between Allah's decree and the success factors in human endeavors which business is one of them. In other word, what determined success in business is seen by many Muslims as just something that does not relate to human's effort. This paper being conceptual tries to examine the relationship between the concepts –Allah's decree, human's effort and business success- as well as how Allah's decree and then the human effort influence the determination of an individual future and the level of his achievement in business. The paper concludes that though Muslim has to believe in predestine but he has to also believe that Allah has tradition that obliged people to hold a curse, also it is part of the Allah's decree that made him to behave toward success or unsuccessful. The study recommends that that people should not only wish but also work toward success, therefore, success factors should be identified and effort should be made toward success and that individual and business should do their own part and leave the rest with Allah, this is where success lies.

Key words; Allah's decree, Business success, Human effort and Success factor

1. INTRODUCTION

Islam, a religion that touches all aspect of human life and sourced it base from the two main doctrines called; Quran and Sunnah need to be understood. Islam with it numerous arms came to bring happiness, freedom, dignity, peace and richness among Muslim community and the whole world. It is therefore, capable of resolving the world problems- economically, politically, socially, health wise and otherwise. Misconception in many of the important aspects of Islam brought a lot of confusions to the world that led Muslims not to enjoy the benefit of being Muslims and others not to enjoy the benefit of being with them.

Islam being a moderate religion denounces one to believe there is any other person or thing that can make him rich or successful in his business and other aspect of life, that is why it negates soothsayer visitation, magician acts and superstition, as reported by the prophet: whoever visit, magician and trust him for what he said, he has disbelieved with what was revealed to the prophet. (Abu Dawud: 3904, Ibn Majah: 639, authenticated by Ibn Hajar in Fathul Bari 10/217 and Albani in Sahih Abi Dawud. See Sahih Muslim 2230).

Islam also rejects laxity where an individual – who supposed to have followed the steps of being successful- will lie down or fold his arms and pretending with only mouth to be successful, as also reported by the prophet: strive/try your best and know that no one will be successful with just his act (endeavour), except when Allah have mercy on him. (Muslim: 2664, 2816, Ibn Majah: 79)

There is what is known as Assabab (cause). This is the fact that Allah has the power over and above everything, He makes the impossible possible, He makes whoever He wishes to be riched a rich

and successful but Allah in His plan based things to happen on cause-sabab, as Allah says, (Kahf 18: 84). And the prophet was report to have said: “strive and try your best...” as mention above. Whoever wants to succeed in whatever aspect of life has defined steps to follow and whoever wants fail has his own route to follow.

The above argument is from the Islamic principle which is based on many Quranic verses and prophetic traditions, such as: you will not be rewarded, judge except from your deeds (Yasin 36: 32), And when the prayer is ended, then disperse in the land and seek of Allah’s favor, and remember Allah much, that you may succeed. (Jumaa 62:10). “He will indeed be successful who purifies his ownself, and he will indeed fail who corrupts his ownself.” (Asshams 91:9-10), Verily, man is in loss, except those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth and recommend one another to patience.” (Asr 103: 1-3). On the account of prophetic tradition, below are some report:

‘Everybody will enter paradise, except those who denounce it. (he who obeyed me). (Bukhari: 7280). ‘The paradise is surrounded by undesired things and the hellfire is surrounded by desired things’. (Bukhari: 6487, Muslim: 2822-2823). ‘Strive and try your best and know that nobody will enter paradise because of his deeds’. (Muslim: 2816).

The study is therefore aimed at examining the relationship between the concepts –Allah’s decree, human’s effort and business success, analyze the concepts –Allah’s decree, human’s effort and business success and their relevance in the determination of an individual future and the level of his achievement in business and to analyze the reasons behind the different level of success with individuals or businesses.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 THE CONCEPT OF DESTINY

Muslims are obliged and expected to believe in destiny whether good or bad. This relates to the fact that Allah has already designed everything that is going to happen up to the last day. This implies that whatever happened of goodness is what has been planned and whatever happened of badness has also been planned by Allah. This knowledge and action upon is expected from a believing Muslim. It is confirmed from the prophetic tradition that, in the beginning Allah has created a pen and asked it to write all that is going to happen. (Tirmizi: 2155 3319, Abu Dawud, 4700, authenticated by Albani).

The prophet was also reported to have said: verily the creation of each one of you is assembled in the womb of his mother, thereafter an angel is sent to it who puts the “Ruh” in to it and he will be ordered by four words: writing about his means of living, his life span, his actions and whether he is among the condemned or the fortunes. (Bukhari: 7454, Muslim: 2643).

An entrepreneur and the business manager need to have this believe in his mind, this will give him the assurance of success from Allah, prepare him to accept whatever Allah chooses for him.

2.2 THE POWER OF ALLAH

Allah the almighty is the only creator, the sustainer, the giver, the denier, whom no one can deny what he has given, and no one can give what he has denied, the one who has power over and above everything, he does and undoes whatever, whenever, wherever and however he wishes. He decides to people what they will have of wealth. Allah said in Quran (Yasin 36: 82): Verily, when He intends a thing, His command is “Be” and it is”

Allah with his power, everything is possible, he created Adam from sand without father and mother, as he created Jesus without father, he considered one who asked his family to burn and pour ash of his dead body in water successful. (Bukhari: 3478, Muslim 2757).

He made Jesus, the son of adulterer who accuses Juraij to speak while they are in their cradle. (Bukhari: 1206, Muslim: 2550).

He can make a venture, an entrepreneur and or a manager a successful or the most successful.

This knowledge will make an entrepreneur or a manager to be positive thinker and optimistic. He will follow Allah's guide, try his best toward a success, knowing it is Allah who is given objectively.

2.3 THE TRADITION (SUNNAH) OF ALLAH

As explain above, the two important things to note, are that everything is going on based on the will of Allah, and that Allah has the power over and above everything. It is equally important to note that Allah in his wisdom and infinite mercy observes some patterns that is the regular way in which He makes things happened. This is what we refer to his tradition. Allah says: such was the practice (approved) of Allah among those who lived before: No change with you find in the practice (approved) of Allah (Al-Ahzab 33:62).

The Allah's tradition also entails "As- Sabab" the cause. Meaning, the reason or condition for an action. It is therefore the tradition, a thing to happen with a cause. This is where an individual effort and action we say determines his future. Allah says: "We gave him the ways and means to all ends" (Al-Kahf 18:84). In one of the prophetic tradition, a prophet companion who is wounded was to observe the ritual birth, and asked his colleagues if he can forgo the ritual birth because of his wound. But they said: no excuse he has to observe it, he did so and die, the prophet said to them, you have killed him. (Abu Dawud: 337, commended by Albani).

It is in light of this that, every human endeavor including business has success factors which are going to be explained in the next section. A business manager is therefore to identify the success factors and acquire them for him to be successful.

3.4 SUCCESS UNDERSTANDING

According to Jamilu (2015), Success from the Islamic perspective can be defined as a beneficial accomplishment which benefits the achiever and benefits others here or hereafter. A distinction should always be made between an achievement or accomplishment and success. Achievement is an attainment of a desire whether planned or unplanned and whether beneficial or not, while success is a profitable achievement. Success in itself is not success until it is beneficial; it must have a positive impact. The Prophet was reported to have said "what a remarkable achievement: a righteous man blessed with lawful wealth. (Ahmad: 17789, Adabul Mufrad: 299).

Wealth with righteousness is success because it would be spent in useful ways, while wealth without righteousness could spell a disaster. Wealth unlawfully acquired is never a success. It is rather a failure in disguise. The Prophet had said, "I was shown the Paradise, behold, most of the people inside are the poor." (Bukhari: 3241).

Wealth could be of possessions, knowledge, influence, experience and beauty. Each of these forms of wealth has the propensity to be spent in righteous or wicked ways. Therefore, our achievement in them is not success until it is profitable and the means to it is clean. Allah says, about some people "Do not let their possessions or their children impress you: through these Allah only intends to punish them in this world and for their souls to depart while they disbelieve," (Attaubah 9:55). So wealth and children of the unbelievers will certainly become a source of punishment for them because of their infidelity to Allah even though those unbelievers would always see those possessions as success.

Success must be inclusive and transitive, Islam wants us to take a holistic approach to life. Every aspect of life works to complement and perfect the other. Such should be success. A person who is successful in business and is not successful in the family is not successful, also successful here and unsuccessful hereafter is not successful. An individual failure in one aspect of his life could cause him stress which will later affect the other aspects of his life. Failure in one aspect of business could lead to the failure in the whole business. A person who is successful in his business and in the family is not really successful if he is at odd with his Lord. It is recklessness to abandon to pursue spiritual growth because of

material pursuit, as it is a forbidden asceticism to abandon the world and its enjoyment because of spirituality. Both should be pursued with tenacity and healthy competition. So, true success requires some balance in our life. Islam recognizes the needs of material as well as spiritual aspects in order to obtain success in both this world and hereafter (Aminuddin et al, 2016). It is among the most frequent prophet's supplication that: O Allah, give us everything good in this world and in the hereafter. (Bukhari: 6389, Muslim: 2690).

Allah says, "Children of Adam, dress well whenever you are at worship, eat and drink [as We have permitted] but do not be extravagant: Allah does not like extravagant people. Say [Prophet], 'Who has forbidden the adornment and the nourishment Allah has provided for His servants?' Say, 'They are [allowed] for those who believe during the life of this world: they will be theirs alone on the Day of Resurrection.' This is how We make Our revelation clear for those who understand. Say, 'My Lord only forbids disgraceful deeds – whether they be open or hidden – and sin and unjustified aggression, and that you, without His sanction, associate things with Him, and that you say things about Him without knowledge. There is a time set for every people: they cannot hasten it, nor, when it comes, will they be able to delay it for a single moment.'" (Al a'raaf 7:31-34).

Success in business relate to achievement in profitability, market share, growth etc. which in turn is expected to bring benefits to various stakeholders from many angles. A business owner or manager plans and aspires to get the success in the business, he is only successful if he achieves that in a clean way, and the business and the achievement did not lead him going astray. Wilson (2006) offers that, as Muslims are accountable to God for all their actions, business success should not simply be viewed in material terms.

2.4 SUCCESS FACTOR

The term success as defined as accomplishing benefits, or beneficial achievement of what has been planned or unplanned. The achievement in most cases relate to an effort, performance or doing something. This argument is supported by Mirah and Nocella, (2019), that Success do not occur by accident but rather it is the result of observing a steady habit creation and continued daily activities.

This to say, there are certain factors that need to be observed to be successful, these factors are called success factors. As argued by Islam, (2010) that some factors must be implemented to successfully achieve success. According to Javadin et al (2015), these are the factors that must be implemented if companies want to be successful in a specific field. The factors should be controllable, measurable and few in number, they determine those performance fields that managers must constantly manage, they indicate more specifically conditions, events and circumstances that contributes to success, they are not overwhelming in numbers, but play a significant role in the success of an individual, group or organization in a competitive environment.

Jamilu (2015) identifies the general success factors for Muslim's endeavor according to the Qur'an and Sunnah as: Knowledge, Faith (Tawheed, risala and Qiyama), Tawakkul (Trusting Allah), Taqwa (Being mindful of Allah, eschewing evils for the sake of Allah), Jihaad (struggle for Excellence and moral perfection), Shukr (Being grateful to Allah and appreciative of people) and Sabr (Patience, tolerance and perseverance), Dutifulness, Cooperation and Planning. Dewin and Dhewanto (2015) offers: sincerity, diligence, effort and honesty as general success factors.

The specific success factors for business identified by Bin Aqeel, Awan and Riaz, (2011) were faith and honesty, customer relation and services, reasonable price with best quality and quantity, determination and struggle, interest and knowledge in the field, luck and opportunity and skilled workforce.

Aminuddin et al, (2016) in his effort to present factors that contribute to the business success, identifies non-financial performance indicators such as Islamic business practices, Islamic work ethics,

Muslim worldview, Muslim personal help and Muslim practices, Muslim entrepreneurs' personalities and their achievements and the financial measurement that includes sales, sales growth, profit, capital, wages and others.

2.5 LEVEL OF BUSINESS SUCCESS

It is part of understanding the Allah's decree that He has the power over and above everything. Whenever he wishes something, His command is be and it will be (Yasin 36: 67). Based on His traditions, individual's endeavor determines his success or failure. One important thing to note is that, the level of individual or business success is determined by the level of efforts exerted, the level of commitments, the level of seriousness, and the level of resources deployed, the more the more and the vice versa.

Individual or business effort differs from one to another and it is hardly for two businesses or individuals to achieve the same level of success. Allah says: it is Allah who opens the doors of richness to whom He wants and He is the one who....()

2.6 ALLAH'S DECREE AND THEN HUMAN ENDEVOUR

Allah's decree always emerged, this is to say there is direct relationship between Allah' decree and the human effort. It is part of what is designed; an individual will find himself striving toward doing something. That is everybody and everybody will find whatever planned for it easier. The dwellers of paradise will find it easier to work toward achieving the paradise. (See: Bukhari: 4949). The successful entrepreneur and the business manager find it easier to toward achievement and the success in the business.

2.7 ALLAH'S DECREE AND HUMAN ENDEVOUR AND BUSINESS SUCCESS

In this part, the direct link between these three concepts is explained. How Allah's decree influenced human's endeavor and how the human's endeavor relate to individual or business success.

The relationship can be put in this way, success comes through effort and effort is made possible and simple to those who were destined to be successful. Success usually does not fall accidentally, it falls to those who have done their part and leave the rest with Allah.

With the above background, every individual and business manager will be determined and a positive thinker, strive toward achieving success in his endeavor, this is because nobody knows his destiny.

The prophet was reported to have said, Allah says "I am where my servant is thinking of me" if you think Allah will make you successful or you think Allah will make you fail; it will be like that (Bukhari: 7405, Muslim: 2675).

2.8 THE SCHOLARS VIEW ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ALLAH'S DECREE AND HUMAN ENDEVOUR AND BUSINESS SUCCESS

It is unanimously agreed by Muslims scholars that Allah has already designed everything that is going to happen, an individual effort is in relation to what Allah designed for him and his effort leads him to success or failure. Below are some of the scholars' views concerning the relationship between the three concepts namely: Allah's decree, human effort and individual or business success.

Khair (2013) study on mistakes and misunderstanding on the issue of destiny and examine among others not taking the necessary means under the cover of destiny, offers that it is expected from an obedient servant to take necessary means (cause) and know that believing in destiny is not negating striving and making effort but calls for taking necessary means (cause), with the believe that the means-cause is not being considered but Allah.

Zakaria (2015) in his paper Qadar in classical and modern Islamic Discourse: Commending a futuristic perspective, in his effort to examine both the classical and modern Islamic conceptions of qadar

and its dynamism as a source of strength for muslim to think about future in positive attitude offers that action is the only space an individual can actively participate and operate in order to choose his destiny be it good or bad, whether on the earth as Allah's servant or vicegerent as well as in the hereafter where he will taste the consequences of his actions.

Karem (2020) offers that when the former grand Mufti of Egypt was asked whether supplication reject destiny, he explained that a Muslim should know that destiny is one of the articles of faith and the foundation for relating human being with Islam and that supplication is an act of worship which Allah commended us, that has a great impact. Supplication is a cause that Allah consider to change the occurrence of something.

Karem (2020) also added that when Imam Gazzali was asked of the essence of supplication if it cannot change destiny, he said people should know that it is part of destiny changing destiny with supplication, supplication is a cause for protecting from bad or looking for good.

Believe in destiny can never be reason for laxity in doing something, this is because nobody knows and nobody can know what Allah has destined for him. A good Muslim should just consider it part of his own effort for Allah to fulfill his destiny on him.

Qutb (2004) in his explanation of Quran 18:23-24, assert that every human should rely on Allah in his life but at the same time, work out with his plans in confidence for he is not alone in executing the plans, his submission to Allah will shall neither overtake him during failure nor deceive him during success for he will resign for whatever Allah will may determine.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the study conceptual library research method is used, the study therefore reviewed what has been documented in the Quran, books of Hadith and other scholarly journals. Islamic scholars' views were obtained and analyzed from the document to justify the relationship between Allah's decree and human endeavor and business success.

4. DISCUSSION

The study sought to examine the relationship between Allah's creed, human endeavor and individual or business success. It is therefore revealed in the study that there is success factors, an individual and business need to identify the success factors and utilize them if they want to succeed, effort is made possible and simple to those who were destined to be successful, success does not usually come accidentally and it falls to those who have done their part and leave the rest with Allah.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study justifies analysis of the relationship between Allah's creed, human endeavor and individual or business success. The study therefore concludes that there is relationship between human endeavor and Allah's decree. It is Allah's decree that determine an individual effort. There is also direct relationship between human effort and his success, in other word; it is human effort that determines his success in the business.

The study also conclude that level of success depend on the level of effort exerted by individual or business, the more the effort and success factors utilized the more the success and the vice versa.

The fact that Allah has already designed everything to happen, should not give room for folding arms, negative thinking about Allah and becoming pessimistic, since nobody knows what has been planned for him, the study recommends that people should not only wish but also work toward success. The study recommends that, individual and business should do their own part and leave the rest with Allah. The success factors should be identified and effort should be made toward success. The study also

recommends that individual and business should work hard toward success as it is the level of their effort that will determine their level of success.

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