

A Quality Management Approach From An Islamic Perspective

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Abstract

Several quality management approaches exist around the World. They differ from one country to another. Most existing approaches are developed in the West. Implementing these approaches in Islamic countries seems to be a challenge due to the fact that the business in the Islamic world has its own perspective. This paper aims to evaluate existing quality management approaches and aims to find out how a quality management approach from an Islamic perspective could look like. Based on the findings of the research, a guideline for quality approach from an Islamic perspective has been suggested. In this paper we review the existing quality management approaches and argue that the values/principles that construct these approaches are implicit. In the Muslim World the Islamic Shari'ah represented by the Islamic Legislation System is the main source of the Values including its explicit business morals and ethics. The existing quality management approaches seem to be difficult to implement. We have proposed a quality management approach from an Islamic perspective in a form of a guideline. This guideline is not finished yet, but it establishes a base for a further research in this area.

Keywords- Quality Management Approaches, Islamic Quality Management Approach, Islamic Business Ethics

Introduction

Several quality management approaches exist around the world. These approaches differ from one country to another. There are countries that have created their own models, whereas other countries have adopted models and customized them according to their situation. Most approaches are developed in the West. Implementing these approaches in Islamic countries seems to be a challenge due to the fact that the business in the Islamic world has its own perspective. This paper aims to evaluate existing quality management approaches and aims to find out how a quality management approach from an Islamic perspective could look like. The focus of the new model is to improve the quality on organizational level. A case study was done in Omani Healthcare.

Existing Quality Management Approaches

Quality management approaches can be divided in three categories; the Business Excellence Models (BEMs), the Certification Schemes (CSs), and the Quality Management Improvement Systems (QMIS). The BEMs are guidelines like the Deming Prize Model (DP), the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Model (MBNQA), and the European Foundation for Quality Management Excellence Model (EFQM). The Certification Schemes are standards such as the standards from the International Organization of Standardization, ISO 9001 and for healthcare those from the Joint Commission International (JCI). The third approach are the Quality Management Improvement Systems, methods such as Six Sigma, Kaizen and Lean. In the following text, the different types of quality approaches will be compared. Three matrices have been developed to describe the different approaches. The matrix characteristics have been adopted from Kemenade and Hardjono (2010), who conducted a comparison between various quality management systems.

Business Excellence Models (BEM)

Most of the literature about BEMs focuses on three major models used. These three models are the Deming Prize model (DP); the Malcolm Baldrige model, also known as the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA); and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence model. These models are the three globally accepted major BEMs (Talwer, 2011). The models are compared regarding their definition of quality, their focus, history, form, function, objects, values and fundamental concepts and methodology. (see Table 1).

Table 1: Matrix of Business Excellence Models

	Deming Model/DP	MBNQA Model	EFQM Model
Definition Quality	“A product or service possesses quality if it helps somebody and enjoys a good and sustainable market” (Hoely, 2009).	No definition found. This model is not based on a quality definition but described quality according to its Criteria for Business Excellence (The National Institute of Standards and Technology, 2014).	This model is not based on a quality definition but describes quality in terms of customer satisfaction, people satisfaction, and impact on society achieved through leadership driving policy and strategy, people management, resources, and processes, leading ultimately to organizational excellence (Nabitz&Klazinga, 1999).
Focus	Focuses on the role of managers and ongoing operations Not only conformity but also the ability of the organization to understand its own situation and set objectives accordingly. Focuses on the policies and processes.	Although it is a customer-based model, it focuses more on the commercial and financial sides. Also focuses on the results.	Focuses on people and satisfaction.
History	Invented in 1951 by the Union of Japanese Scientists & Engineers (JUSE) in grateful recognition of Dr Deming. The award is given annually.	First established in 1987 in recognition of Malcolm Baldrige. The award is given annually.	In response to the tradition of MBNQA, the EFQM has been established in 1988 as a result of the initiative of the presidents of 14 European multinationals; the award has been revised in 1991 but the principles remain the same. The award is given annually (Nabitz et.al, 2000).
Form	Award and a tool for excellence	Award and a tool for excellence	Award and a tool for excellence
Function	To recognize individuals, groups, and organisations that contributed to the development of quality control/ management in Japan.	To recognize companies for achievement in quality. To increase the competitiveness between companies and thus improve performance.	To increase competitiveness. To understand the requirements of excellence. To recognize organisations and firms for their achievement.
Object	Organization	Organization	Organization

	Deming Model/DP	MBNQA Model	EFQM Model
Values and Fundamental concepts	Implicit values. Implicit values. Create constancy of purpose towards improvement, Adopt the new philosophy, Cease dependence on inspection, Move towards a single supplier for any one item, Improve constantly and forever, Institute training on the job, Institute leadership, Drive out fear, Break down barriers, Eliminate slogans, Eliminate management by objectives, Remove barriers to pride of workmanship, Institute education and self-improvement, The transformation is everyone's job.	Leadership, Strategic planning, Customer focus, Measurement, analysis, & knowledge management, Workforce focus, Operations focus, and Results	Implicit values. Concepts like Leadership, Policy & Strategy, People, Partnership and resources, Process, Products, & Services, Customers results, People results, Society results, Key results. EFQM has eight fundamental concepts: 1. adding value for customers; 2. creating a sustainable future 3. developing organizational capability 4. harnessing creativity and innovation 5. leading with vision, inspiration and integrity 6. managing with agility 7. succeeding through the talent of people 8. sustaining outstanding results
Methodology	Self-assessment method. Evaluation focuses on three independent criteria: basic categories, unique activities, and role of top management, which account for equal proportions of the total score of 100.	The assessment process consists of An initial application write-up examination. A site visit (if selected). A review and evaluation.	The assessment process consists of An initial application write-up examination. A site visit (if selected). A review and evaluation

The comparison of the BEMs leads to a conclusion that in the most BEMs the business excellence function is accountability and improvement. The object are organizations or institutions. The BEMs are developed by a national body in the case of the Deming and the Malcolm Baldrige whereas the EFQM is a result of an initiative of the presidents of fourteen European multinationals. The stakeholders in all models do not differ. The values are implicit. The methodology followed is similar in all models where the assessment process consist of self-evaluation and an external audit.

Certification Schemes

The second quality management approach is the Certification Schemes (CS) like the International Organization of Standardization ISO 9001:2008 and the Joint Commission International (JCI) standards. The object for the CSs are products, services, and processes and the certification methodology is accomplished by an auditing. In this article we consider ISO 9001:2008 to be known by the readers.

The Joint Commission International (JCI) has been established in 1951 in the United States and played a major role in improving the quality of the hospitals' services for more than half – century. The JCI is specialized in the accreditation of the healthcare organizations with the aim of “continuously improve the safety and quality of care in the international community through the provision of education and advisory services and international accreditation and certification” (JCI, 2014). It is a standard based system. See table 2 which presents the matrix for the Certifications Scheme.

Table 2: Matrix of the Certification Schemes

	ISO 9001:2008	JCI
Definition Quality	Hoely (2009) has quoted The ISO 9001 defining quality as “The degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfills requirement”.	The JCI did not provide clear definition for quality but by focusing on the definition of the JCI and its mission, it obvious that the quality if it determined through the patient safety (Joint Commission International, & Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, 2002).
Focus	Focuses on standardization of procedures within an organization. Focuses on the customer through conformance to specified requirements.	Focus on patient safety and quality of care.
History	The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) was founded in 1947. The first quality standards for military procurement were introduced in 1959 by the US. It was also used by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1965. Following the British Standard BS 5750, the first series of ISO 9000 was published in 1987.	Established in 1951 as a result of a joint venture of the American College of Surgeons, American College of Physicians, American Hospital Association, American Medical Association, and Canadian Medical Association (Ratcliffe, (2009).
Form	Standards and specifications.	Standards and specifications
Function	To enhance customer satisfaction through the effective application of the system (BS EN ISO 9001. 2008). To standardize procedures in organisations.	"To continuously improve health care for the public, in collaboration with other stakeholders, by evaluating health care organizations and inspiring them to excel in providing safe and effective care of the highest quality and value"(www.jointcommissioninternational.org).
Object	Products, services, and process	Services and process
Values and fundamental concepts	Implicit values. Concepts on Customer focus, Leadership, Involvement of people, Process approach, System approach to management, Continual improvement, Factual approach to decision making, Mutually beneficial supplier relationship.	Implicit values. Concepts on Access to care and continuity of care, Patient and family rights, Assessment of patients, Care of patients, Anesthesia and surgical care, Medication management and use, Patient and family education, Quality improvement and patient safety, Prevention and control infection, Governance, leadership, and direction, Staff qualifications and education, Management of communication and information.
Methodology	Assessment that depends on an audit system. The audit includes an inspection of the documents and records that make up the quality system. The audit is carried out in scheduled and planned external audits of the QMS. Get registration from a third-party agency.	A survey carried out by qualified healthcare professionals such as doctors, nurses, etc. begins with education, baseline assessment, action planning, chapter assignments, policies and standards, final mock survey.

The comparison of the BCSs leads to a conclusion that the CS function is standardization and improvement. The object can be organizations or institutions in different sectors or as for JCI specifically focused on healthcare. The values are implicit.

The Quality Management Improvement Systems (QMISs)

Beside the BEMs and the CSs, there is also a third approach we call Quality Management Improvement Systems that are neither guidelines nor standards but methods for ensuring continuous improvement such as Six Sigma, Kaizen and Lean. The characteristics and features of these approaches can be found in the matrix that has been made for this purpose which is self-explanatory in table 3.

The comparison of the QMISs leads to a conclusion that in the function is continuous improvement. The object can be different types of professionals, programs, and organizations. The comparison leads to the conclusion that again the values are implicit.

Table 3: Matrix of the Quality Management Improvement Systems (QMISs).

	Six Sigma	Kaizen	Lean
Definition of Quality	Six Sigma as an improvement process did not provide an official definition about quality. This might be due to fact there is not specific body responsible for certification.	Kaizen as a system did not provide a definition for quality.	Lean as a methodology did not provide definition for quality.
Focus	Reducing process variation and then on improving the process capability.	Continuous Improvement.	Removal of waste
History	It was invented by the Motorola in 1987 (Black and Rever, 2006; Kawak and Anbari, 2006) with aim to “produce high-level results, improve work processes, expand all employees’ skills and change the culture” (Schroeder et al., 2008).	Implemented in the Japanese business sector after World War II. Then it was influenced by the American teachers (such as Homer Sarasohn and Charles Protzman, and Deming) and business men which made it to be spread outside to the outside World.	Used first by the Toyota Company (Nave, 2002)
Form	Course of knowledge and skills.	Philosophy for Improvement which formulate a systems that evolve everyone in an organization.	Methodology
Function	To reduce defects & errors and increase the organization productivity.	Improving productivity, safety and effectiveness while reducing waste.	Reduce waste and improving flow
Object	Professionals and organization	Professionals and Organizations	Organization
Values and fundamental concepts	Values are implicit. Concepts like: Critical to Quality, Defect, Process Capability, Variation, Stable Operations, and Design for Six Sigma. Follow DIMAC steps: define, measure, analyze, improve, and control.	Values are implicit. Concepts like: <i>Seiri</i> which mean selection, <i>Seito</i> which means order or systematic, <i>Seiso</i> which means clearness or cleaning, <i>Seiketsu</i> which means consolidation and standardization, <i>Shitsuke</i> which means discipline.	Values are implicit.
Methodology	Several international bodies certify professionals who will transfer the knowledge and skills and implement it at his working place.	The Kaizen is implemented in organization through the use of several techniques such as Fishbone and the root cause analysis.	Concepts like Identify values, identify values stream, flow, pull, and perfection.

The Islamic perspective on business

Before we attempt to explain the business concept from an Islamic perspective, it is useful to define the meaning of Islam as it might help the reader to relates the further explanation in this section to the origin which is the word 'Islam'. Islam is an Arabic word that means submission, surrender and obedience to God's will. As a religion Islam means "The complete submission and obedience to Allah" (Abbasi et al., 2010). It also means peace of body and soul as one is fully to obey to All; the Creator.

Williams and Zinkin (2009) and Sakai (2010) have mentioned some criteria or pre-requisites for a business from Islamic perspective which can be summarized in the following. First, the business should be permissible not forbidden. Second, it should be a business that maintains the Islamic moral and ethical system. Third, it should be free from interest on loans or usury. Fourth, the price must be determined; thus speculation is prohibited. Fifth, avoid monopoly or withholding good to raise prices later. Finally, uncertainty is prohibited in trading: the goods must be in the hand of the seller before selling it to customer. This Islamic legislation system is divided into six sources (figure 1); two of them are considered as primary sources which are *the Qur'an* (text that have been descended by Allah) and *Sunna* (action and words of Prophet Mohammed, Peace (P.B.U.H). Imam al-Shaafa'i (may Allaah have mercy on him) said "No view is binding unless it is based on the Book of Allaah or the Sunna of His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

From the above mentioned Islamic Legislation System, Islamic Work Ethics have been developed which consists of thirteen ethics. Intentions (Niya), Benevolence (Ehsan), justice (Adil), forever mindful of the Almighty God (Taqwa), Sincerity and keeping promises (Ekhlas), Trust (Amanah), Trustfulness (Sidq), Conscientious of self-improvement (Etqan), Consultation (Shura), Patience (Saber), Teamwork (Ruh al Jama'ah), Compliance (Mutabakah), and Supervision.

Table 4: the Islamic work ethics.

S.No	Ethics	Meaning
	Intentions (Niya)	The Muslim's actions should be accompanied with good intentions (Braniane& pollard, 2010). In this regard, God Said in Qur'an (Surah ar -ad 13:11) "God does not change the condition of people unless they change what is in their hearts" and Prophet Mohammed also said "actions are recorded based on intentions and the person will be rewarded or punished accordingly" (Bukhari & Muslim).
	Benevolence (Ehsan)	Giving, perfection, amelioration, forgiveness, complete faith but the most important meaning is doing good deeds (Branine& Pollard, 2010).
	Justice (Adil)	All people should be treated equally regardless of their sex, color, race, wealth, job, and social status. The Holy Quran stated " O you who believe! Stand out firmly for God as witnesses to fair dealing and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice" (AlMa'idah 5:8).
	Forever mindful of the Almighty God (Taqwa)	It is a belief that our actions and intentions are known to God. It also mean God consciousness, piousness, fear of Allah, love for Allah, and self-restraint.
	Sincerity and keeping promises (Ekhlas)	Obligation to be sincere in words and deeds. Holey Qur'an Said "It is Allah I serve, with my sincere and exclusive devotion (Surah 39:14).
	Trust (Amanah),	The Holy Qur'an states "O you that believe! Betray not the trust of God and the Apostle nor misappropriate knowingly things entrusted to you" (Surat Al-Anfal 8:27). One of the core values in any governing social relationship is trust (Branine& Pollard, 2010) which leads to consultation and delegation of authority from top management to subordinates (Tayed, 1997).
	Trustfulness (Sidq)	Sidq referred to doing and saying what is right to the best of own knowledge and the opposite of it is to lie or cheat
	Conscientious of self-improvement (Etqan)	Strive for excellence. Prophet Mohammed Said "God loves when someone does a job to do it well" (Bukhari and Muslim).
	Consultation (Shura),	Consultation (Shura) was a major characteristics of the prophet's management, therefore Muslim leaders should consult others before making a decision especially for socio-economic matters that were not defined or mentioned clearly in the Quran and Sunna (Branine& Pollard, 2010). The Holey Qur'an said (Surah, 42: 38) "their matters are Shura between them" and also Prophet Mohammed practiced consultation with his companions before taking decision in different subjects.

Patience (Saber)	In the Islamic working ethics it mean fulfilling duties determination, strength, the endurance, persistence, and constancy.
Teamwork(Ruh al-Jama'ah)	The need to work in a team and directs all efforts to achieve group objectives and values. . The Holey Quran said "And hold fast all together by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you) and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favor on you; for you were enemies and He joined your hearts in love so that by His grace you became brothers (Surah, 3:103). Also Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) said: "Faithful believers are to each other as the bricks of a wall, supporting and reinforcing each other. So saying, the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) clasped his hands by interlocking his fingers" (Sahih al-Bukhari).
Compliance (Mutabakah)	Conformity and Accordance, considered as the scale or the criteria for quality of performance.
Supervision	Muraqabah comes from the word raqib, which means to follow, to watch, to control, and keep tags-on.

Comparison existing approaches and Islamic Work Ethics

Islamic Shari'ah and Islamic Work Ethics: A principle issue in the western world is the separation between the church and the state, therefore a lot of Christian values in business are implicit.. In Islam the Religion/Mosque and the State are united and can not be separated. Lapidus (1975) states: "In the early polity led by Muhammad and in the early decades of the Caliphate, membership in the Muslim community entailed participation in a state order, with one person, the Caliph, representing both the religious and the political aspects of Muslim identifications".

Implicit Vs Explicit principles: If we look at the Malcolm Baldrige Model's criteria, we can see the Anglo-Saxon values of doing business as well as in the European models which was an answer to the Deming.. The frameworks of the business excellence models ask important questions only and leave the organization to determine what process to use in order to meet their business requirements. Taking the MBNQA and the EFQM models as an example, in leadership principle it asks what are the organization objective (targets), in strategic planning it ask how you could achieve these objectives, in the measurement it ask how to track your progress, and in the results what are your business results.

Rigidity in standards case: Other quality approaches such as the Certification Schemes are in a form of rigid standards and specification that guide the organization on how to set up a good quality management system. In his analysis of the perception to the ISO standards, Boiral (2003) reported critical attitudes toward standards from the managers interviewed who believed that the standards had negative impact on management's practices, created an iron cage, caused uncertain commercial advantages, and increased bureaucracy.

The Cost & Resources: Although the certification schemes such as ISO 9001 have been adopted by some Islamic and Arab countries, there seems to be some difficulty encountered by these countries. Magd (2006) reported that although the ISO standards improved efficiency, documentation and quality awareness within organizations in the Saudi Arabia but the high cost of the registration and the implementation seems to be a barrier. Thus, due to the high cost and if we take in consideration the fact that the economy in the Muslim and Arab world is still developing, the small and medium organization could encounter some difficulties such as lack of financial and human resources, and lack of experience in auditing.

Applicability:Magd and Nabulsi (2012) in their study to explore the implementation and certification of ISO 9001 in the Middle East and the United Arab in specific, concluded that the standards define general requirements to establish quality management systems and created challenges to understand the standards benefits and problems. Other authors such as Fard and Abbasi (2010) conducted a study to review the implementation of ISO standards in Iran and reported that the ISO standard is not applicable in the public services sector because it standards originated in the private-industrial sector. In Oman, this is the challenge because we encounter these (implicit) values but we cannot share them; countries like Oman, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Jordan have tried the existing quality management approaches and kept shifting from one to another because every time they implement one model they discover that it misses

something so they shift to another one. As we mentioned above, the Muslim countries values are based on the Islamic shari'ah, thus inventing a quality approach from an Islamic perspective which is based on explicit values seems to be an urgent need.

Considering the above mentioned issues, there seems to be a need to develop a new quality management approach from an Islamic perspective by integrating the Islamic Work Ethics. There is no doubt that the existing approach played a major in improving business, enhancing innovation, increasing customer and employees satisfaction, and improving the products and services. This study does not attempt to criticize any existing approach but rather an attempt to find a practical solution for improving the quality of organization performing business in Muslim/Arab countries. It does not attempt to come up with a totally new business process excellence model but to make profile of the existing principles that are used in the current quality management approaches and try to put it in a framework that could be used in Muslim/Arab countries such as Oman. The integration of the Islamic Work Ethics is not about the differences and similarities in values but to use the available Islamic values to motivate the people to improve the quality of organizations.

Characteristics of Islamic Quality Approach

Guideline Vs Standards: It is well known that the quality can be assured or implemented through guidelines or standards. In the attempt of developing a quality approach from an Islamic perspective, a guideline could be the best option. Firstly is because the guideline is more flexible and provide the organizations with opportunity to interact and make improvement initiative. Secondly, the nature of guideline is to provide suggestions and recommendations for the good practices and allows the organization to decide; it is not mandatory to follow. Thirdly, being the first attempt to develop a quality approach from an Islamic perspective, a guideline will be more acceptable for the first time; imposing standards that should be followed strictly could have negative affect for accepting the approach. Fourthly, making standards require previous experiences, cases and practices. However, there are no cases and practices available on the subject. . In addition, a discussion has been conducted with the Deputy to the Mufti in the Sultanate of Oman to get his opinion of whether a guideline or standards would suit the country context. The Deputy to the Mufti stated “Islam is advice and that a guideline provide suggestion and recommendation for the best practice which is an advice”. He believes that standards are strict and imposing instructions that must be followed which is not the case in Islam. Thus, a guideline method will be more visible and appropriate for this subject.

Guideline's Components

Islamic Work Ethics (IWEs)

In this study we presented 13 Islamic work ethics. These are the ethics that have been found in the articles reviewed and these are the number that have been approved by the Acting Mufti of the Sultanate of Oman.

Principles

Principles are “a fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of belief or behavior or for a chain of reasoning” (Oxford dictionary.com, 16/12/2014). As for business, there are several principles for organizational management which are considered as core values in the business excellence models and quality management systems. The existing quality approaches contain principles that could be used in developing the new model and service as objectives. The principles that have been presented in the focus groups were good governance, leadership, people, customer focus, results, Mutual beneficial supplier relationship, system approach, process approach. However, the participants have suggested the following principles: good governance, leadership, employees' management, customer focus, partnership, resources, systems approach, outcomes, transparency, social responsibility, and system effectiveness, and innovation & creativity. In the Delphi session the experts from different sectors including the Acting Mufti, quality experts from the Ministry of Health, and the quality experts from other sectors such as education and oil sectors have agreed about the selected principle but added

“strategy principle”. Thus, the final selected principles are good governance, leadership, employees’ management, customer focus, partnership & resources, systems approach, outcomes, transparency, social responsibility, and innovation & creativity.

Based on the findings above a guideline for quality approach from an Islamic perspective has been suggested (figure 1). The guideline consists of eight principles which are good governance, leadership, customer focus, employees’ management, outcomes, partnership and resource, systematic approach, social responsibility, transparency, and creativity & innovation. The philosophy of the guideline is centralized around the good governance which is supported by the above mentioned principles for quality management. There is interrelated relationship between the principles itself and between the principles and the good governance. The function of the Islamic work ethics is to make the guideline explicit in which it explain how each principle can be carried out. For instance, leadership can be performed in an organization through assuring good intention, justice, and trustfulness and all others ethics.

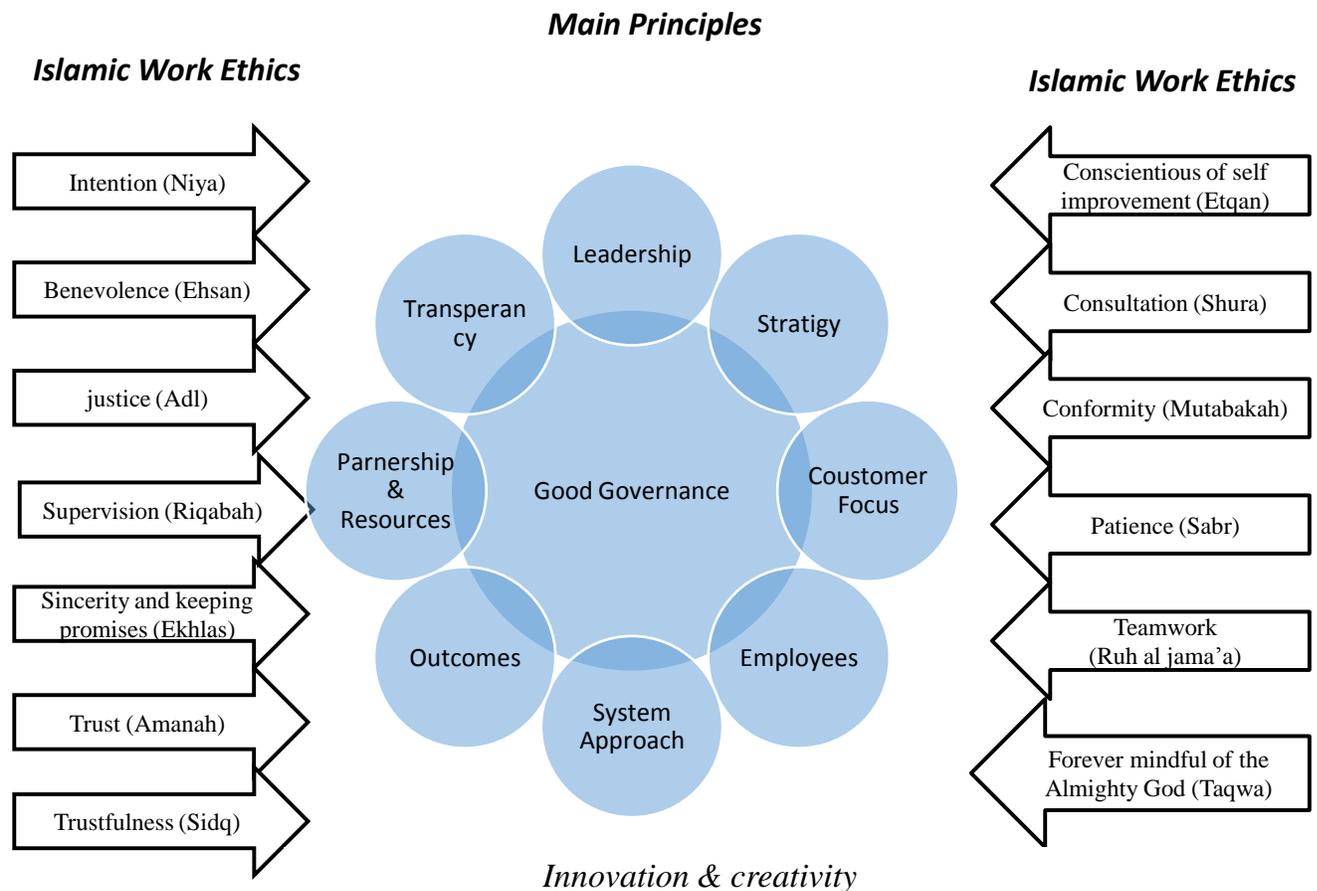


Figure 1: a guideline for quality approach from an Islamic perspective

Conclusion

In this article, we have reviewed the existing quality management approaches and argued that the values/principles that construct these approaches are implicit. This might be due to the separation between

the Church and the State in the West where values are kept back stage in business. In the Muslim World, the situation is different where the Islamic Shari'ah represented by the Islamic Legislation System is the main source of the Values including business morals and ethics which are explicit. Thus, the existing quality management approaches seems to be difficult to implement. We have proposed a quality management approach from an Islamic perspective in a form of a guideline. This guideline is not finished yet, but it establishes a base for a further research in this area.

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