# MOTIVATING PEOPLE IN ORGANIZATIONS: THE ISLAMIC WAY

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**ABSTRACT:** The study is conducted mainly to evaluate the contributions of Islam in motivating people to work and to identify the way of motivating people in Islam by an organization. The proposed study is mainly based on secondary data. Basically, motivation is a management process by which a manager of an organization inspires or encourages his subordinates to take required action. Indeed, managers are responsible for providing an environment conducive to performance but individuals themselves are responsible for self-motivation. Without motivating people, any organization can't be reached at desired level though its productive resources are sufficiently improved. In the study, Some measures or way of motivating people by following Islamic principles such as good behavior, recognition of work, rewarding for excellency of work, mutual consultation, freedom of thought, etc. have been discussed. Some fundamental factors of motivation have also been described. The paper concludes that in the present day of management it would not be possible to sustain the employees in the organization or to involve in the work by applying undue influence or force creation. And any organization can enhance easily the performance, productivity, job satisfaction, maximum use of labor efficiency, etc. through proper motivating of its employees.

**INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPT OF MOTIVATION:** Now-a-days motivation is widely used term in any organization and each of us is motivated in some way to do the things we do. It is a mysterious force of life. Indeed, it is the force that moves different people in the organizations in different ways, and the performance of its people can be enriched through motivation. It is a prime concern of today's managers because they are responsible for providing an environment conducive to performance. Managers at all levels believe that if they can only "motivate" their subordinates, those subordinates will perform better. There is an intimate relation between motivation and satisfaction. When the employees of the organizations will become highly motivate or will get their desires then, they will perform their duties and responsibilities with proper care. Likewise the employees who find their positions rewarding but are being paid considerably less than they desire or think they will probably search for other

jobs. So, motivation is an influencing factor that satisfies the employees towards work. Indeed, without motivating people, any organization can't be reached at desired level though its productive resources are sufficiently improved.

Motivation can be defined as the desire within an individual that stimulates him/her to action. Managers, academicians, employees and common man — all are interested in knowing the dynamics of human motivation. Different authors have defined it from different viewpoints. Some of them are mentioned below:

In managerial terms, motivation can be defined as getting people to behave in a desirable way to accomplish organizational goals and at the same time to satisfy their own needs (Wren and Jr, ,1984).

Motivation refers to a person's psychological internal drive state, which cause the person to behave in certain ways particularly in the job setting. Motivation also means the internal psychological state of tension that induces a person to behave (Tosi and Carrol, 1982).

Motivation is the inner condition or intentions of human beings that enrich the eagerness towards work and stimulates him or her to reach upper level of the organizations (Habibullah et. al., 1989).

Motivation is primarily a mental process, a mental attitude that incites or produces physical actions leading to the accomplishment of some practical result. It is indeed the action part of a need-satisfaction cycle (Shukla, 1999).
Motivation is a managerial function to inspire, encourage and impel people to take required action (Sherlekar, 1999).

The word "motivation" involves needs, wants, tensions, discomforts and expectations (Kast, and Rosenzweing, 1986).

Motivation is a general term applying to the entire class of drives, desires, needs, wishes, and similar factors (Weihrich, and Koontz, 1994).

From the foregoing discussion it can be said that motivation refers to the task of desires, needs, wishes, tensions, expectations etc. that induces a person to behave, and a manager of an organization inspires or encourages his/her subordinates to accomplish organizational goals with the help of this force.

Islam fully recognizes and emphasizes the significance and role of motivation in human activity. It states that the human activities are governed by inner intensions, drives and motives. In this regard the prophet Mohammad (PBUH) has said-

   *"The acts depend on intentions. A man will get whatever he had intended for"* (Al-Hadith)

From the Islamic point of view motivation refers to that part of management process by which the managers or authorities of the organizations attempt to encourage their subordinates towards work in the light of the principles based on Islamic shari'ah. In this regard, some basic motivating tools in Islam like Iman (faith), taqwa (fear of Allah), tawbah (repentance), recognition of work, good behavior, mutual consultation, justice, due share, honesty etc. must be ensured to the organization.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:** The main objective of the study is to evaluate the contribution of Islam in motivating people to work in organization. The specific objectives are as follows:

i)       to outline the concept of motivation from both the conventional and Islamic perspective;

ii)      to assess the importance of motivations in organizations; and

iii)     to identify some fundamental motivating tools or way of motivating people in Islam;

**METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:** Secondary data and information was mainly used in this study. The sources of data were the management literature including various books, journals, different relevant publications and research studies. Some academicians and experts in Islamic perspective relating to motivation have also been consulted.

**FINDINGS AND ANALYSES OF THE STUDY:**

1. **Prime motivating tools in Islam:** There are some basic motivating forces that are assumed to be the basis of human motivation. Some of them are discussed below:

a) **Iman as a motivator:** Iman means the true faith and belief in Allah, his apostles, his Book & the day of judgment, the resurrection. It is the fundamental as well as the most powerful motivating force for a Muslim. Because all the activities of a true Muslim are the manifestation of his Iman**.** Iman comprises the strong Islamic base for directing, re-educating, and influencing man's behavior in his life. Every Muslim is required to submit to Allah, as the holy Qur'an instructed prophet (PBUH) to do!

>    *"Say O Muhammad (PBUH) my prayers, my sacrifice, my life and my death belongs*
>     *to Allah; he has no partner and I am ordered to be among those who submit"*
>    (Al-Qur'an 6: 162-164)

It is clear from the preceding verses that Islam creates the real inner motivation and self-direction within a man. A true Muslim performs all types of activities including organizational and productive work, with the basic intention of seeking the pleasure of Allah. A person, who believes that work is a part of his worship, will obviously show a very high degree of dedication and involvement in the work. He will have a very intense feeling of responsibility and accountability before Allah. He will perform the work effectively, even if the material rewards are inadequate, working conditions are poor and the work itself is difficult, monotonous or routine (Ahmad, 1988). Thus, the basic motive in Islam remains in Iman. The essential components of this motive are the strong unshakable belief in Allah (the Eternal, the Absolute, and the Creator of the universe) and the strong unshakable belief in the fact that man must be held accountable for his deeds in this life.

**b) Taqwa as a motivator:** There are some internal and external motives accompany the Iman to maximize its effectiveness. Some of these are the three 't's taqwa (fear of Allah), tahrid (arousal), and tawbah (repentance). Allah (SWT) says in the holy Qur'an to support the existence of each of these motives. An example of the taqwa motivation is the following verse:

> *"Enjoin prayer on they people, and be constant therein. We ask thee not to provide*
> *sustenance: we provide it for thee. But the Hereafter is for righteousness"*
> (Al- Qur'an  20:132)

Actually, the word taqwa and its derivatives are mentioned more than 258 times in the holy Qur'an. As for tahrid, it is mentioned explicitly only once, while it is mentioned many times implicitly. Taqwa refers to the fear of Allah represented by adhering to his orders and commends and avoiding his disobedience. The motivation of fear is the human emotion that enables man to either avoid danger and problematic situations or face and solve them. Here a Model of Taqwa motivation is given below (Mohiuddin, 2004):

**Figure:1   Model of Taqwa Motivation.**
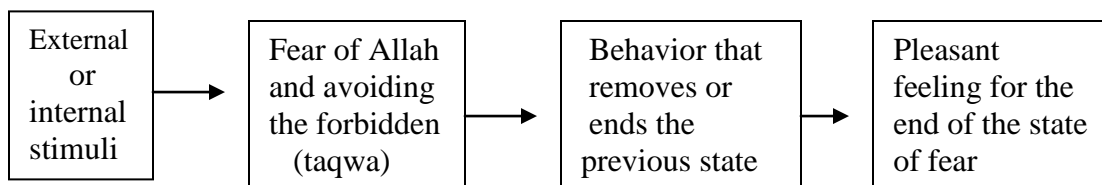


**c) Tawbah (repentance) as a motivator:** The concept of tawbah (repentance) is a very important tool of motivation. Without repentance, the Muslim will stay on the wrong path and he/she will not directing his efforts toward good deeds. Indeed, repentance urges the individual to do more good work to compensate for the wrong he has done, in addition to providing him with the assistance he needs to abstain from wrong deeds. In this regard, the holy Qur'an commends Muslim:

> *"When those come to thee who believe in our signs, say: Peace be on you. Your lord hath*
> *inscribed upon Himself (the rule of) mercy, Verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance and*
> *thereafter repented and amended (his conduct), lo ! He is oft-forgiving, most merciful"*
> Al-Qur'an 6: 54).

It is clear from the above verses that how can a person amend himself after doing something wrong or offence through repentance. He will try to devote himself more and more good work to compensate for the wrong he has done. In any organization particularly in business organization, every employee should follow the teaching of this tawbah for earning more benefits. Here the interrelatedness of the different types of motivation is described below (Falah, 1994):

**Figure:2 The Interrelatedness of The Different Types of Motivation.**
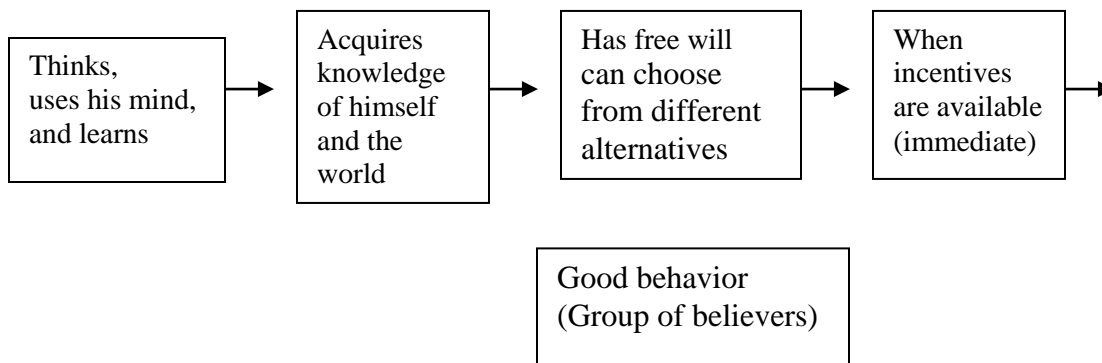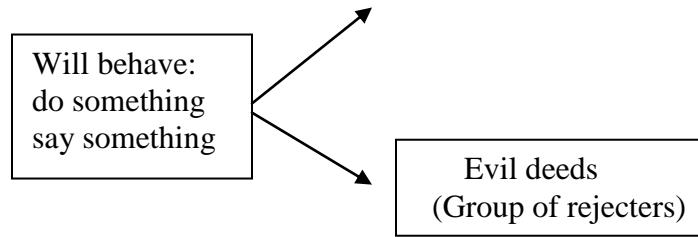
The above figure shows that man, once endowed with the ability of thing, will soon acquire the knowledge necessary to choose the correct path from alternatives. Then internal (free will) and external (incentives and rewards) motives activate human behavior and provide man with the energy and desire for correct behavior. Depending on his knowledge, free will, and wisdom, man will choose one between two groups:  the believers or rejecters.

## 2.  Other motivating tools or way of motivating people in Islam:

**a) Reward and Punishment as a motivator:** Both reward and punishment may act as a motivator. But it should be mentioned here that all the mechanisms for motivational affairs is the great process of reward and punishment. It must also be noticed here that the reward and punishment in the holy Qur'an are both qualitatively and quantitatively different from those mentioned elsewhere. People usually act out of hope or out of fear. In Islam, there are both reward and punishment, both in this world and in the hereafter, for men's act out of fear and / or out of hope. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as well as the other messengers of Allah was sent with both glad tidings and warnings.

> *"Verily, we have sent thee in truth as a bearer of glad tidings and a Warner"*
> (Al-Qur'an 2:119)

In another place the verses of the holy Qur'an:

> *"And Allah sent messengers with glad tiding and warnings"(*Al-Qur'an 2: 213)

It is necessary that people should be rewarded for the efforts not just for the achievements. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

> *"Whoever puts an effort and succeeds gets two new lands and whoever puts an effort*
> *and does not succeed gets one reward"* (Al Hadith)

It should be realized that punishment itself is not a motivator; it is rather the fear of punishment that motives people. Islamic teachings advise warning from punishment but not punishment itself. Islam treats the punishment as a disciplinary measure and the managers should be generally careful about using this measure (Mohiuddin, 2004).  It is clear from this discussion that if an employee of an organization gets reward or punishment for his working, he must be careful in future to perform his duties.

**b) Spiritual Motivation:** It is a kind of divine guideline. It plays an important role to inducing people to achieve the objectives. Without material incentives spiritual motivation may be the best incentive for better performance. By the guidelines of spiritual motivation sometimes people are

diverted to sacrifice even their lives also. Good words and good statement of recognition and praise are also important. Allah (SAW) said: "And speak to people Good" (Al-Qur'an 2:183)

Religious teachings can play a vital role for spiritual motivation. There are ample Islamic teachings that encourage Muslims to be productive:

"And of them (also) is he who said: Our Lord! give into us in the world that which is good and in the hereafter that which is good, and guard us from the doom of fire" (Al-Qur'an 2:201)

"And when the prayer is over, then may ye disperse through the land and seek the bounty of Allah: and celebrate the praise of Allah often that you may prosper" Al-Qur'an 62:10)

The verses indicate the people to devote themselves in the functions of organization with sincerely and carefully.

**c) Justice as the hygienic factor of human motivation:** Justice is the cornerstone of human motivation. In the organization, grievance and other types abnormalities like- lockout, strike, hartal and layoff create various kinds of injustice. By establishing justice an organization can easily increase the level of motivation. The worker has to be sure that his work is rewarded, or at least he/she should be recognized for the good work. Otherwise he/she might loss any incentive to keep up the same productivity and quality (Mohiuddin, 2004). The worker has to be treated fairly and has to be granted his rights, as he has to assume his duties. The Qur'an commends Muslim to be fair even, when dealing with those opposed to them:

*"O you who believe! stand out fairly for justice, as witness to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parent, or your kin and whether it be against rich or poor, for Allah can protect both"* (Al-Qur'an 4:135)

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

"Injustice is darkness in the hereafter" (Al-Hadith)

It is not enough for managers to be just. They also have to make sure that their subordinates perceive them so. The decisions that managers make should be thoroughly explained so that the workers don't feel any injustice.

**d) Mutual consultation (Shura):** Mutual consultation is treated as the most important force for motivating people in the organization. The holy Qur'an has made it clear that Muslim leaders are obliged to consult those who have knowledge of those who can provide sound advice. The prophet (PBUH) himself was diverted by the Qur'an to consult his companions:

*"And consult them in affairs (of moment), then, when you have taken a decision put your trust in Allah, For Allah loves those who put their trust (in him)"* (Al-Qur'an 3:159)

The practice of "shura" enables workers of the organization to participate in the decision making process. Thus, they encourage themselves to do more work.

**e) Profit sharing:** In Islamic point of view, the workers have absolute right to share in the profits in addition to their remuneration. In this regard, prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

> *"Give due share to the workers from their assets, earned by physical ability (profits)."*
> (Al-Hadith)

It is clear that when the employees of the organization can share in the profits in addition to their due remuneration, they will pleased and try to contribute more for welfare of the organization.

**f) Freedom of thought:** The managers or authorities of the organization should provide their subordinates to express their opinions freely; even they should call them for open constructive criticism. In the age of four khalifs (company of prophet) it was considered as an essential factor of leadership, and they were bound to answer to the general people. Prophet (PBUH) said:

> *"Deen (Religion/Complete code of life) is the sincere advice"* (Al-Hadith)

In Islamic sense, managers or employers should always act as a khadem (assistant) of all people of the organization. The workers or subordinates must be motivated to observe this system in the organization.

**g) Discipline:** To maintain discipline is the key to success of any organization. It may obviously be said that an well-decorated and rich organization may be deteriorated due to lack of disciplinary action. The employees of the organization will be motivated through maintaining the discipline in their organizational activities. In this regard the holy Qur'an commend the Muslim:

> "O ye who believe! Obey Allah and obey the messenger and those charged with authority among you" Al-Qur'an 4:59)

**h) Maintenance of honesty:** It is a crucial factor for constituting motivation in the organization. Both employer and employees should always be responsible to maintain honesty in the organization as a perpetual succession. The employees must be motivated by touching the honest and sincere behavior of the employer. At the same time the employees should perform their duties with sincerely and honestly. An honest worker who serves both Allah & his employer is double virtuous. In this case the prophet (SAW) said:
> "Three types of people will be doubly rewarded, among them is included those who devotedly serve both Allah and their masters." (Al-Hadith)

**SOME FUNDAMENTAL FACTORS OF MOTIVATION:** In traditional management, Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs is widely accepted in the world. In this theory five essential human needs are discussed which are to be considered for motivating people. These are: (Sharfuddin, 1988):

i) Physiological needs: It includes hunger, thirst, shelter, sex and other bodily needs which are called the primary needs and people want to employ himself in the economic activities for satisfying this needs. For this why the management authority of the organization motivate their employees through providing (i) monetary wages and (ii) real wages to satisfy the physiological needs.

ii) Safety and security needs: It includes security and protection from physical and emotional harm. After satisfying the initial needs human beings highly feel the security needs in terms of their job, future uncertainty, healthy and comfortable life etc. in which the cordiality, sincerity and honesty are involved to perform their duties and responsibilities. So, the management of an organization can stimulate their employees by securing job stability, life insurance policy, pension and gratuity facilities etc.

iii) Affiliation and love needs or social needs: After satisfying the safety and security needs human being are willing towards belongingness and love needs. They want to involve themselves in the social values and culture. As individuals, they are likely to be concerned with maintaining pleasant social relationships, to enjoy a sense of intimacy and understanding, to be ready to console and help others in trouble, to be accepted by others, and to enjoy friendly interaction with others.

iv) Esteem or ego needs: It includes internal esteem factors such as self-respect, autonomy, and achievement; and external esteem factors such as status, recognition, power, prestige and attention. The management should facilitates this kind of needs for motivating those employees who have already achieved above three needs.

v) Self-actualization: It regards as the highest need in the hierarchy. It is the desire to become what one is capable of becoming- to maximize one's potential and accomplish something. It is concerned with quite fulfillment of qualities, power, status etc. of an individual on his related profession. The employees who already enjoyed above four facilities, they should be facilitated self-actualization need for proper attention in the organization.

## In addition to the above factors some basic characteristics/elements of motivation from Islamic viewpoint are described below (Mansi, 1982):

i) One of these traits is the vertical interdependency of motives or the hierarchical nature of motives;

ii) The second characteristic of human motivation from an Islamic point of view is the clarity of aims and objectives;

iii) The third distinguishing feature of human motivation from the Islamic viewpoint is the vitality and high importance of goals and aims;

iv) The fourth characteristic of human motivation from an Islamic perspective is realism. Motivation deals realistically with human beings in a very natural manner that corresponds to his pure nature; and

v)     The final distinguishing feature of motivation as portrayed in the holy Qur'an is comprehensibility.

**CONCLUSION:** From the foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that in the present day of management it would not be possible to sustain the employees in the organization or to involve in the work by applying undue influence or force creation. And any organization can enhance easily the performance, productivity, job satisfaction, maximum use of labor efficiency, etc. through proper motivating of its employees. The employees are willing to work hard if they feel that they have a good personal relationship with their superiors and colleagues. However, if the Muslim manager of a public or private organization uses the guidelines mentioned above for motivating its people it is believed that the productivity of that organization will be raised, and absenteeism, misbehavior, corruption etc. of employees must be eliminated. It can also be noted that the concept of motivation in Islam is quite comprehensive and balanced; it includes both material and spiritual dimensions. Islam considers that work is a part of worship (Ibadah) provided it is done with the right intention and in accordance with the commandments of Allah. Whatever, the Islamic government and its Islamic organizations must provide good working conditions so that employees can be motivated to work and must pay them fair wages/due payments and retirement benefits.

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