

Balancing Work & Religious Duties

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Objective

- Sharing personal perspective on
 - Muslim and career
 - Career as an ibadah
 - Career as religious duties
- Guide participants to enter career life
- Help participants to balance between career and religious duties

Muslim and Career

- No Man can live without work
 - work is necessary for Man's survival (to eat, maintain family and have pleasure)
- For Muslim
 - not just for survival
 - don't work for the sake of work, or "just follow" mentality
 - God creates Man not without purpose / in vain / for idle play
 - > see Al-Mu'min, 23:116; Al-Qiyamah, 75:36
 - Man is created with mission = Muslim has mission in this life
 - > to be God's khalifah (Al-Baqarah, 2:30)
 - > to fulfill ubudiyah (devotion) (Al-Zariyat, 51:56)
 - > will be accounted for our mission (Al-Mu'min, 23:116)

Career as Ibadah

- Minimum in career choice
 - ensure it's an ibadah, do it as an ibadah to God (Al-An`am, 6:162)
 - an obligation, not an option
 - > role as khalifah, to uphold ubudiyah in all aspects of life (Al-Baqarah, 2:30)

- Three dimensions of “career as ibadah”
 - 1) Man & God
 - do it for the sake of Allah i.e. to perform what is commanded to us as Muslim
 - do it in a manner that pleases God i.e. in accordance to His religion
 - 2) Man & Self
 - an important means to salvation
 - > work/career takes much of Man’s life
 - > life is a farm for Afterlife
 - > wrong/right choice = big impact on Afterlife
 - self reliance is a virtue (Al-Baqarah, 2:273)
 - being liability to others without reason is deplorable (Al-Nahl, 16:76)
 - a giving hand is better than a receiving hand
 - God loves strong Muslim

3) Man & Others

- each of us owes something to somebody in this life = duty to return the kindness

- parents, siblings and society

- Be serious with career choice, plan seriously

Career & Personal Religious Duties

- Personal religious duties
 - mixed of halal and haram
 - solat
 - fasting
 - hijab
- Islam is a flexible religion, able to offer solution for life and work challenges
 - consult asatizah (plural, not singular) and relevant persons
 - > if one does not satisfy you, ask another one, and another, and another, and another...

- Know job nature and company policy
 - make an informed decision
 - when making decision, factor in religious needs
 - plan forward to overcome constraints, if there are
 - > consult asatizah for specific situation
- Know worker rights in Singapore context
 - consult lawyer, HR professional and industry relation officer
- Mixed halal & haram
 - read <http://haniff.sg/pautan/buku-operasi-kasino-di-singapura-dan-implikasinya-terhadap-hukum-pekerjaan-dan-muamalah-analisa-fiqh-dan-pendekatan-wasatiyah/>

- Solat
 - generally no problem
 - if you have learned to overcome problem during JC and NS, should be able to overcome it at work
 - Friday prayer for critical services i.e. SCDF, SAF, SPF, public transport, <http://haniff.sg/pautan/kemusykilan-agama-solat-jumaat-bagi-peronda-polis-dan-isu-pancing-dalam-islam-berita-harian-singapura-17-mei-2013/>
 - > many situations where jama' is permissible
- Fasting
 - generally no company prohibits workers from fasting
 - concession may be given due to physically demanding work
 - = consult Ustaz

- Aurat
 - for uniform group, read <http://haniff.sg/pautan/kemusykilan-agama-kerja-jururawat-tak-boleh-pakai-tudung-haram/>
- Healthcare workers
 - see <http://haniff.sg/en/links/slide-some-pertinent-fiqh-rulings-for-muslim-healthcare-professionals/>

Career & Da`wah

- Da`wah is obligatory to all Muslims (Al Imran, 3:104, 110; Al-Nahl, 16:125)
 - part of being khalifah
 - important part of ubudiyah (devotion) to God
 - not all be asatizah, but all must do da`wah
- Many ways of da`wah
 - career is just one way
- All work/career must be an ibadah
 - but not necessary a direct da`wah

- Life of Muslim is not just about personal choice/ambition, but also about serving others
- Types of career vis-à-vis da`wah

a) career that has direct contribution to da`wah = career da`wah, da`wah via career

> career that has direct relation to 3:104, 110 = al-amr bi al-makruf wa al-nahy `an al-munkar (enjoining good and forbidding evil)

> conveyance of Islam i.e. MROs, YDOs, teacher (madrasah and national school), executive imam, counsellor, SWOs

> service/action/direct support i.e executives at MMOs

b) career that has no direct contribution to da`wah, but can be very useful for da`wah purpose

- > lawyer at private firms, can do pro-bono service

- > investment banker, can use expertise for da`wah purpose

c) career that has no direct contribution, doesn't have close relevance to da`wah i.e marine biologist

- > contribute in other ways = volunteer time, money

= everybody must/can contribute to da`wah regardless the choice of career

- Advantage of Type A
 - career and da`wah merge and integrate to one
 - no need to think of volunteer work outside working hours
 - note necessarily freer from other types
 - > those who are involved in this type of career and in MMOs are busier in the weekend and holidays = family time sacrificed

Key Traits of Muslim Worker

- Two important traits in the Quran
 - 1) Al-Quwwah (Strength) = competent (Al-Naml, 27:39; Al-Qasas, 28:26)
 - > knowledge (Al-Baqarah, 2:247; Yusuf, 12:55)
 - > skill
 - 2) Al-Amanah (Honesty/Trustworthiness) = values (guiding professional behaviour)
 - > truthful to God
 - > professional to employer = fulfilment of contractual duties (Al-Maidah, 5:1; Al-Isra', 17:34; Al-Mu'minun, 23:8; Al-Ma'arif, 70:32)
 - > principled

- “Behold, God has exalted him (Saul) above you, and **endowed him abundantly with knowledge and bodily perfection**. And God bestows His dominion upon whom He wills: for God is infinite, all-knowing.” (2:247)
- “[Joseph] replied: "Place in my charge the store-houses of the land; behold, I shall be a **good and knowing keeper**.” (12:55)
- “Said a bold one of the invisible beings [subject to Solomon]: “I shall bring it to thee ere thou rise from thy council-seat - for, behold, I am **powerful enough** to do it, [and] **worthy of trust!**” (The Quran, 27:39)
- “.... “O my father! Hire him: for, behold, the best [man] that thou couldst hire is one who is [as] **strong** and **worthy of trust** [as he]!” (The Quran, 28:26)

Making Decision

- Know yourself accurately
 - personality type to match career types
- Think and plan early
 - zoomed in (focus) or in options (at least)
 - consistency between relevant choices and future career
 - have contingency i.e. plan A, B
- Consult relevant people to guide decision
 - attend relevant courses

- Don't be individualistic = my career/future/life = my choice
 - we owe many people in life
 - we have duty to society and religion
 - > try to reconcile personal ambition with societal and religious interest
 - > what is the priority of the community that has not been fulfilled?
 - > what is the fardu kifayah of the day that need to be fulfilled?
 - > Is there a community's interest that is a fardu ain on me to carry?
 - not a call to a sacrifice one's personal wish
 - > just don't take career choice as purely personal matter
 - > remember = many ways of da`wah, different ways to contribute with different career types

- Seek God's guidance
 - have good faith in God
 - His knowledge and plan is always superior than personal ambition and plan

Good Reading

- A Guide to Choosing a Profession That Benefits You and the Ummah, <http://productivemuslim.com/guide-choosing-profession-benefits-ummah/>
- A career choice: An Islamic Perspective, <https://www.central-mosque.com/fiqh/islcar.htm>

Thank You