

Components of Human Resource Efficiency in the Quranic Thought of Imam Khamenei

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ABSTRACT

As a central concern and a key directive of the Supreme Leader, human resource productivity has been extensively emphasized in his statements and guidelines. Given that the strength of the economy and national macro-management relies on the optimal utilization of existing capacities and the adoption of long-term strategies to enhance organizational and human resource productivity, Imam Khamenei has consistently highlighted this issue in annual slogans [e.g., “*Rawnaq-i Tawlid*” (Production Boom), “*Iqtiṣād-i Muqāvimatī*” (Economy of Resistance), and “*Rushd-i Tawlid*” (Production Growth)]. The present study, utilizing library resources, specialized software, and cyberspace, employs content analysis and interpretive methods to explore the components of human resource efficiency in the Quranic thought of Imam Khamenei. The findings indicate that, based on divine revelation, Imam Khamenei identifies components such as faith and trust in God, preserving employee dignity, competent leadership, enhancing job motivation, fostering competitiveness, improving physical and mental well-being, education and institutionalizing a monotheistic culture, expertise and commitment, experience, and attention to creativity and innovation as key factors in enhancing human resource efficiency. The study concludes that the growth and development of organizations and Islamic societies are closely tied to the level of human resource efficiency. Achieving this requires systematic adherence to the identified components and their precise implementation at various organizational and societal levels. Thus, prioritizing these factors enhances organizational efficiency and effectiveness and paves the way for the progress and elevation of Islamic societies across multiple dimensions.

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Introduction

In an era of rapid transformations and increasing competition, the pivotal role of efficient and effective human resources in the growth and development of organizations and societies has become increasingly evident. Achieving sustainable competitive advantage necessitates the optimal utilization of high-quality, up-to-date human capital, which drives organizations toward excellence and advancement through efficiency and effectiveness. Consequently, enhancing human resource efficiency is an indispensable necessity for societal progress and development.

Efficiency is a vital requirement for individual and societal survival and advancement. Every individual, regardless of their position, must strive with diligence and efficiency to achieve their goals and values to thrive in this fast-paced and ever-changing world (Ḥaydarī 2021, pp. 19-20).

Human resource efficiency is strongly emphasized in the Quran, with the term “*khusrān*” (loss) and its derivatives appearing approximately 65 times and the concept of righteous deeds and its derivatives referenced around 196 times in various verses, underscoring the Quran’s regard for efficiency and its link to human salvation. Similarly, the Supreme Leader, in his speeches and messages, has addressed the critical issue of human resource efficiency. According to Imam Khamenei, “... one of the problems of the country is that efficiency has been reduced. That is, we do not reap benefits as much as we spend. This is the case in different areas. Efficiency is low in the country ... we do not benefit from electricity as much as we consume it. Other countries are ahead of us in average. We are behind other countries in terms of efficiency. The same is true of other matters. If we move towards a knowledge-based economy, this important economic problem will be resolved” (Imam Khamenei, Nowruz Address to the Nation, March 21, 2022, <https://B2n.ir/pp4484>).

The term “efficiency” (*bahri-varī*) appears approximately 65 times in the Supreme Leader’s statements over the years, reflecting its significance in his managerial approach within the Islamic governance framework (Islamic Republic). In light of this necessity, the present

study, adopting an analytical and exegetical approach, examines the components of human resource efficiency at contextual, behavioral, and structural levels based on Imam Khamenei's Quranic-managerial thought. Through systematic review and extraction of relevant propositions, this study seeks to provide a practical framework for enhancing human resource efficiency in organizations and Islamic societies.

Research Background

A comprehensive review of management literature reveals that human resource efficiency has been extensively discussed in numerous books and articles. However, based on the conducted search, no study specifically addressing the components of human resource efficiency from a Quranic perspective grounded in Imam Khamenei's managerial thought was found. Although this study lacks specific prior research, two related studies are cited as general background:

1. The article "Examining Imam Khamenei's Views on Utilizing Experiences, Avoiding Waste, Redundancy, and Parallel Efforts to Reduce Costs and Enhance Efficiency through Lessons-Learned Management" (2018) [in Persian] by Īmān Rajabī Fard. This article explores the Leader's perspectives on lessons-learned management and its impact on efficiency, but does not specifically address the components of human resource efficiency from a Quranic perspective.

2. The book, *Strategies for Enhancing Efficiency in Revolutionary-Cultural Organizations* (2019) [in Persian], authored by the Office for the Preservation and Publication of the Works of Ayatollah Khamenei. This book provides strategies for improving efficiency in revolutionary cultural organizations but does not specifically focus on the components of human resource efficiency in Imam Khamenei's Quranic thought.

This study addresses this research gap by examining the components of human resource efficiency from a Quranic perspective based on Imam Khamenei's managerial thought, positioning it as an innovative and essential contribution to this field.

Research Objective and Methodology

This study aims to investigate the components of human resource efficiency with reference to Quranic verses and the statements and thoughts of the Supreme Leader, utilizing content analysis and *Istinṭāq*¹ exegetical method to analyze relevant Quranic evidence related to the topic. By elucidating the issue from a Quranic perspective based on the Leader's viewpoint and presenting a Quranic model of human resource efficiency components, this research distinguishes itself from previous studies and holds significant importance.

1. Conceptual Framework

To address the topic, it is necessary to first examine the core concepts of the study, including efficiency, human resources, competence, and effectiveness.

1.1. Efficiency (*Bahrivarī*)

The term “*bahrivarī*” (efficiency) carries various meanings in both literal and technical contexts. In Persian dictionaries, it is translated as “profitability,” “success,” “usefulness,” and “utilization” (Mu‘īn 2007, 297). Some scholars, from a technical and classical perspective, define it as the ratio of output to input (Bābā’iyan et al. 2008, 23). Others, considering human life, describe efficiency as the effective actualization of a subject—human or non-human—to address primary and secondary material and spiritual needs (Qulīpūr & Ḥamīdiyān 2009, 24). From a management perspective, efficiency is a combination of efficiency and effectiveness, achieved by performing tasks correctly to maximize efficiency and undertaking the right tasks to maximize effectiveness.

¹. The meaning of *istinṭāq* is considered equivalent to thematic Quranic exegesis. From Martyr Sadr's perspective, *istinṭāq* in this sense implies that the researcher must possess the ability to examine and study the conditions of society in each era, identify and extract its issues and topics, and then present them as structured questions to the sacred realm of the Noble Quran, deriving answers from its divine teachings (Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir Ṣadr, *Al-Madrasat al-Qur'āniyyah*, p. 26).

A more comprehensive definition, which aligns with the study's objectives, is: Efficiency refers to the optimal use of various resources to produce goods and services that satisfy consumers, maximize employees' job satisfaction, and enhance the overall quality of employees' lives. This definition emphasizes human resources because, among all factors influencing efficiency, humans are the only factor with unlimited potential for performance improvement (Sā'atchī 2003, 24).

1.2. Human Resources (*Manābi'-i Insānī*)

The term "human resources" refers to the utilization of human capital to achieve organizational goals. Human resources encompass individuals working within a specific organizational sector, managing its operations. These individuals strive to improve their own and their colleagues' performance, contributing to organizational progress and holding vital value for the organization (Zarrīn-Nigār 2021, 69).

Notably, human resources are a critical asset for any nation. Without skilled and competent individuals, even the most advanced and wealthy organizations may face bankruptcy and stagnation. Consequently, developed nations prioritize their human resources, fostering conditions for personal growth to ensure a capable workforce that secures their future (Sa'adat 2007, 32).

1.3. Effectiveness (*Athar-bakhshī*)

Effectiveness refers to doing the right tasks and the degree to which predetermined goals are achieved. In other words, it indicates how much of the efforts result in the desired outcomes, while efficiency pertains to the proper utilization of resources to achieve those outcomes (Ridā'ī 2007, 31). Effectiveness pertains to the manner of performance and competence in utilizing resources to enhance efficiency and improve outcomes. The initiation of performance improvement involves determining what is to be produced or provided (effectiveness). However, how it is produced or provided relates to competence (Javādiyān 2015, 129). Effectiveness focuses on performance quality and achieving satisfaction from efforts, whereas efficiency concerns the optimal use of resources. Thus, competence is quantitative, while effectiveness is qualitative (Alwānī 2006, 141).

1.4. Competence (*Kār-Ayā*)

Competence is the ratio of actual output to standard or expected output, or the ratio of work performed to the work that should be performed (Kāzīmī 2009, 4). Notably, in physical systems (closed mechanical systems), competence—defined as the ratio of actual capacity to nominal capacity—rarely reaches one and is typically less than one. However, in human systems (open systems), through motivation and leadership, competence can reach or even exceed one (Bābā’iyan et al. 2008, 70).

2. Components of Human Resource Efficiency

Identifying the factors influencing human resource efficiency is a primary goal for researchers in this field. All researchers agree that enhancing efficiency cannot be attributed to a single cause but results from a combination of various factors. To improve human resource efficiency, it is essential to identify these components, assess their significance, and propose actionable strategies for enhancement.

Human resource efficiency is strongly emphasized in the Quran, with the term “*khusrān*” (loss) and its derivatives appearing approximately 65 times and the concept of “*‘amal-i ṣāliḥ*” (righteous deed) and its derivatives referenced around 196 times across various verses, underscoring the Quran’s emphasis on efficiency and its link to human salvation. Similarly, the Supreme Leader has addressed the critical issue of human resource efficiency in various speeches and messages. Generally, the components affecting human resource efficiency can be categorized into three groups: contextual, behavioral, and organizational factors.

2.1. Contextual Factors

Human resource efficiency is a key objective in Islamic organizations, with numerous Quranic verses and hadiths encouraging righteous deeds and performing tasks correctly. In Islamic sources, improving efficiency is regarded as a principle for individual and societal progress. The primary contextual factors influencing human resource efficiency in the Quran and the Leader’s thought include faith, piety, value orientation, education, and discipline.

2.1.1. Faith

Faith in the Oneness of God and His actions is one of the most significant factors in enhancing organizational efficiency. Faith in God serves as an encouraging and compassionate overseer for employees, motivating them to perform righteous deeds² (Quran 103:2-3) and fostering strong performance³ (Quran 8:65-66). The absence of faith leads to a lack of steadfastness and resilience⁴ (Quran 49:7). In the Supreme Leader's statements, faith is considered a key factor in boosting human resource efficiency: "Muslims in early Islam conquered Iran and Rome through the power of faith. The nations they encountered were inspired by this faith... When people's faith is strong, it transforms them into resilient, tireless, active, and vibrant beings; but when faith weakens, all forms of afflictions follow" (Imam Khamenei, Friday Prayer Sermon, Tehran, May 18, 2001, <https://khl.ink/f/3066>). Thus, faith significantly enhances efficiency, while its absence leads to reduced efficiency.

². ﴿إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ * إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصُوا بِالحَقِّ وَتَوَّصُوا بِالصَّبْرِ﴾ (العصر/٢-٣)

"Indeed man is in loss, except those who have faith and do righteous deeds, and enjoin one another to [follow] the truth, and enjoin one another to patience" (Quran 103:2-3)

³. ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ إِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ عَشْرُونَ صَابِرُونَ يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتِينَ وَ إِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفًا مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ * الْآنَ خَفَّفَ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ ضَعْفًا فَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ صَابِرَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتِينَ وَ إِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أَلْفٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفَيْنِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾ (الأنفال/٦٥-٦٦)

"O Prophet! Urge on the faithful to fight: If there be twenty patient men among you, they shall overcome two hundred; and if there be a hundred of you, they shall overcome a thousand of the faithless, for they are a lot who do not understand. Now Allah has lightened your burden, knowing that there is weakness in you. So if there be a hundred patient men among you, they shall overcome two hundred; and if there be a thousand, they shall overcome two thousand, by Allah's leave; and Allah is with the patient" (Quran 8:65-66)

⁴. ﴿وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ فِيكُمْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ لَوْ يُطِيعُكُمْ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ لَعَنِتُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الرَّاشِدُونَ﴾ (الحجرات/٧)

"Know that the Apostle of Allah is among you. Should he obey you in many matters, you would surely suffer. But Allah has endeared faith to you and made it appealing in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you faithlessness, transgression and disobedience. It is such who are the right-minded" (Quran 49:7)

2.1.2. God Wariness (*Taqwā*)

Muhaqqiq Tūṣī defines God wariness as comprising three pillars: fear of God, abstention from sinful acts, and intention for divine proximity (Javādī Āmulī 2007, 11:205). The Quran emphasizes God wariness and adherence to divine boundaries, establishing a direct link between actions and God wariness. God wariness is described as a source of beauty⁵ (Quran 7:26), closely tied to the acceptance of deeds⁶ (Quran 35:10) and associated with blessings and abundance⁷ (Quran 7:96). Imam Khamenei states: “God wariness enables an individual or society to succeed in any endeavor. ‘... and the outcome will be in favour of the God wary’ (Quran 7:128). The hereafter belongs to the pious, as does the outcome of this world. If Imam [Khomeini] lacked God wariness, he could not have displayed the character that led this monumental movement to success. His God wariness brought him to this point and preserved him” (Luṭfī Marzanākī 2018, 67). God wariness is thus a catalyst for societal progress and a criterion for growth. Based on its meaning, Quranic verses, and Imam Khamenei’s statements, God wariness directly influences human resource performance. As Islamic organizations aim for societal growth and divine proximity, a faithful employee aligned with these goals enhances organizational efficiency.

⁵. «يَا بَنِي آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُؤَارِي سَوْآتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَى ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ» (الاعراف/٢٦)

“O Children of Adam! We have certainly sent down to you garments to cover your nakedness, and for adornment. Yet the garment of God wariness that is the best. That is [one] of Allah’s signs, so that they may take admonition” (Quran 7:26)

⁶. «مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدِ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ وَالَّذِينَ يَمْكُرُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَكْرُ أُولَٰئِكَ هُوَ يُنْزَرُ» (فاطر/١٠)

“Whoever seeks honour [should know that] honour entirely belongs to Allah. To Him ascends the good word, and He elevates righteous conduct; as for those who devise evil schemes, there is a severe punishment for them, and their plotting shall come to naught” (Quran 35:10)

⁷. «وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِن كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ» (الاعراف/٩٦)

“If the people of the towns had been faithful and God wary, We would have opened to them blessings from the heaven and the earth. But they denied; so We seized them because of what they used to earn” (Quran 7:96)

2.1.3. Value Orientation (*Arzish-Mihvari*)

Values refer to the set of organizational dos and don'ts that distinguish individual performance. They reflect organizational beliefs and attitudes. In Islamic organizations, adherence to Islamic values is a critical contextual factor that propels the organization toward its objectives and enhances employee performance. The Quran contains numerous value codes relevant to human resource efficiency, such as faith and righteous deeds⁸ (Quran 35:7), sincerity⁹ (Quran 39:11), justice and kindness¹⁰ (Quran 16:90), and trust in God¹¹ (Quran 33:3). From an Islamic perspective, economy and efficiency are not ultimate goals but essential means for managing individual and societal life, which Islam comprehensively addresses. Imam Khamenei emphasizes value orientation and preserving Islamic values: "This country gained global respect by turning to spirituality. This nation achieved global authority by adhering to spirituality and Islam ... Major world powers, which dominate and dictate to governments worldwide, dare not impose their will on Iran's government and nation because they know that, due to the nation's embrace of Islam, the Quran, and Islamic values, their opinions will be rejected. The greatest duty of the police force is to preserve values. Power, dignity, and compassion lie within the framework of preserving Islamic and Quranic values" (Imam Khamenei, Remarks during a meeting with a group of police force commanders, July 12, 1995, <https://khl.ink/f/2760>). According to his statements and Quranic verses, value orientation drives organizational and human resource progress, while neglecting it reduces efficiency and hinders organizational goals.

⁸. ﴿وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ﴾ (فاطر/٧)

"... but for those who have faith and do righteous deeds there will be forgiveness and a great reward" (Quran 35:7)

⁹. ﴿قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ﴾ (الزمر/١١)

"Say, Indeed I have been commanded to worship Allah with exclusive faith in Him" (Quran 39:11)

¹⁰. ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ﴾ (النحل/٩٠)

"Indeed Allah enjoins justice and kindness ..." (Quran 16:90)

¹¹. ﴿وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا﴾ (الأحزاب/٣)

"And put your trust in Allah; Allah suffices as trustee" (Quran 33:3)

2.1.4. Higher Education

Education and the enhancement of employees' scientific capacity are crucial factors in improving human resource efficiency within divine teachings. Knowledge and expertise are regarded as means of utilizing divine blessings, with the superiority of the knowledgeable emphasized¹² (Quran 39:9), the basis for reverence and obedience¹³ (Quran 2:31), and a key prophetic duty¹⁴ (Quran 3:164). Knowledge and learning foster growth and efficiency in Islamic and human organizations. Imam Khamenei underscores the importance of education for efficiency: "The development of higher education must align with objectives. Higher education officials must strictly avoid aimless expansion, as it wastes both financial and human resources. We must assess our needs, define our goals, and determine our destination, then develop the educational space accordingly, pursuing our objectives based on those needs" (Ja'fari 2016, 34). He emphasizes goal-aligned education as critical for efficiency.

2.1.5. Discipline and Order

Discipline and order are significant contextual factors influencing human resource efficiency in organizations. Discipline entails diligence, organizational compliance, neatness, orderliness, effort, and avoidance of laxity or disarray. It fosters employee growth and enhances organizational efficiency. Divine teachings provide clear evidence of order in the system of creation and human organizations

¹². «... قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ» (الزمر/ ٩)

"... Say, 'Are those who know equal to those who do not know?' Only those who possess intellect take admonition" (Quran 39:9)

¹³. «وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ» (البقرة/ ٣١)

"And He taught Adam the Names, all of them; then presented them to the angels and said, Tell me the names of these, if you are truthful" (Quran 2:31)

¹⁴. «لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَ يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ

كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ» (آل عمران/ ١٦٤)

"Allah certainly favoured the faithful when He raised up among them an apostle from among themselves to recite to them His signs and to purify them, and to teach them the Book and wisdom, and earlier they had indeed been in manifest error" (Quran 3:164)

established by prophets. The Quran describes disciplined warriors as “a compact structure”¹⁵ (Quran 61:4), refers to the organized ranks of Solomon’s workforce¹⁶ (Quran 27:17), and highlights the strict discipline of angels executing divine commands¹⁷ (Quran 78:38), all underscoring the importance of discipline in executing tasks effectively. Imam Khamenei states: “If the Armed Forces bravely, selflessly, and shrewdly identify and fulfill their roles at the right time, they will be able to provide security ... You should equip yourselves with knowledge, practicality, piety, faithfulness, and purity to the extent you could. Remember that God is with you, and God willing the prayers of the Imam of the Age (may our souls be sacrificed for his sake) will protect you” (Imam Khamenei, Addressing army members in a joint ceremony of the armed units of Fars province, May 1, 2008, <https://B2n.ir/zq3502>). His emphasis on discipline reflects its critical role in organizational success.

Religious contextual factors create a foundation for aligning individual Muslim behavior with divine and human objectives, enhancing both the quality and quantity of organizational work. This aligns with the concept of righteous deeds in Quranic verses and hadiths, representing human resource efficiency in organizations.

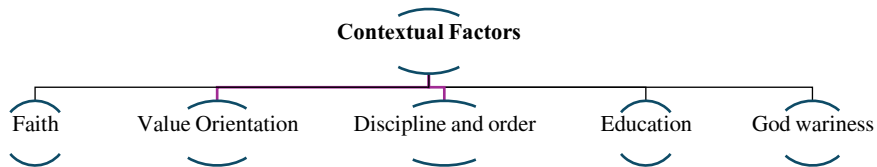


Figure 1: Contextual Factors

¹⁵. ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ صَفًّا كَأَنَّهُمْ بُنْيَانٌ مَرْصُورٌ﴾ (الصف/٤)

“Indeed Allah loves those who fight in His way in ranks, as if they were a compact structure” (Quran 61:4)

¹⁶. ﴿وَخَشَرٌ لِّسَلْطَمَانَ جُنُودَهُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ وَالطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ﴾ (النمل/١٧)

“[Once] Solomon’s hosts were marched out for him, comprising jinn, humans, and birds, and they were held in check” (Quran 27:17)

¹⁷. ﴿يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا لَا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا﴾ (النبا/٣٨)

“on the day when the Spirit and the angels stand in an array. None shall speak except whom the All-beneficent permits and who says what is right” (Quran 78:38)

2.2. Behavioral Factors

Another level of factors influencing human resource efficiency, analyzed in this study, pertains to behavioral factors within organizations. The primary factors include motivation, effective manager-employee communication, management style, integrity and trustworthiness, and participation and consultation.

2.2.1. Religious Motivation

Creating motivation and mobilizing the latent potential of individuals and society to achieve goals is a critical factor in shaping employee behavior and performance in management science, with a direct impact on efficiency. The Quran addresses motivation in numerous verses, such as trust in God¹⁸ (Quran 65:3), remembrance of God¹⁹ (Quran 13:28), and divine rewards for righteous deeds²⁰ (Quran 4:57), which elevate human motivation and foster the growth and flourishing of human resources in organizations.

The Supreme Leader also considers religious motivation and faith as key drivers of national progress: “Each individual is a universe in themselves. If a person is refined, knowledgeable, and virtuous, their world is sweeter and more appealing, making it worthwhile to learn from them” (Luṭfī Marzānakī 2018, 72). According to His Eminence, strengthening these factors in organizations and institutions is essential for growth and increased efficiency.

¹⁸. ﴿... وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا﴾ (الطلاق/٣)

“... And whoever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him. Indeed Allah carries through His command. Certainly Allah has set a measure for everything” (Quran 65:3)

¹⁹. ﴿الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ﴾ (الرعد/٢٨)

“those who have faith, and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah. Look! The hearts find rest in Allah’s remembrance!” (Quran 13:28)

²⁰. ﴿وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا لَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا﴾ (النساء/٥٧)

“As for those who have faith and do righteous deeds, We shall admit them into gardens with streams running in them, to remain in them forever. In it there will be chaste mates for them, and We shall admit them into a deep shade” (Quran 4:57)

2.2.2. Strong Manager-Employee Communication

Communication refers to the process by which units exchange information and reach mutual understanding, utilizing symbols to transfer concepts and manage information flow (Shafī'ī 2009, 83). Effective relationships within an organization are among the most impactful factors in enhancing human resource efficiency, as emphasized in divine teachings and the Leader's statements.

Quranic models of compassionate managerial communication, such as those exemplified by Prophet Abraham²¹ (Quran 60:4) and Prophet Muhammad²² (Quran 33:21), along with the Prophet's interactions with his followers²³ (Quran 26:215) and non-believers²⁴ (Quran 48:29), provide a framework for intra- and extra-organizational communication in Islamic settings. When managers adopt this valuable model, it results in employee satisfaction and increased organizational efficiency.

The Supreme Leader further highlights: "Command is the core pillar of the armed forces and must be robust and steadfast. In a military organization, the organizational structure must maintain a strong connection with command, as a complete and dynamic organization renders command truly effective" (Luṭfī Marzānākī 2018, 163). This reflects his meticulous attention to managerial and efficiency issues.

²¹ «قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ إِذْ قَالُوا لِقَوْمِهِمْ إِنَّا بُرَءُ مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَاءُ أَبَدًا حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحَدَهُ إِلَّا قَوْلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ لَأَسْتَغْفِرَ لَكَ وَ مَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ رَبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ أَنْتَبْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ» (المتحنة/٤)

"There is certainly a good exemplar for you in Abraham and those who were with him, when they said to their own people, 'Indeed we repudiate you and whatever you worship besides Allah. We disavow you, and between you and us there has appeared enmity and hate forever, unless you come to have faith in Allah alone, except for Abraham's saying to his father, I will surely plead forgiveness for you, though I cannot avail you anything against Allah. Our Lord! In You do we put our trust, and to You do we turn penitently, and toward You is the destination' (Quran 60:4)

²² «لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَ ذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا» (الاحزاب/٢١)

"In the messenger of Allah there is certainly for you a good exemplar, for those who look forward to Allah and the Last Day, and remember Allah greatly" (Quran 33:21)

²³ «وَ اخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ» (الشعراء/٢١٥)

"and lower your wing to the faithful who follow you" (Quran 26:215)

²⁴ «مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا ...» (الفتح/٢٩)

"Muhammad, the messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are hard against the faithless and merciful amongst themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating [in worship], seeking Allah's grace and [His] pleasure ..." (Quran 48:29)

2.2.3. Compassionate Management Style

God is the ultimate manager of existence, governing both the realms of creation and legislation under the theory of “Monotheism in Management.” According to the principle that “Allah did not want to permit things to work without their means and reasons,”²⁵ (Kulaynī 1986, 1:183), divine management operates through apparent means, with the perfect human (God’s vicegerent) facilitating the realization of affairs.

God’s management method is flawless, discoverable, and adaptable. The Quran serves as the source for understanding this method. While some aspects of divine management, such as divine majesty, are exclusive to God, other attributes like knowledge, forbearance, power, patience, forgiveness, and compassion can be emulated. Thus, the management style derived from the Quran, termed “compassionate management,” serves as a model and criterion for evaluating all forms of management (Qavāmī 2014, 30).

Organizational efficiency improvement begins at the management level, as it falls primarily within managers’ responsibilities. The success or failure of efficiency programs depends on managers’ attitudes, strategies, and, most importantly, their actions. The Quran critiques the rejected management style of Pharaoh²⁶ (Quran 11:97), praises the

²⁵. عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ صَغِيرٍ عَمَّنْ حَدَّثَهُ عَنْ رَبِيعٍ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: «أَبَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يُجْرِيَ الْأَشْيَاءَ إِلَّا بِأَسْبَابٍ فَجَعَلَ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ سَبَبًا وَجَعَلَ لِكُلِّ سَبَبٍ شَرْحًا وَجَعَلَ لِكُلِّ شَرْحٍ عِلْمًا وَجَعَلَ لِكُلِّ عِلْمٍ بَابًا نَاطِقًا عَرَفَهُ مَنْ عَرَفَهُ وَجَهَلَهُ مَنْ جَهَلَهُ ذَلِكَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ وَنَحْنُ».

“Allah did not want to permit things to work without their means and reasons. For everything He made a cause, for every cause an explanation, for every explanation a science, for every science a speaking (door) chapter. Certain people recognize and know it (the door) and certain others do not recognize it. It (the door) is the messengers of Allah and we (*Ahl al-Bayt*, recipient of divine supreme covenant).”

²⁶. ﴿إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَأَتْهُ فَاتَّبَعُوا أَمْرَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَا أَمْرُ فِرْعَوْنَ بِرَشِيدٍ﴾ (هود/٩٧)

“to Pharaoh and his elite, but they followed Pharaoh’s dictates, and Pharaoh’s dictates were not right-minded” (Quran 11:97)

compassionate management style²⁷ (Quran 7:53), and highlights the Prophet's management style²⁸ (Quran 3:159), which fostered the growth and efficiency of his followers.

In the Quranic thought and statements of the Supreme Leader: "High-ranking army officials, as brave and virtuous commanders, can adopt the Alawi [Imam Ali's] behavior as their model. Imam Ali (a), as a leader and commander, epitomized purity, transparency, and sincerity. He avoided indulgence, refrained from arrogance toward subordinates, considered himself a servant of God and the people, and worked selflessly without worldly expectations. This can manifest as Alawi behavior in our actions and those of any responsible individual in any organization" (Fīrūzābādī 2012, 154). Additionally, His Eminence cites Imam Khomeini's example: "The enemy realized the impact of leadership in Islamic Iran and how the affectionate bond between the leader and the nation resolves challenges in various fields. The enemy saw how Imam Khomeini's influence mobilized people against adversaries" (Ja'farī 2016, 266). He considers the Alawi and compassionate management style a key driver of organizational growth and goal attainment.

2.2.4. Integrity and Trustworthiness

Integrity and trustworthiness are critical factors in improving human resource efficiency, emphasizing accuracy in task execution. In Quranic criteria, integrity and competence are prerequisites for all employees.

²⁷ «هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا تَأْوِيلَهُ يَوْمَ يَأْتِي تَأْوِيلَهُ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ نَسُوهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ قَدْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ فَهَلْ لَنَا مِنْ شُفَعَاءَ فَيَشْفَعُوا لَنَا أَوْ نُرَدُّ فَنَعْمَلْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ قَدْ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَخَسَلَ عَنْهُمَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ» (الأعراف/ ٥٣)

"Do they await anything but its fulfillment? The day when its fulfillment comes, those who had forgotten it before will say, 'Our Lord's messengers had certainly brought the truth. If only we had some intercessors to intercede for us, or we would be returned, so that we may do differently from what we did!' They have certainly ruined their souls, and what they used to fabricate has forsaken them" (Quran 7:53)

²⁸ «فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ» (آل عمران/ ١٥٩)

"It is by Allah's mercy that you are gentle to them; and had you been harsh and hardhearted, surely they would have scattered from around you. So excuse them, and plead for forgiveness for them, and consult them in the affairs, and once you are resolved, put your trust in Allah. Indeed Allah loves those who trust in Him" (Quran 3:159)

Managers and leaders must uphold trustworthiness and integrity to the highest degree in fulfilling their duties. Quranic examples include Prophet Moses's encounter with Prophet Shu'ayb²⁹ (Quran 28:26), Asif Barkhiya, Solomon's minister³⁰ (Quran 27:39), and Prophet Yusuf's governance³¹ (Quran 12:54), alongside numerous verses emphasizing honesty and trustworthiness and their impact on human resource efficiency.

In the Supreme Leader's thought: "In the Islamic system, the legitimacy of all officials stems from their commitment to serving as devoted adherents of divine religion, implementers of its laws, and upholders of the constitution. This is the will and choice of the people. ...To ensure the prosperity of the populace, we must diligently strive to implement divine ordinances. The felicity of the people, both in this world and the hereafter, lies in the execution of divine and Islamic injunctions. This is what can propel our nation and country toward its lofty and distinguished aspirations. It is this commitment that can safeguard our nation against the ever-increasing ambitions of major global powers" (Imam Khamenei, Presidential Inauguration Ceremony, August 2, 2001, <https://khl.ink/f/3076>). Integrity and trustworthiness significantly enhance organizational performance and system growth, as they are universally valued in individual and collective interactions, with abundant and clear Quranic evidence supporting their importance.

2.2.5. Collective Participation

A key behavioral factor in improving organizational efficiency is employee and subordinate participation in decision-making and organizational management. Islam emphasizes cooperation and participation, with all elements of human resource management

²⁹. «قَالَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا يَا أَبَتِ اسْتَأْجِرْهُ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ» (القصص/٢٦)

"One of the two women said, Father, hire him. Indeed the best you can hire is a powerful and trustworthy man" (Quran 28:26)

³⁰. «قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِنْ مَّقَامِكَ وَإِنِّي عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِيٌّ أَمِينٌ» (النمل/٣٩)

"An afreet from among the jinn said, I will bring it to you before you rise from your place. Indeed I have the power for it and am trustworthy" (Quran 27:39)

³¹. «وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ ائْتُونِي بِهِ أَسْتَخْلِصْهُ لِنَفْسِي فَلَمَّا كَلَّمَهُ قَالَ إِنَّكَ الْيَوْمَ لَدَيْنَا مَكِينٌ أَمِينٌ» (يوسف/٥٤)

"The king said, Bring him to me, I will make him my favourite. Then, when he had spoken with him, he said, Indeed today [onwards] you will be honoured and trustworthy with us" (Quran 12:54)

intertwined with consultation. The Quran strongly advocates for participation and consultation, instructing the Prophet (s) to consult with his companions and involve them in decision-making³² (Quran 3:159) and emphasizing consultation in social and organizational affairs³³ (Quran 42:38) to ensure orderly execution.

The Supreme Leader states: “What gives superiority to a people both throughout history and in their own time is diligence and effort. Of course, this effort takes different forms. It includes scientific and economic effort and effort in the sense of social cooperation among individuals: all efforts are necessary, but the most significant effort is preparedness for laying down one’s life. This is what gives a people superiority over all other peoples” (Imam Khamenei, Leader’s Speech during Meeting with Pilgrims of Rahian-e Noor Caravans in Abadan, March 26, 2014, <https://B2n.ir/ud6842>). Following divine teachings, he considers participation and consultation as drivers of organizational growth and human resource efficiency. Participation enhances employee motivation and plays a crucial role in planning and decision-making, as the exchange of ideas fosters innovative execution and increased efficiency.

The nature of organizational interactions shapes employee behavior and relationships, with positive and motivational manager-colleague interactions directly improving work quality and human resource efficiency.

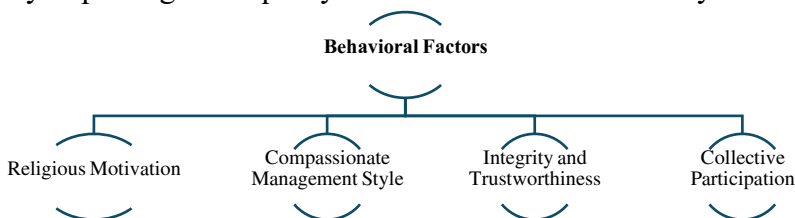


Figure 2: Behavioral Factors

³². «فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ» (آل عمران/ ١٥٩)

“It is by Allah’s mercy that you are gentle to them; and had you been harsh and hardhearted, surely they would have scattered from around you. So excuse them, and plead for forgiveness for them, and consult them in the affairs, and once you are resolved, put your trust in Allah. Indeed Allah loves those who trust in Him” (Quran 3:159)

³³. «وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ» (الشورى/ ٣٨)

“those who answer their Lord, maintain the prayer, and their affairs are by counsel among themselves, and they spend out of what We have provided them with” (Quran 42:38)

2.3. Structural Factors

Another level of factors influencing human resource efficiency, analyzed in this study, pertains to structural factors within organizations. The primary factors include adherence to Islamic laws, division of labor, task-oriented structure, centralization and decentralization in management, and reward and punishment systems.

2.3.1. Adherence to Islamic Laws in Organizations

Islamic laws encompass the five categories of rulings: obligation, prohibition, recommendation, disapproval, and permissibility (Hāshimī Shāhrūdī 2005, 3:355-356). A critical factor in enhancing human resource efficiency in Islamic organizations is adherence to these laws, as Islam is a comprehensive religion addressing all dimensions of individual and societal life, aiming for the prosperity and salvation of both. Issues related to observing divine rulings, derived from Quranic verses, include:

- Positions and roles are divine trusts, requiring qualified individuals.
- Hiring must avoid deception and falsehood, as these involve impermissible uncertainty³⁴ (Quran 2:224).
- Qualification assessments must not involve unauthorized methods, such as intrusion into privacy³⁵ (Quran 49:12).
- Fear of God and obedience to divine commands must be institutionalized in organizational practices³⁶ (Quran 47:33) .

³⁴. ﴿وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةً لِأَيْمَانِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَتُصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾ (البقرة/ ٢٢٤)

“Do not make Allah an obstacle, through your oaths, to being pious and God wary, and to bringing about concord between people. And Allah is all-hearing, all-knowing” (Quran 2:224)

³⁵. ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَخَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ

لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾ (الحجرات/ ١٢)

“O you who have faith! Avoid much suspicion. Indeed some suspicions are sins. And do not spy on or backbite one another. Will any of you love to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it. And be wary of Allah; indeed Allah is all-clement, all-merciful” (Quran 49:12)

³⁶. ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَلَا تُبْطِلُوا أَعْمَالَكُمْ﴾ (محمد/ ٣٣)

“O you who have faith! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and do not render your works void” (Quran 47:33)

- Justice and fairness toward employees and organizational personnel must be upheld³⁷ (Quran 57:25).
- Self-control in behavior and performance is essential³⁸ (Quran 12:53).
- Gratitude for divine blessings is necessary³⁹ (Quran 14:7).
- Service to people and society is a priority⁴⁰ (Quran 34:28).
- Trust in God is fundamental⁴¹ (Quran 14:12).

In the statements of the Supreme Leader: “All of Imam [Khomeini’s] behaviors and stances revolved around God and spirituality. He believed in God’s legislative will and trusted in His creational will, knowing that one who strives to realize divine law is supported by the laws and traditions of creation. He believed: *‘To Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is all-knowing, all-wise’* (Quran 48:4). Imam considered the laws of sharia to be the main motive behind his movement. He considered them to be a guide for his movement. Imam’s movement was for the happiness of the country and the people and it was based on the guidance of Islamic sharia. So, Imam (r.a.) looked at divine obligations as a key to success. It was these divine

³⁷. «لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ» (الحديد/٢٥)

“Certainly We sent Our apostles with manifest proofs, and We sent down with them the Book and the Balance, so that mankind may maintain justice; and We sent down iron, in which there is great might and uses for mankind, and so that Allah may know those who help Him and His apostles in [their] absence. Indeed Allah is all-strong, all-mighty” (Quran 57:25)

³⁸. «وَمَا أَبْرِئُ نَفْسِي إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَفْهَارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّي إِنَّ رَبِّي غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ» (يوسف/٥٣)

“Yet I do not absolve my [own carnal] soul, for the [carnal] soul indeed prompts [men] to evil, except inasmuch as my Lord has mercy. Indeed my Lord is all-forgiving, all-merciful” (Quran 12:53)

³⁹. «وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ» (ابراهيم/٧)

“And when your Lord proclaimed, If you are grateful, I will surely enhance you [in blessing], but if you are ungrateful, My punishment is indeed severe” (Quran 14:7)

⁴⁰. «وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ» (سبا/٢٨)

“We did not send you except as a bearer of good news and warner to all mankind, but most people do not know” (Quran 34:28)

⁴¹. «وَمَا لَنَا أَلَّا نَتَوَكَّلَ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَانَا سُبُلَنَا وَلَنَصْبِرَنَّ عَلَى مَا آذَيْتُمُونَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ» (ابراهيم/١٢)

“And why should we not put our trust in Allah, seeing that He has guided us in our ways? Surely, we will put up patiently with whatever torment you may inflict upon us, and in Allah let all the trusting put their trust” (Quran 14:12)

obligations that helped him to reach his great idealistic goals” (Leader’s Speech on 15th Demise Anniversary of Imam Khomeini (r.a.), June 3, 2004, <https://B2n.ir/wd9610>). This underscores the importance of adhering to divine and Islamic laws in organizations, which fosters organizational growth, individual, and societal prosperity.

2.3.2. Division of Labor

A critical factor in enhancing human resource efficiency in organizations is the division of labor, defined as breaking down tasks into smaller, distinct activities or transforming organizational tasks into recognized and specialized duties (Pirūz 2006, 100). The Quran references division of labor in the organization of creation⁴² (Quran 51:1-4), among angels⁴³ (Quran 79:1-5), and in the practices of prophets like Solomon⁴⁴ (Quran 27:20-22), highlighting its significant role in human resource efficiency.

In the Supreme Leader’s Quranic thought and statements: “The work of research centers should complement each other to prevent duplication and waste of human and material resources” (Luṭfī Marzānakī 2018, 54). “Organization is one of the obligations of any group of people pursuing a goal. Organization means order, division of tasks, communication, connection, and working in a chain-like manner; this is the essence of organization. It is not only not undesirable but is

⁴². ﴿الذَّارِيَاتُ ذُرَّوَا * النَّحَامِلَاتُ وُقَرَّوَا * الْجَارِيَاتُ يُسْرَوَا * فَأَلْمَقَسَمَاتِ أَمْرَا﴾ (الذاريات/١-٤)

“By the scattering [winds] that scatter [the clouds]; by the [rain] bearing [clouds] laden [with water]; by [the ships] which move gently [on the sea]; by [the angels] who dispense [livelihood] by [His] command” (Quran 51:1-4)

⁴³. ﴿وَالنَّازِعَاتُ غَرَقَا * وَالنَّاشِطَاتُ نَشَطَا * وَالسَّابِقَاتُ سَبَقَا * فَأَلْمَذَبِرَاتُ أَمْرَا﴾ (النازعات/١-٥)

“By those [angels] who wrest [the soul] violently, by those who draw [it] out gently, by those who swim smoothly, by those who take the lead, racing, by those who direct the affairs [of creatures]” (Quran 79:1-5)

⁴⁴. ﴿وَتَفَقَّدَ الطَّيْرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِيَ لَا أَرَى الْهُدْهُدَ أَمْ كَانَ مِنَ الْغَائِبِينَ * لَأُعَذِّبَنَّهُ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا أَوْ لَأَذْبَحَنَّهُ أَوْ لَيَأْتِيَنِي بِسُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ * فَمَكَتْ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطْتُ بِمَا لَمْ تَحِطْ بِهِ وَجِئْتُكَ مِنْ سَبَإٍ بِنَبَأٍ يَقِينٍ﴾ (النمل/٢٠-٢٢)

“[One day] he reviewed the birds, and said, Why do I not see the hoopoe? Or is he absent? I will surely punish him with a severe punishment, or I will surely behead him, unless he brings a clear-cut excuse. He did not stay for long [before he turned up] and said, I have alighted on something which you have not alighted on, and I have brought you from Sheba a definite report” (Quran 27:20-22)

indeed beneficial and even essential. No task in the world progresses without organization. The Islamic Revolution of Iran, too, did not advance or succeed without organization” (Zāri‘ī 2019, 57). Division of labor is thus emphasized as a strategy for enhancing human resource efficiency.

2.3.3. Task-Oriented Structure

A key factor in improving human resource efficiency in organizations is the principle of a task-oriented structure in Islam, where individuals are obligated to perform duties completely and correctly within society and organizations. The Quran addresses this in various verses, considering task orientation based on individuals’ capabilities and talents as a significant criterion. Concepts such as striving⁴⁵ (Quran 53:39), working within one’s capacity⁴⁶ (Quran 2:286), responsibility aligned with competence⁴⁷ (Quran 65:7), fulfilling duties⁴⁸ (Quran

⁴⁵. ﴿وَأَنْ لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى﴾ (النجم/٣٩)

“and that nothing belongs to man except what he strives for” (Quran 53:39)

⁴⁶. ﴿لَا يَكْلَفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾ (البقرة/٢٨٦)

“Allah does not task any soul beyond its capacity. Whatever [good] it earns is to its benefit, and whatever [evil] it incurs is to its harm.” Our Lord! Take us not to task if we forget or make mistakes! Our Lord! Place not upon us a burden as You placed on those who were before us! Our Lord! Lay not upon us what we have no strength to bear! Excuse us and forgive us, and be merciful to us! You are our Master, so help us against the faithless lot!” (Quran 2:286)

⁴⁷. ﴿لِيُنْفِقَ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِنْ سَعَتِهِ وَمَنْ قَدِرْ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ فَلْيُنْفِقْ مِمَّا آتَاهُ اللَّهُ لَا يَكْلَفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَا آتَاهَا سَيَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُسْرًا﴾ (الطلاق/٧)

“Let the affluent man spend out of his affluence, and let he whose provision has been tightened spend out of what Allah has given him. Allah does not task any soul except [according to] what He has given it. Allah will bring about ease after hardship” (Quran 65:7)

⁴⁸. ﴿مَا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَى فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ﴾ (الحشر/٧)

“The spoils that Allah gave to His Messenger from the people of the townships, are for Allah and the Messenger; the relatives and the orphans, the needy and the traveller; so that they do not circulate among the rich among you. Take whatever the Messenger gives you, and relinquish whatever he forbids you, and be wary of Allah. Indeed Allah is severe in retribution” (Quran 59:7)

59:7), and acting according to divine obligations⁴⁹ (Quran 20:57) indicate the critical impact of task orientation on efficiency.

In the thought of the Supreme Leader, the significance of task orientation in organizations and its impact on efficiency is evident: “A fundamental difference between Islamic ideology and liberalism is task orientation versus result orientation. Based on Islamic thought, a faithful and pious individual must be task-oriented, striving to fulfill their duty at a given time without focusing on outcomes. Task orientation is evident throughout Islamic history and the practices of the Prophet and the Imams. In describing Imam Ali’s justice-oriented governance, His Eminence highlights his task orientation and sense of duty, considering it vital for societal development” (Qādirī 2021, 236). This reflects his deep concern for human resource efficiency.

2.3.4. Centralization and Decentralization

In Islam, particularly in the governance and leadership of Prophet Muhammad (s) and Imam Ali (a), both centralization and decentralization are observed. The Quran references both management approaches. When decision-making is the criterion, verses using the term “*mashiyyat*” (Divine will) indicate centralization, such as granting forgiveness⁵⁰ (Quran 29:21) or power⁵¹ (Quran 5:54) to whomever God wills, suggesting centralized decision-making. Conversely, verses referring to angels as managers of affairs⁵² (Quran 79:5) or distributors

⁴⁹. ﴿قَالَ أَجِئْنَا لِنُخْرِجَكَ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا بِسِحْرِكَ يَا مُوسَى﴾ (طه/٥٧)

“He said, Have you come to us, Moses, to expel us from our land with your magic?” (Quran 20:57)

⁵⁰. ﴿يُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَرْحَمُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُقْلَبُونَ﴾ (العنكبوت/٢١)

“He will punish whomever He wishes and have mercy on whomever He wishes, and to Him you will be returned” (Quran 29:21)

⁵¹. ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٌ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾ (المائدة/٥٤)

“O you who have faith! Should any of you desert his religion, Allah will soon bring a people whom He loves and who love Him, [who will be] humble towards the faithful, stern towards the faithless, waging jihad in the way of Allah, not fearing the blame of any blamer. That is Allah’s grace which He grants to whomever He wishes, and Allah is all-bounteous, all-knowing” (Quran 5:54)

⁵². ﴿فَالْمُدَبِّرَاتِ أَمْرًا﴾ (النازعات/٥)

“by those who direct the affairs [of creatures]” (Quran 79:5)

of tasks⁵³ (Quran 51:4) imply decentralization through delegation. Similarly, appointing Adam (a) as God's vicegerent on earth⁵⁴ (Quran 2:30) and David (a) as a ruler with authority to judge justly⁵⁵ (Quran 38:26), or choosing the Prophet (s) for the true path⁵⁶ (Quran 45:18), indicate delegated authority. These verses suggest that centralization and decentralization are context-dependent, and managers should apply either approach based on circumstances to enhance work and human resource efficiency.

The Supreme Leader, in explaining the concept of a resilient economy, presents it as a model for achieving a dynamic and sustainable economy while reducing vulnerability to external shocks: "A resilient economy means maintaining economic growth while reducing vulnerability. The economic system should be structured to withstand enemies' constant and varied tactics with minimal disruption" (Ja'farī 2016, 271). From his perspective, temporal and spatial conditions play a decisive role in economic growth and efficiency. Adopting appropriate economic approaches requires attention to environmental contingencies and existing capacities. According to the Leader, the degree of centralization or decentralization in economic policymaking should align with economic conditions and human resource capabilities to maximize efficiency.

⁵³. ﴿فَالْمَقْسَمَاتِ أَمْرًا﴾ (الذاريات/٤)

"by [the angels] who dispense [livelihood] by [His] command" (Quran 51:4)

⁵⁴. ﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ (البقرة/٣٠)

"When your Lord said to the angels, 'Indeed I am going to set a viceroy on the earth,' they said, 'Will You set in it someone who will cause corruption in it, and shed blood, while we celebrate Your praise and proclaim Your sanctity?' He said, 'Indeed I know what you do not know'" (Quran 2:30)

⁵⁵. ﴿يَا دَاوُدُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا نَسُوا يَوْمَ الْحِسَابِ﴾ (ص/٢٦)

"O David! Indeed We have made you a vicegerent on the earth. So judge between people with justice, and do not follow desire, or it will lead you astray from the way of Allah. Indeed those who stray from the way of Allah there is a severe punishment for them because of their forgetting the Day of Reckoning" (Quran 38:26)

⁵⁶. ﴿ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَىٰ شَرِيعَةٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ فَاتَّبِعْهَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ (البجائية/١٨)

"Then We set you upon a clear course of the Law; so follow it, and do not follow the desires of those who do not know" (Quran 45:18)

2.3.5. Reward and Punishment System

Another structural factor enhancing human resource efficiency is the use of a reward and punishment system in organizations. Rewards are applied when an individual demonstrates high performance, encouraging better performance and motivating others, thus improving overall employee performance. Similar considerations apply to punishing errant employees.

The Quran addresses rewards and punishments as means to influence performance, including worldly material rewards like spoils of war and victory⁵⁷ (Quran 57:10), spiritual worldly rewards like divine aid⁵⁸ (Quran 3:125) and glad tidings⁵⁹ (Quran 48:18), and otherworldly material rewards like paradise and abundant provisions⁶⁰ (Quran 76:5), as well as spiritual otherworldly rewards like divine satisfaction⁶¹ (Quran 9:109) and beholding God's mercy⁶² (Quran 75:23), which inspire believers and enhance their performance. In terms of

⁵⁷. ﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَمَنْ نَكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنْكُثُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِمَا عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهِ اللَّهُ فَسَيُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾ (الحديد/١٠)

"Why should you not spend in the way of Allah, while to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth? Not equal [to others] are those of you who spent and fought before the victory. They are greater in rank than those who have spent and fought afterwards. Yet Allah has promised the best reward to each and Allah is well aware of what you do" (Quran 57:10)

⁵⁸. ﴿بَلَىٰ إِن تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُم مِّن فُورِهِمْ هَذَا يُمْدِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ آلَافٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ﴾ (آل عمران/١٢٥)

"Yes, if you are steadfast and God wary, and should they come at you suddenly, your Lord will aid you with five thousand marked angels" (Quran 3:125)

⁵⁹. ﴿لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَابَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا﴾ (الفتح/١٨)

"Allah was certainly pleased with the faithful when they swore allegiance to you under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts, so He sent down composure on them, and requited them with a victory near at hand" (Quran 48:18)

⁶⁰. ﴿إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا﴾ (الانسان/٥)

"Indeed the pious will drink from a cup seasoned with Kāfir" (Quran 76:5)

⁶¹. ﴿أَفَمَن أَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهُ عَلَى تَقْوَىٰ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٍ خَيْرٌ أَمْ مَن أَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهُ عَلَىٰ شَفَا جُرُفٍ هَارٍ فَانَهَارٍ بِهِ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ (التوبة/١٠٩)

"Is he who founds his building on God wariness and [the pursuit of Allah's] pleasure better-off or he who founds his building on the brink of a collapsing bank which collapses with him into the fire of hell? And Allah does not guide the wrongdoing lot" (Quran 9:109)

⁶². ﴿إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ﴾ (القيامة/٢٣)

"looking at their Lord" (Quran 75:23)

punishment, the Quran applies a similar logic, but its criteria differ from human or organizational experiences, as good deeds are rewarded twofold⁶³ (Quran 4:40) or tenfold⁶⁴ (Quran 6:160), while errors receive a single, fair punishment aligned with the offender's actions.

In the Leader's thought: "God loves for good deeds to be appreciated and acknowledged" (Luṭfī Marzānakī 2018, 137). Another principle is upholding inter-organizational values, such as the reward and punishment system. Commanders, take this seriously with your subordinates. Imam Ali (a) disciplined his loyal poet, Hasan ibn Thabit, for a mistake, despite his service and defense of Ali (a). Ali's response implied that past services and current accountability are separate matters (Imam Khamenei, Remarks delivered during a meeting with a group of AGIR commanders, September 18, 1991, <https://khl.ink/f/2490>). This underscores the importance of a reward and punishment system in enhancing organizational performance.

Employee performance is shaped by the organizational environment. If the governing rules and atmosphere are not aligned with positive and desirable interactions or fail to direct human effort, efficiency will not materialize. Quranic verses and narrations highlight the profound impact of the work environment on individual performance, noting that even a faithful individual may become hypocritical or disbelieving due to the influence of the organizational environment, emphasizing its critical role.

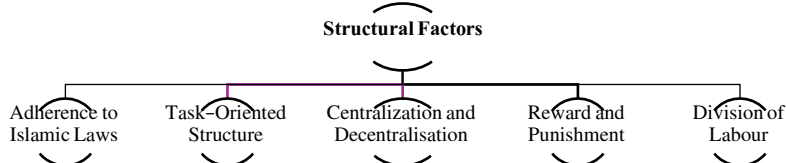


Figure 3: Structural Factors

⁶³. «إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ وَإِنْ تَكَ حَسَنَةً يُّضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا» (النساء/٤٠)

"Indeed Allah does not wrong [anyone][even to the extent of] an atom's weight, and if it be a good deed He doubles it[s reward], and gives from Himself a great reward" (Quran 4:40)

⁶⁴. «مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى إِلَّا مِثْلُهَا وَهُمْ لَا يَظْلَمُونَ» (الانعام/١٦٠)

"Whoever brings virtue shall receive ten times its like; but whoever brings vice shall not be requited except with its like, and they will not be wronged" (Quran 6:160)

Conceptual Model of the Study

The factors influencing human resource efficiency, due to their multiplicity and diversity, are categorized into three levels in this study, inspired by the Quran and the hadiths of the Infallibles (a). These three levels are closely linked to human resource performance. The first level, contextual factors, encompasses factors related to the individual, stemming from their beliefs and perspectives toward their environment and activities. The second level pertains to behavioral factors, involving interactions and reactions among colleagues, groups, and teamwork, which are directly associated with human resource performance. The third level concerns structural factors, relating to the organizational environment, including its structure and culture, in which the individual operates.

These three levels shape and engineer individual behavior and performance within the organization, resulting in either a reduction or an enhancement of work output and efficiency. It is noteworthy that these factors reinforce one another and exhibit interdependence and overlap.

Human Resource Efficiency		
Contextual Factors	Behavioral Factors	Structural Factors
Faith	Religious Motivation	Adherence to Islamic Laws
God wariness	Communication	Division of Labour
Value Orientation	Trustworthiness	Task-Oriented Structure
Education	Collective Participation	Centralization and Decentralization
Discipline and Order	Compassionate Management	Reward and Punishment

Figure 4: Conceptual Model of the Study

Conclusion

This study, adopting an analytical and exegetical approach, examines the factors affecting human resource efficiency from the perspective of the Holy Quran and the managerial thought of the Supreme Leader. Based on the findings, humans, as social and civic beings, grow and excel through bidirectional interactions with their environment. These interactions create the foundation for individual and organizational behaviors, ultimately influencing human resource efficiency. Accordingly, the components of human resource efficiency are categorized into three macro-levels:

a) Contextual Level: This level refers to foundational and enabling factors for efficiency, including components such as faith, piety, value orientation, education, and discipline and order. These factors serve as essential prerequisites for fostering productive behaviors within organizations.

b) Behavioral Level: This level addresses individual behaviors and interpersonal interactions within the organization. Its components include motivation, effective manager-employee communication, management style, integrity and trustworthiness, and participation and consultation. These factors directly impact human resource performance and efficiency.

c) Structural Level: This level pertains to organizational structures and processes related to efficiency. Its components include adherence to Islamic laws, division of labor, task-oriented structure, centralization and decentralization in management, and reward and punishment systems. These factors provide a framework for productive activities within the organization.

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