



Call for Papers

Special Issue of 'Journal of Management & Organizations'

"Contextualizing diversity within Islam: Interpretations, understandings and implications for management and organizations"

Guest editors

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In the mainstream academic literature as well as media, the Islamic faith and Muslims are often presented as a monolithic religion, ignoring the internal diversity or heterogeneity on the basis of denomination, ethnicity, gender and religious practice. While there are two broad sects within Islam, i.e., Sunni and Shia, the diversity within Islam is much more nuanced and heterogeneous and can be traced to different interpretations of the texts, opinions of narrators, jurisprudence and different milieus where such interpretations are enacted. Thus, for example, interpretations, geographical location and culture intersect in how gender practices such as the veil/hijab and segregation and injunctions on other matters such as inheritance, commerce, religious taxes, leadership and treatment of religious and ethnic minorities are proclaimed, legislated and endorsed (e.g., Moghadam, 1994; Warde, 2000). Yet, scholars signal the need to carefully contextualize research by situating management and organizations within contextualized perspectives, levels of analysis and multiple levels of relationships (Härtel & O'Connor, 2014).

The monolithic perspective often projected in mainstream media and academic scholarship is problematic because Muslim beliefs, practices and their interpretations vary tremendously on the basis of denomination, sect, cultural and ethnic practices, gender and religiosity. In the field of management and organization studies, this may mean that employers, managers, employees, practitioners, and scholars may not appropriately understand the significant differences within Muslim employees' belief systems and practices. A unidimensional understanding may result in organizational theories and practices based on stereotypes and sweeping generalizations and assumptions which may be misleading and inaccurate, misrepresenting Muslims. For example, organizations may not understand that the ultraorthodox Salafi (including Wahhabi) and Deobandi denominations of Islam are relatively more hardline and pro-Jihadist compared to mainstream Sunni, Shia or Sufi traditions (comprising Hanafi, Maliki, Shafii and Jafari schools of jurisprudence). Also, organizations may not realize important differences within Muslim communities with respect to practices of gender segregation, female seclusion and approaches to

diversity. In other words, Muslim communities can have disagreements and contradictions among themselves on these and other issues of ideology and its practice.

Given this heterogeneity, Sunni, Shia and Sufi Muslims are as much a victim of Salafi and Deobandi militancy of the Al-Qaeda, ISIS/ISIL, Taliban, Boko Haram, Al Shabab and other militant outfits as are adherents of various faith traditions such as Christians, Jews, Hindus and other non-Muslim communities (Moghadam, 2009; Syed et al., 2016). In some instances, even moderate Salafis and Deobandis have not escaped violence at the hands of radical elements within their own sect (Syed et al., 2016). Similarly, multinational corporations (MNCs) may need to understand that in their international operations in the Middle East and other Muslim majority regions, countries and communities, they are interacting with a range of ideologies. Thus for example in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE, MNCs are likely to be dealing with Salafi or Hanbali ideology of the state, while in their operations in Egypt, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Turkey, it is likely to be Sunni Hanafi ideology (Johnson & Vriens, 2011; Kynsh, 2007). Similarly, in their operations in Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan and the northern part of Yemen, they are dealing with Shia ideology, whereas in Indonesia and Malaysia, they mainly encounter Shafii ideology while in North Africa, they are mostly faced with Maliki ideology (Mayer, 1995; Nasr, 2007).

When Muslims travel from their source countries to immigrate or work in Western countries or typically non-Muslim majority countries, they carry with them their traditions and ways of being, not only into the receiving countries' societies, but also into the organizations situated in these countries. Add to this the influx of refugees into Europe, many of whom are Muslims, from countries such as Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia and the complexity of the management and diversity of a workforce within an organization increases exponentially. While such diversity can be viewed as an ominous challenge, it is also a wonderful opportunity to share the richness of the threads that unite humanity and for organizations to serve as leaders, nurturers, path-breakers and path-creators in forging sophisticated talent management and growth opportunities. Indeed, if we hark back to the period when Islam was known for its scientific advancements and humane treatment of all societies, we note that the Ottoman Empire welcomed Jews when they were persecuted in many parts of Europe (Fatah, 2011). Furthermore, it is worth pointing out, that during the Irish potato famine in the 19th century, the Ottoman Caliph Abdul Mejid wanted to contribute 10,000 pounds but was requested by Queen Victoria not to contribute this amount as that would overshadow her contribution of 2,000 pounds (Hayes, 2016). In the Indian Subcontinent, we have the example of the 16th century Mughal Emperor Akbar who institutionalized and implemented a pluralist policy of the *sulh-e-kul* (absolute peace) for people of diverse faiths and sects (Syed, 2011).

In terms of denominational diversity, there are varied approaches to community leadership. For example, in Sunni Islam, the first four caliphs (the Rashidun) are most prominent after the Prophet Muhammad, and after them importance is accorded to the four Imams of jurisprudence (Abu Hanifa, Malik, Shafii, Ahmed ibn Hanbal) (Makdisi, 1979). In contrast, in Shia Islam, Prophet Muhammad and his

twelve descendants (12 Imams) are considered the legitimate spiritual leaders (Abdal-Haqq, 2002). In the modern era, the institution of *taqleed* or followership (in religious matters) of a competent cleric is an integral part of the Twelver Shia ideology (Akhavi, 1988). In contrast, in Sunni Islam, there is no such central authority and as such different clerics, organizations and countries use their own influence to direct and indoctrinate Sunni Muslims (Ruthven, 2012). In the absence of central control, there is thus a possibility within organizations and wider society that some Muslim and non-Muslim individuals may be influenced by radical ideologies of extremist groups.

There are also financial implications of such differences. For example, in Sunni Islam, *zakat* (2.5% religious tax on total savings and wealth) may be given to any needy person or community based on the donor's discretion while in Shia Islam, an additional *khums* tax (20% of all gains and profits) is mandatory which must be distributed through a competent cleric (Karim, 2014; Mallat, 1988).

There are further heterogeneities within Islamic sects. For example, Sufi Muslims (within Sunni and Shia sects) pay special attention to construction and maintenance of shrines and the legal trusts or *awqaf* registered for management of these buildings and funds and contribute to public welfare (Green, 2004). In contrast, in ultraorthodox Salafi, Wahhabi and Deobandi traditions, shrines are not permissible and must be levelled to the ground. Some of these ultraorthodox traditions seem to endorse violence and attacks on Islamic shrines (often maintained and managed by Sunni, Sufi and Shia Muslims) (Fair, 2011). On a global scale, radical Salafi and Deobandi groups may indulge in practices of intolerance and discrimination which may be directed against women and/or religious and ethnic minority groups within or outside Islam (Fair, 2011; Syed et al., 2016). This may at times result in particular gender discriminatory practices and laws, for example restrictions in Saudi Arabia on women's driving and independent mobility. In contrast, some interpretations of Islam are relatively more pluralistic when it comes to gender and inclusion, such as the presence of people of diverse faiths, ethnicities and gender at Sufi shrines and Ashura (Muharram) rituals (Iraqi News, 2009).

In terms of diversity, while there is evidence of commitment to equality – based on gender, ethnicity and race – within several injunctions of the Quran and the Hadith (traditions of Prophet Muhammad), actual practices vary greatly across societies, cultures and organizations (Syed & Pio, 2016). Thus, the status and roles of women in Saudi Arabia are different to those in Malaysia, Turkey and Pakistan (Kandiyoti, 1991). Similarly, the treatment of ethnic minority and migrant workers remains a sore point in the UAE, Qatar and other Gulf countries (Gibson, 2016). Moreover, there seems to be greater commitment to cultural heritage, arts and music in Central and South Asia than in countries dominated by Salafi ideology (Batsh, 2016) There are also differences on the basis of urban/rural background and regions. Such differences may also exist within a single country. For example, in the case of the Islamic Republic of Iran, women in Tehran seem to be relatively more independent and active in everyday life and employment when compared to women in Qom and Zahedan (Farsian, 2003).

We seek papers which delve into the ideological and cultural contexts, as well as the past, present and future as a lens, for a more erudite and refined understanding and interpretation of Islamic heterogeneity in the context of management and organizations. Therefore, theoretical and empirical papers for this special issue are sought which engage with the diversity, complexity and possibilities of engaging with various kinds of organizations, diverse theoretical frameworks and methodologies and ensuing management practices highlighting the heterogeneity within Islam. Papers submitted to this special issue need to take a contextual perspective, whether it be positioning Islam, culture, history, management, employees and/or organizations as context (Härtel & O'Connor, 2014). Indicative topics for papers are presented below, however, the list is not exhaustive.

- Ideological, denominational, cultural and other contextual differences in Islamic approaches to work, management and organizations
- Various Islamic approaches to leadership within organizations
- Civil-society organizations and not-for-profit organizations that engage with Muslims and their work and management practices
- Diversity of Islamic approaches to cultural heritage, arts and music and their contributions to management practices and business development
- Human resource development practices for Islamic women within various organizations such as multinational and transnational corporations as well as small and medium enterprises
- Muslim diaspora and their diverse contributions to management and organizations
- Diversity of Islamic banking and its impact on management practices within organizations
- Cultural celebrations in organizations and the diversity of Muslim communities
- Heterogeneity of Muslim women and their agency in organizations
- Organizational and management implications of the interplay of Islamophobia and Islamic radicalism and its linkage with Islamic ideologies and interpretations
- Diversity of Islamic interpretations and practices and their consistency with values of democracy, diversity and integration at work

Distribution of CFP

- This is an open call for papers. The guest editors would be glad to receive inquiries from prospective authors in advance of the submission deadline. The CFP will be distributed through Listservs of the Academy of Management (particularly MSR, GDO and SIM Divisions), EURAM (GRDO SIG), BAM and ANZAM as well as through the South Asian Academy of Management, New Zealand Work Research Institute, and other relevant academic fora in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Muslim diaspora.

Schedule of submission and deadlines:

- Open call for papers issued: 17 October 2016

- Short abstract (600 words) (optional, for initial discussion and comments) due: 15 December 2016 - Prospective authors please email both guest editors Jawad.Syed@hud.ac.uk and Edwina.Pio@aut.ac.nz
- First full paper (6000-8000 words excluding references) due: 15 March 2017
- First decision on full paper: 15 May Aug 2017
- Revision due: 15 July 2017
- Publication date: late 2017

Authors are requested to carefully follow the guidelines on the JMO website and submit their full paper via the JMO portal.

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displaySpecialPage?pageId=6780>

All papers will be reviewed according to the JMO double-blind review process.

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