The Rationality-Ethics Paradox in Managerial Decision-Making: A Comparative Analysis of Western and Islamic Perspectives

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Abstract

In the complex and dynamic world of businesses and organizations, managerial decision-making plays a vital role. One of the key challenges in this area is the conflict between two significant and often contradictory principles—rationality and ethics—in decision-making processes. This article examines this conflict and the prioritization of one principle over the other in situations where both are in opposition. Specifically, the research aims to determine, based on the views of both Western and Islamic thinkers, whether rationality or ethics should take precedence in managerial decisions under such circumstances. The first section of the article analyzes the concepts of "rationality" and "ethics" within the context of managerial decision-making. Rationality, understood as a logical process based on data analysis, facilitates optimal decision-making aligned with organizational goals. On the other hand, ethics refers to a set of human and value-based principles and rules that must be considered in decision-making to ensure public interest and justice are upheld. Subsequently, the article reviews various Western philosophical perspectives on the conflict between rationality and ethics. Herbert Simon, through the concept of "bounded rationality," emphasizes that decision-makers, due to informational and time constraints, cannot always arrive at the best and most rational choice. In contrast, John Stuart Mill advocates utilitarianism and prioritizes decisions that bring the greatest benefit to the greatest number, which may conflict with ethical principles. Meanwhile, moral philosophers such as Kant and Rawls firmly stress the importance of adhering to ethical principles in decision-making, even if such decisions may harm individual or organizational interests. The next section explores Islamic perspectives on this issue. The Holy Qur'an and the conduct of the infallibles, especially Imam Ali (peace be upon him), consistently stress the importance of integrating rationality and ethics in decision-making. Quranic verses and the sayings of the infallibles view decision-making not only from a rational perspective but also from an ethical and religious

standpoint. The principles of Islamic management uphold that even in times of crisis, ethics must be observed in decision-making to ensure justice and fairness. This article also undertakes a comparative and analytical review of Western and Islamic viewpoints on this conflict, concluding that from the perspective of Islamic management, ethics must always be considered as a fundamental pillar of decision-making. This is because, within this framework, the ultimate goal of management is to achieve justice and divine satisfaction.

Keywords: Managerial decision-making, Rationality vs. ethics, Islamic management, Utilitarianism, Organizational justice.

Introduction

In the Realm of Management and Organizational Decision-Making, Two Fundamental and Vital Factors Determine the Path to Success and Progress: Rationality and Ethics. Each of these two elements plays a unique role in the decision-making process. However, in many instances, they stand in opposition to one another, creating challenges for managers. The aim of this article is to examine and analyze this conflict and to seek an answer to the question of which principle should take precedence in managerial decision-making when rationality and ethics are in conflict.

Rationality refers to the adoption of decisions based on logical analyses, data, and accurate information. This approach primarily seeks to optimize resources, reduce costs, and achieve efficient outcomes. In other words, rationality aims to maximize the use of available resources so that the organization can attain its strategic goals.

In contrast, ethics refers to a set of principles and values that guide human behavior within correct and virtuous frameworks. Ethical decision-making in organizations means making choices that not only consider the interests of the organization but also respect individuals' rights and dignity. Simply put, in ethical decision-making, values such as justice, fairness, and social responsibility take precedence.

However, when these two principles come into conflict, managers face complex challenges and questions. For instance, imagine a manager is faced with a decision where, according to organizational rules or a directive from a higher authority, an employee must be dismissed. Yet, the manager knows this employee is in dire need of the job, and their dismissal could have serious consequences for their financial and mental well-being. In this scenario, the manager faces two options: on the one hand,

rationality dictates acting according to rules and procedures and dismissing the employee; on the other hand, ethics suggests considering the employee's situation and attempting to find an alternative solution that would cause less harm.

This simple example illustrates the conflict that many managers encounter in their daily decision-making. The central question examined in this article is: in such situations, which principle should be prioritized? Should rational decisions, based on rules and guidelines, be followed, or should ethical considerations be given precedence, even if the resulting decision may not appear rational?

Investigating this conflict is significant because in today's world, organizations must not only seek to maximize profit and efficiency but also attend to their social and human responsibilities. Through analysis of this conflict and by reviewing various perspectives from Western and Islamic scholars, this article seeks to identify solutions that managers can use when faced with such challenges.

1. Ethical Decision-Making

Ethical decision-making refers to the process of selecting choices that consider not only individual and organizational interests but are also based on moral and human principles. This type of decision-making involves upholding justice, fairness, and human dignity throughout the decision-making process. In management, ethical decision-making should balance organizational interests with ethical considerations such as the rights of employees, customers, and society in the mean time.

2. Characteristics of Ethical Decision-Making

2-1. Justice and Fairness

Ethical decisions must be just and fair. This means individuals should be treated equally and without discrimination, and individual rights must be respected in the decision-making process. Especially in the workplace, decisions that lead to discrimination or inequality are not only ethically flawed but may also generate distrust and dissatisfaction among employees.

2-2. Respect for Human Dignity

Ethical decision-making must respect the dignity and honor of individuals. Any decision that results in people or groups being deprived of their human respect cannot be considered ethical. For example, if an organization decides to lay off employees, it must ensure that the decision is executed in a manner that does not compromise human dignity.

2-3. Social Responsibility

Social responsibility plays a crucial role in ethical decision-making. Managers must consistently consider the social impact of their decisions and emphasize that the organization's performance should benefit society and align with the public interest. For example, many organizations are accountable for environmental or human rights issues and must factor these into their decisions.

2-4. Accountability and Transparency

Ethical decisions must be made in a manner that ensures decision-makers are accountable for the outcomes. Transparency in the decision-making process and communication with stakeholders strengthens trust and ensures that no corruption or self-serving decision occurs.

3. Rational Decision-Making

Rational decision-making refers to the process of selecting the best possible option using available data, logical analyses, and existing evidence. This type of decision-making is grounded in resource optimization and the maximization of economic and performance outcomes. In rational decision-making, decision-makers aim to choose the option that yields the greatest benefit with the lowest possible cost and risk.

4. Characteristics of Rational Decision-Making

4-1. Data and Information Analysis

Rational decision-making is always based on available data and evidence. Rational managers and decision-makers must possess complete and accurate information about the current situation in order to make informed decisions. In this process, data collection and analysis play a crucial role.

- o *Example:* In selecting suppliers for a company, the manager must gather and analyze precise information regarding costs, product quality, delivery times, and supplier credibility to make the best decision.

4-2. Clear Goal-Setting

Rational decision-making is driven by clearly defined goals. In this process, decision-makers must first accurately determine the short-term and long-term objectives of the organization or project and then make decisions that contribute to achieving those objectives. For example, if the goal of an organization is to increase sales, rational decisions must be made to fulfill this goal with maximum efficiency and minimal cost.

4-3. Resource Optimization

In rational decision-making, the decision-maker seeks to allocate available resources (financial, temporal, human, etc.) in an optimal way to achieve the highest possible return. The objective is to use resources in a manner that maximizes organizational benefits. For instance, a factory may decide to reduce employee working hours to boost productivity, but enhance equipment and production processes to maintain the same output at lower costs.

4-4. Risk and Cost Assessment

Rational decisions always involve a thorough evaluation of risks and costs. Managers must anticipate the risks associated with each option and weigh its advantages and disadvantages. This assessment becomes particularly important when different options entail varying degrees of risk and cost.

5. Decision-Making Models

In management, there are various models and frameworks that guide decision-making. The following are just a few of these models:

5-1. Utilitarianism

Utilitarians regard "benefit" as the sole ultimate criterion and believe the moral end to be pursued in all actions is the greatest possible prevalence of good over evil (or the least prevalence of evil over good) in the world. They also argue that good and bad can be quantitatively measured. According to this model, the best decision is the one that creates the most benefits for the greatest number of people. The decision-maker must carefully evaluate the consequences of their decision and choose the one that benefits the largest number. This model is widely used in economic and social decision-making.

- o *Example:* If a company decides to halt the production of a specific product to reduce air pollution, the decision may benefit society even if it temporarily increases the company's costs.

5-2. Rights-Based Approach

This model emphasizes that all individuals should have equal rights without discrimination. Decision-making should be based on protecting individual rights and avoiding their infringement. This approach is especially significant in large organizations that deal with legal and human rights issues.

- o *Example:* If an employee files a complaint about being unfairly denied a promotion, the manager must investigate whether the individual's rights have been disregarded.

5-3. Distributive Justice Model

This model emphasizes the fair distribution of resources and opportunities. According to this approach, decisions should be made in a way that benefits and resources are distributed equally among individuals or groups.

o   *Example:* When an organization decides to reward its employees, it must ensure that these rewards are distributed fairly and based on individual or group merit.

5-4. Rest's Model of Ethical Decision-Making

This model proposes that ethical decision-making involves four components: moral sensitivity, moral judgment, moral motivation, and moral character. Ethical failure can result from a deficiency in any of these components. The model is as follows:

o   **Moral Sensitivity:** Defined as interpreting the behaviors of individuals in response to evaluating a situation, recognizing the presence of moral issues in a context, and understanding how one's actions affect others.

o   **Moral Judgment:** The individual must determine what the right action is. In other words, they must identify an appropriate action that is morally correct.

o   **Moral Motivation:** Concerns the prioritization of ethical decisions over personal values. In this stage, ethical values are considered superior to individual values. This phase is about enhancing moral motivation and determines what *should* be done. It includes evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of each decision based on the decision-maker's emotions, perceptions, and social character.

o   **Moral Character (Ethical Action):** Consistently acting ethically over time. According to this component, individuals need honesty and autonomy to uphold ethical values. Overall, this aspect of the model—ethical action—is one of its most critical dimensions.

5-5. The Bommer Model

The Bommer model is an ethical decision-making model introduced by Bommer and his colleagues in 1987. This model includes six categories of factors that influence decisions when faced with an ethical issue:

o   **Social Environment:** This factor encompasses the cultural influences, norms, and values of the society in which an individual lives.

- o **Legal/Governmental Environment:** This includes laws, regulations, and governmental policies that affect an individual's ethical decisions.

- o **Work Environment:** This refers to the organizational culture, company policies, and workplace relationships that influence the individual.

- o **Professional Environment:** This factor includes the ethical standards and professional rules within the field in which the individual operates.

- o **Individual Environment:** This includes the person's values, beliefs, and personal experiences that affect their ethical decision-making.

- o **Personal Characteristics:** This includes personal attributes such as education level, age, and gender, all of which can influence ethical decisions.

These six factors impact ethical decision-making behavior by influencing the rational decision-making behavior of managers. In other words, managers make ethical decisions based on how these factors affect their choices.

The Bommer model is a potential behavioral model of ethical decision-making that helps managers make better decisions when facing ethical issues. By considering the various influential factors in ethical decision-making, this model assists managers in aligning their decisions with their ethical values and standards.

5-6. Rational Decision-Making Model

The Rational Decision-Making Model is a step-by-step process based on logic, rationality, and precise information. This model assumes that the decision-maker has access to all relevant information, can identify all possible options, and is capable of selecting the best option based on logical and rational analysis.

6. Stages of the Rational Decision-Making Model

- o **Problem Definition:** At this stage, the issue or decision to be made is clearly and precisely defined. This includes identifying the causes, consequences, and constraints associated with the problem.

- o **Identification of Decision Criteria:** Here, the criteria used to evaluate and compare different options are specified. These criteria should align with the decision-maker's goals and values.

- o **Weighting the Criteria:** At this stage, each identified criterion is assigned a weight or importance. These weights reflect how critical each criterion is to the decision.

- o **Identification of Alternatives:** All possible options for resolving the problem or making a decision are identified. This includes gathering information, consulting with others, and reviewing various solutions.

- o **Evaluation of Alternatives:** Each identified option is evaluated based on the decision criteria and their corresponding weights. This includes analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of each option and predicting its outcomes.

- o **Selection of the Best Option:** Based on the evaluations, the option with the highest overall score is selected. This option should align with the decision-maker's goals and values.

- o **Implementation of the Decision:** The chosen decision is put into action. This includes planning, organizing, and allocating the necessary resources for implementation.

- o **Evaluation of Outcomes:** After implementation, the results of the decision are assessed. This includes examining the success of the decision in resolving the issue or achieving the intended objectives.

7. Western Philosophers' Theories on Rationality and Ethics in Decision-Making

7-1. Herbert Simon

With a profound insight into the complexities of human behavior, Herbert Simon demonstrated that decision-making, contrary to popular belief, is not a wholly logical and rational process, but rather a domain where reason and emotion, consciousness and the unconscious, interact. By introducing the concept of "bounded rationality," he emphasized that due to cognitive and informational limitations, individuals are not capable of assessing all aspects of an issue or identifying the optimal solution. Instead, they seek a "satisfactory" option that meets their basic needs.

Simon, through outlining the stages of decision-making from "design" to "implementation," showed that this process is influenced by various factors including values, goals, experiences, and even organizational structure. He also highlighted the crucial role of intuition and experience in decision-making, asserting that in complex and ambiguous situations, reliance on these elements can be beneficial. Thus, by presenting a comprehensive and realistic theory, Simon challenged traditional views of

decision-making and opened a new perspective on understanding this intricate phenomenon.

7-2. John Stuart Mill

The prominent 19th-century British philosopher and economist also offered significant insights into decision-making. Although he did not address decision-making directly, his ideas on individual liberty, rationality, and utility have profoundly influenced how we think about the subject.

One of Mill's most important contributions to decision-making is his emphasis on individual freedom. He believed every individual should be free to make decisions regarding their own life and that no one else should decide on their behalf. This idea, elaborated in his famous book *On Liberty*, has greatly influenced political and social thought and remains highly relevant today.

Mill also stressed rationality in decision-making. He argued that individuals should use reason and logic to make the best choices for themselves. However, he acknowledged the limitations of rationality and recognized that humans cannot always make fully rational decisions. Therefore, he emphasized the importance of experience and experimentation in decision-making.

Another of Mill's major contributions is the concept of utility. He believed the aim of decision-making is to maximize utility for oneself and others. Utility could mean happiness, well-being, or anything else of value to individuals. According to Mill, individuals should consider the potential consequences of their decisions for both themselves and others, and choose the option that yields the greatest utility. In his theory of "utilitarianism," he maintained that the best decision is the one that brings the most happiness to the greatest number of people. In this view, rationality is grounded in cost-benefit calculation, and decisions that may seem ethical might not always result in the greatest public benefit under certain circumstances.

In sum, by emphasizing individual freedom, rationality, and utility, John Stuart Mill made a lasting contribution to the discourse on decision-making. His ideas continue to be highly influential and can aid in making better decisions today.

7-3. Immanuel Kant

Immanuel Kant, the great German philosopher, also made important contributions to the discourse on decision-making. His views in this

domain are primarily based on moral principles and deontology. The following are some aspects of decision-making from Kant's perspective:

- o **Emphasis on Reason and Moral Principles:** Kant believed decisions should be based on reason and universal moral principles, not emotions, desires, or potential outcomes. He stressed the importance of the "categorical imperative" as a moral guide in decision-making. In brief, the categorical imperative states that one should act only according to the maxim one can will to become a universal law.

- o **Deontological Ethics in Decision-Making:** Kant emphasized the importance of "duty" in decision-making. He believed that people should fulfill their duties regardless of the outcomes. In other words, the moral value of a decision lies not in its results but in the motivation behind it. If a person fulfills a duty merely out of fear of punishment or hope for reward, their action holds no moral value. However, if the duty is performed out of respect for the moral law, then the decision is morally valuable.

- o **Universalizability of Ethical Principles:** Kant held that moral decisions must be based on principles that are universal and applicable to all humans. In other words, if a decision is right, it should also be right for everyone in similar circumstances. This principle helps avoid arbitrary and biased decision-making.

- o **Respect for Humanity in Decision-Making:** Kant emphasized the importance of respecting humanity in decisions. He believed that people should never be treated merely as a means to an end. In other words, decisions should always consider the rights and dignity of all individuals.

- o **The Role of Free Will:** Kant believed that humans possess free will and can freely choose their actions. However, he emphasized that this freedom must be limited by moral principles and human duties.

Kant argued that morality must be based on reason, not feelings or experiences. He maintained that moral principles are universal and necessary, and apply to all humans at all times and places. He introduced the concept of the "categorical imperative" as the highest moral principle. One of its most important formulations is: "Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law."

In other words, Kant urges that before taking any action, one should ask whether he can will that everyone in a similar situation should act in the same way. If the answer is no, then the act is immoral. For example, if someone considers lying, they should ask themselves whether they can wish for everyone to lie all the time. If such a scenario is impossible or undesirable, then lying is unethical.

8. Decision-Making in the Islamic Perspective

This section explores Islamic sources on the topic of decision-making:

8-1. Exploring the Prophet and Infallibles' Traditions on Decision-Making

Sound decision-making is impossible without sufficient and accurate information about the issue at hand. As the Holy Quran states: *"Do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge"* (17:36). Reason also dictates that one should not act in personal matters without thorough investigation and assessment, as the consequences of uninformed decisions will fall upon the individual.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), in his administrative conduct, consistently emphasized the importance of obtaining precise and adequate information before making decisions. For instance, to support planning and decision-making in Medina, he ordered a census of Muslims and their information to be recorded, stating: *"Count all who profess Islam."*

Furthermore, prior to confronting adversaries, the Prophet (PBUH) would first gather detailed intelligence about them. For example, in Rajab of the second year after Hijrah, he sent Abdullah ibn Jahsh along with a group of emigrants on a mission, instructing him not to open a letter for two days, and then to act according to its contents. The letter instructed them to go to Nakhlah and gather intelligence on the Quraysh for the Prophet.

To ensure accurate information and sound decisions, the Prophet (PBUH) appointed individuals as *'Arif* and *Naqeeb*. The *'Arif* (literally, "the knower") was responsible for overseeing a tribe or group and reporting their affairs to higher authority. The *Naqeeb* (chief or notable) was someone aware of the people's conditions and held influence among them.

Islamic history and the Prophet's biography are replete with instances demonstrating his reliance on *Naqeebs* and *'Arifs* for information gathering and decision-making. For instance, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani quotes Ibn 'Asakir, who narrates that Abu 'Aziz Jundub ibn Nu'man al-

Azdi approached the Prophet (PBUH), and the Prophet appointed him as the *'Arif* of his tribe. Similarly, Rafi' ibn Khadij al-Ansari served as the *'Arif* for his tribe in Medina.

From these instances, one can conclude that correct decision-making requires sufficient and accurate information, and the Prophet (PBUH) made strategic use of various methods to attain awareness of the situation.

In general, during decision-making, multiple methods and approaches may be available to a manager. A capable and competent manager is one who selects the best and shortest path to the objective, thus saving time and reducing errors. Many managers, due to choosing an incorrect method—despite their significant efforts—end up straying from their goal and wasting valuable human and economic resources.

The decisions of the Prophet (PBUH) throughout his life show that he always adopted the best and most appropriate methods. One prominent example is the placement of the *Hajar al-Aswad* (Black Stone) during the reconstruction of the Kaaba. When it came time to install the stone, each tribe wanted the honor for itself, leading to a situation that nearly sparked conflict. They agreed to accept the verdict of the Prophet, saying: *"We are content with the judgment of Muhammad, the trustworthy."* The Prophet asked for a cloth, placed the stone in it, and instructed each tribe to take hold of a corner, thus allowing all tribes to participate. He then placed the stone in its position himself. In this way, the Prophet resolved a potentially bloody conflict with a simple yet wise approach—true management in action.

Prudent management is that which first addresses the consequences and potential fallout of hasty, ill-considered actions, and only then proceeds. That is, all aspects of the issue should be thoroughly examined at the outset, and only when no flaws are found should a decision be executed. This contrasts with unwise management, where the process is reversed.

Imam Ali (AS) states in a hadith: *"O people!... There is no good in a world without prudence."* Foresight and planning were core principles in the Prophet's decision-making approach. Imam Sadiq (AS) narrates that a man once approached the Prophet (PBUH) and said: "O Messenger of God, advise me." The Prophet asked, "Will you act upon it?" The man said, "Yes." After repeating his question three times and receiving the same response, the Prophet said: *"Whenever you decide to do something, consider its outcome. If the outcome is good and sound, proceed. If not, refrain from it."*

8-2. Ethical Decision-Making Components from the Perspective of Nahj al-Balagha

1. Knowledge and Insight

Ethical decision-making requires deep awareness and sound judgment. Managers must consistently strive to enhance their professional knowledge and update their information. Imam Ali (AS) states in *Hikmah(wisdom) 366*:

> *"If you acquire knowledge, you must act upon it; otherwise, your knowledge will be useless."*

2. Rational Choice

Solutions should be selected based on logical reasoning and avoidance of emotional decisions. Imam Ali emphasizes in *Hikmah 113*:

> *"There is no wealth more beneficial than intellect."*
> Decision-makers must analyze the consequences of each action with rationality (*Wisdom 154*).

3. Reliance on God (Tawakkul)

Tawakkul means heartfelt trust in God alongside material effort. Imam states in *Letter 28*:

> *"My success is only through the grace of God, and I expect from none but Him."*
> Tawakkul liberates managers from complete reliance on material factors.

4. Consultation (Shura)

Involving experts and avoiding autocracy are key principles. Imam Ali states in *Hikmah 161*:

> *"Whoever consults with others becomes a partner in their wisdom and knowledge."*
> Consultation is essential at all stages: problem identification, solution evaluation, and implementation.

5. Trustworthiness (Amanah)

Responsibility in preserving organizational rights and secrets is a trait of ethical managers. Imam Ali says in *Sermon 199*:

> *"Those who are not trustworthy will never reach their destination."*
> Loyalty to commitments and covenants is also an expression of trustworthiness (*Letter 53 to Malik al-Ashtar*).

6. Justice Orientation

Upholding everyone's rights without discrimination is the foundation of societal stability. Imam Ali states in *Hikmah 437*:

> *"The implementation of justice brings expansion to society's affairs."*
> Justice should be a priority in resource distribution and managerial judgments.

7. Upholding Rights

Decisions must be grounded in the preservation of divine and human rights. Imam emphasizes in *Sermon 168*:

> *"God has given precedence to the protection of Muslims' rights over all else."*
> Upholding rights involves respecting stakeholders and avoiding injustice.

8. Duty Fulfillment

Accountability and avoidance of negligence in fulfilling responsibilities are vital. Imam warns in *Letter 53*: *"Whoever neglects their duty shall perish."*

9. Adherence to Law

Commitment to religious and organizational regulations is essential. Imam states in *Sermon 16*:

> *"Whatever I say, I myself am committed to it."*
> Adherence to law is practical justice and a barrier against corruption.

8-3. Pitfalls of Ethics-Only Decision-Making According to Nahj al-Balagha:

1. Inability to Predict Outcomes

A lack of logical analysis and repetition of past mistakes. Imam Ali considers learning from history a remedy (*Hikmah 31*).

2. Haste

Reduces accuracy and increases risk. Imam advises in *Letter 53*: *"Do everything in its proper place and at the appropriate time."*

3. Dominance of Emotions

Leads to irrational decisions driven by anger or excitement. Imam regards emotional control through remembrance of the Hereafter essential (*Letter 53*).

4. Influence of Material Interests

Conflict between personal gain and professional responsibility. Imam warns in *Sermon 105*:

"Following desires leads to destruction."

9. Emphasis in Nahj al-Balagha on Rational Morality and Values

"There is no wealth more beneficial than intellect" (*Hikmah 113*) and "there is no intellect like contemplation and prudence." The most valuable self-sufficiency is intellect, and the greatest poverty is lack of reason (*Hikmah 38*). Decision-making based on reflection and awareness leads to successful outcomes. One who acts with foresight must first determine whether their action is beneficial or harmful. If it is beneficial, they should proceed; otherwise, they must refrain. As Imam states in *Sermon 154*, the ignorant act blindly and stray further the faster they move, while the enlightened walk a clear path. Here, rational utilitarianism aligned with truth-seeking is also emphasized. Goal-setting and organizing resources accordingly are among the best indicators of human intellect and inner insight. Moreover, Imam stresses progressiveness, innovation, and avoiding stagnation.

A manager must prioritize the rights of individuals in decision-making. Imam Ali places utmost importance on respecting people's rights: *"Indeed, God has elevated the sanctity of a Muslim above all else, and the safeguarding of their rights through sincerity" (Sermon 168).* He defines fair decision-making standards as: adherence to truth, observance of justice, and seeking public satisfaction.

In *Nahj al-Balagha*, ethics and values are not divorced from reason. On the contrary, neglecting them undermines one's rationality: *"Know that worldly desires distract the intellect and make one forget remembrance of God"* (*Sermon 86*, p. 145).

10. Decision-Making in Islamic Management

In Islamic management, both ethical and rational decision-making hold significant importance and cannot be prioritized one over the other. Rather, these two aspects are complementary. A successful Islamic manager must be capable of balancing them and making the best decisions for their organization within the framework of ethical principles, reason, and logic—and implementing them decisively.

11. Ethical Decision-Making

- Ethical Foundations in Islam: Islam places great emphasis on ethics and outlines numerous ethical principles in the Quran and the Sunnah. These include justice, honesty, trustworthiness, fulfilling commitments, respecting others, and upholding their rights.

- The Role of Ethics in Management: An Islamic manager must adhere to ethical principles in all decisions. They should seek decisions that are not only beneficial to the organization but also align with Islamic ethical standards.

- Moral Responsibility: Islamic managers are accountable for their decisions before both God and society. They must consider the interests of all stakeholders and avoid decisions that could cause harm to others.

12. Rational and Decisive Decision-Making

- Rationality in Islam: Islam strongly emphasizes the use of reason and reflection in decision-making. Islamic managers should employ logic and rational analysis to choose the best courses of action for their organizations.

- Decisiveness in Decision-Making: Islamic managers must be decisive and avoid hesitation. However, decisiveness should not mean dismissing others' opinions. A proper Islamic manager consults with others and makes firm decisions informed by collective wisdom.

- Importance of Rationality and Decisiveness: Rational and decisive decision-making are key traits of a successful manager. Managers must be able to act wisely in various conditions and enforce their decisions with conviction.

13. Balancing Ethics and Rationality

- Need for Balance: In Islamic management, ethical and rational decision-making are interdependent. An Islamic manager must strike a balance between the two, ensuring that decisions are both morally sound and logically grounded.

- Strategies for Achieving Balance: To achieve this balance, managers can employ various strategies, including:

o   Consulting with qualified and committed individuals,
o   Studying Islamic resources,
o   Embedding ethical values in organizational culture,
o   Establishing oversight mechanisms.

14. Final Summary and Comparative Analysis

Ultimately, decision-making is a multifaceted and complex issue. One aspect is ethical principles; another is rational, legal, and logical foundations. Depending on the situation, one aspect may gain more attention from the decision-maker. In Islamic thought, greater emphasis is placed on ethics in decision-making. Although rationality is highly valued, ethics remains a fundamental principle. In contrast, some Western theories may prioritize rationality over ethics, especially in utilitarian models focused on maximizing utility.

When rationality and ethics confront one another, in Islamic models, ethics should be prioritized in decision-making when in conflict with rationality as the ultimate goal of Islamic management is to achieve justice and divine satisfaction. In contrast, certain Western models may favor rationality as the primary consideration.

15. Western Perspectives:

- **Utilitarianism (John Stuart Mill):** Decisions should bring the greatest benefit to the most people, even if this conflicts with personal ethical principles.

- **Deontology (Kant):** Ethics is based on universal principles and human duties; outcomes should not be the basis of moral judgment.

- **Bounded Rationality (Herbert Simon):** Due to cognitive and informational limitations, people often settle for "satisfactory" rather than optimal decisions.

16. Islamic Perspectives:

- **Integration of Rationality and Ethics:** Decision-making in Islam must involve logical analysis along with ethical considerations like justice, fairness, and social responsibility.

- **Consultation and Reliance on God (Tawakkul):** Collective wisdom and spiritual reliance complement rationality and ethics.

- **Ethical Priority in Crises:** Even during conflicts, ethics should not be sacrificed for pure rationality. Upholding justice and human dignity always takes precedence.

While Western approaches may at times isolate rationality or ethics as primary, Islam sees them as mutually reinforcing. Islamic models (e.g., *Nahj al-Balagha*) emphasize the balance between rationality and ethics, and the practices of the infallibles demonstrate how this balance is realized in real-life situations. In times of conflict, Islam prioritizes ethics—such

as preserving human dignity and justice—offering a solution aligned with accountability before God and society.

In confronting the conflict between ethical principles and rational foundations in the decision-making process, achieving a balance between these two dimensions is essential. Such a balance ensures that decisions are not only logically justifiable but also aligned with ethical values and principles. However, it is crucial to recognize that each situation possesses its own unique characteristics. Therefore, rather than relying solely on general rules, one must consider the specific context of each scenario and tailor decisions accordingly. In certain critical situations, it is true that rationality may temporarily take precedence over ethics in decision-making. Nonetheless, this does not imply that ethical principles should be entirely disregarded. Even in crisis conditions, efforts must be made to uphold ethical considerations to the greatest extent possible.

17. In Conclusion:

When facing the dilemma of rationality versus ethics, Islamic managers should:

1. Employ hybrid models (data analysis + ethical principles).
2. In conflicts, consult and refer to Islamic teachings, treating ethics as a non-negotiable foundation.
3. Always pursue justice and divine satisfaction, even if it involves short-term costs.

This approach not only offers the most sustainable solution for organizations but also ensures social responsibility and the moral legitimacy of managerial decisions.