Development Actors in the Conventional Development Theory: Analysis Based on Development Actors According to the Qur'anic Worldview

Mohd Shukri Hanapi

Centre for Islamic Development Management Sudies (ISDEV),
University Sains Malaysia, 11800 Minden, Penang, Malaysia.

Abstract

Each development scheme will surely have a development actor(s). In both, Islamic-based and conventional development theories, the actors are humans. However, the function of humans as actors in both these theories differs. Thus, what is the function of humans as development actors in the conventional development theory? Is it in line with the Quranic Worldview? In order to answer these two questions, this working paper had two main objectives. First, to determine the function of humans as development actors in the conventional development theory. Second, to analyse the function of humans as development actors in the conventional development theory based on the Quranic worldview. This study, which used document research and the content analysis method, found that in the conventional development theory, humans were valued for their physical ability and not their spiritual aspect. This theory treats humans as pseudo-humans or incomplete humans. It only refers to physical strength, productivity and the human mind while ignoring the spiritual aspects, such as faith (*iman*) and God-consciousness (*taqwa*). This clearly contradicts human functions based on the Quranic worldview, which presumes humans to be the subject and *khalifah* of Allah SWT.

Keywords: Development actor, conventional development, Quranic worldview

1.0   Introduction

No development could occur if not for the presence of development actors. Thus, both in Islamic-based and conventional development theories, the actors are humans. Although the development actors in both these theories are similar, the function of humans in either of these theories is dissimilar. This is because the fundamentals that form these two development theories are different. The Islamic-based development theory is based on the

fundamentals of the Islamic worldview[1], while the conventional development theory is based on the fundamentals of the conventional theory[2]. Since conventional development theory is usually based on conventional worldview, humans in this theory are seen solely from the capability and physical aspects without considering the spiritual aspects. Therefore, the humankind component found in the conventional development theory refers to the physical part of humans or *pseudo*-human, which represents an incomplete human. This is shown in the production function characteristic in the conventional development theory, which is represented by P = f (T, M, B, K....n (where P is production, M is modal, B is labour, K entrepreneurship and n are the other factors of production). In this production function, the factors of production related to humankind are labour and entrepreneurship. Actually, humankind in the form of labour and entrepreneurship only refers to physical strength, production and mental capabilities. These factors do not consider spiritual elements such as faith (*iman*) and God-consciousness (*taqwa*) as well as the main purpose of creating humankind as subjects and *khalifah* of Allah SWT (Salleh, 2003:31).

Based on these issues, this working paper was written with the intention of achieving two main objectives. First, to identify humankind's function as a development actor in the conventional development theory. Second, to analyse humankind's function as a development actor in the Quranic worldview-based conventional development theory. In order to achieve these two objectives, this explanatory and descriptive study had applied the content analysis method. In general, the discussion in this paper is divided into three main sections. The first section discusses the function of humankind as a development actor in the conventional development theory, followed by the second section that discusses the function of humankind according to the Quranic worldview. The third section analyses humankind's function as a development actor in the Quranic worldview-based conventional development theory.

2.0   The Human Function as a Development Actor in Conventional Development Theory

In conventional development, religion is a tool for development and not vice versa. For example, Todaro (1977:62), who adheres to the Conservative/Traditional or Progressive/Radical line of thinking, had touched on the spiritual aspect. He was of the view that development must be viewed as a multidimensional process that involves various changes such as the social structure, societal attitudes, national institutions, eradication of poverty, and reducing the gap between the high income and low-income sectors while pursuing economic growth. Briefly, development should reflect overall changes or overall adjustment to the social system without excluding various basic needs (food,

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[1] Islamic worldview is built on Islamic epistemology that stems from four main sources, which are the Qur'an, Hadith, Ijmak and Qiyas. These four sources form the Islamic worldview that is very different from the conventional worldview and is the foundation for forming the Islamic-based development theory (Salleh, 2003:21). In other words, Islamic-based development theory is formed by combining the *'aqli* (epistemology and Islamic worldview) and *naqli* (the Qur'an and Hadith) religious references.

[2] Conventional worldview is formed from conventional epistemology that is based on Western thinking (*'aql*). Conventional or Western epistemology does not make religion its core values. On the contrary, it is based on rationalization, idealism, empiricism, positivism, pragmatism, scientism, existentialism, materialism, humanism, liberalism and Western modernization. Thus, secular thinking was born based only on facts, data, research findings and observations that use cognitive and natural senses. Values, ethics and aesthetics are seen as relative and normative (changing) in its use. For details about this see Ihsan (2010:147-190).

accommodation, health issues and peace). Besides that, it must also consider the individual's wants or social groups such as greater ownership of wealth, safeguarding dignity and freedom to create a better living, either materially or spiritually.

Todaro's (1977) view is in line with Lewis (1982:10), who said that economic growth depends on attitude and human beliefs about work, wealth, being frugal etc. However, economic growth would be more successful if religion accommodates and certifies as halal all changes that leas towards progress explored by the current system (secular system). In other words, Lewis's (1982) view emphasised that in order to seek progress, hence religion cannot restrict any method or production.

Although Todaro (1977) and Lewis (1982) had touched on the spiritual or religious element, it is not presumed to be part of development. For example, Todaro (1977) was inclined to believe that successful material and physical development would improve spiritual life and not vice versa. Meanwhile, Lewis (1982) had put religion at a lower level because he wanted religion to support the secular system so that development would continue to progress without any obstacles. Hence, religion is seen as a tool for development and not development as a tool of religion. Thus, it clearly shows that the conventional development theory believes that humankind can and ought to manage economic development without considering religious protocols.

In order to prove this, for example the Modernization theory[3], which was born in the West after Western philosophy had successfully isolated religion and tradition from controlling society, had rejected the natural view based on religion and developed a new worldview that rejected metaphysical aspects (Haris, 2012:35). Therefore, the Modernization theory denied humankind's role as the subject and *khalifah* of Allah SWT. According to Habermas (1985), Bauman (1991), and Hermansen (1996), the Modernization theory sees humankind as greatly revered, so much so that humankind is presumed to be the measure of all things as well as the deliverer and source of all rights.

Thus, it is clear that conventional development theory teaches humankind to separate religious teachings and economic development. Therefore, humankind in conventional development theory is presumed to be economic creatures whose function is only to produce and consume (Mill, 1844:137-138).

It is clear here that humankind's function in the conventional development theory is not more than just a commodity or tool (Sobri, 1989:75). Thus, the development actor in the conventional development theory is believed to be born only to exercise a stereotype and secularistic function, such as to consume, grow, learn, work, have a family, reproduce and

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[3] According to Salleh (2005:169) and Embong (2002:168-169), the Modernization theory is actually related to Neo-Classical Development Philosophy, which borne the capitalistic system. The main source of this is Western Social Science, which is characterised by anti-dogmatism, anti-teleology, free from values and science that is based on *daruri* knowledge and cognitive arguments only. The anti-dogmatic characteristic jeopardises the Islamic faith (*aqidah*), the anti-teleological characteristic rejects ritualism and religious analysis, the 'free of values' characteristic denies a person his belief and worldview, the scientific characteristic rejects the supernatural world and the *daruri* knowledge as well as the cognitive arguments lack the understanding and problems related to development.

eventually pass on. They are also presumed to be producers or consumers who only consider physical and mental strength, skills as well as all that is physical in nature.

3.0   The Human Function as a Development Actor Based on the Quranic Worldview

According to the Quranic worldview, humankind is a composite consisting of the physical, spiritual, cognitive and natural inclination (*nafsu*) elements (Mustapha, 1986:17). Islam has stated that the physical aspect is similar to the *haywaniyyah* (animalistic characteristics), whereas the spiritual aspect is similar to the *natiqah* (rational characteristics). The symbiosis between these aspects is what makes humankind. Both these aspects depend on one another to lend meaning to life. However, if one is missing or its significance is neglected, then humankind would not be humankind anymore (Wan Azhar, 2014).

Humankind, as creatures of Allah SWT, has a more specific function compared to its function in conventional development based on conventional worldview fundamentals. According to Salleh (2003:23), production and consumption activities are only part of the tools humankind uses to implement or defend its specific function laid down upon them as subjects and *khalifah* of Allah SWT on this earth. According to Qutb (1987a:60), being a subject is a function that connects humankind to Allah SWT (*habl min Allah*), while being a *khalifah* is a function that connects humans amongst humans (*habl min al-nas*).

The first function of humans is to be a subject of Allah SWT. This is explained in the exhortations of Allah SWT:

Meaning: *"And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me"* (al-Zariyat, 51:56).

This verse explains one of the main functions of human creation, which is to devote oneself to Allah SWT. This shows the kind of duty that determines which subjects are worshiping and which God is worshiped (Qutb, 1987c:3374). This is portrayed in the expression *illa liya'budun* (for those who worship and pray to Allah SWT). The use of the word *illa* is meant for *hasr* (limitations), which means limited to devoting oneself only to Allah SWT. Meanwhile, the use of *lam al-'illah*, which means intention, before the word *ya'budun*, explains that the intention of Allah SWT to create humankind was only to devote oneself and worship Him (Ibn 'Asyur, 2003:25).

This was explained in the Hadith of the Prophet (SAW), meaning:

Narrated by *Mu'adh bin Jabal r.a.: While I was riding behind the Prophet (SAW) as a companion rider and there was nothing between me and him except the back of the saddle, he said, "O Mu`adh!" I replied, "Labbaik O Allah's Messenger (SAW)! and Sa`daik!" He proceeded for a while and then said, "O Mu`adh!" I said, "Labbaik and Sa`daik, O Allah's Messenger (SAW)!" He then proceeded for another while and said, "O Mu`adh bin Jabal!" I replied, "Labbaik, O Allah's Messenger (SAW), and Sa`daik!" He said, "Do you know what is Allah's right on His slaves?" I replied, "Allah and His Apostle know better." He said, "Allah's right on his slaves is that they should worship Him and not worship anything besides Him." He then*

proceeded for a while, and again said, "O Mu`adh bin Jabal!" I replied. "Labbaik, O Allah's Messenger (SAW), and Sa`daik." He said, "Do you know what is (Allah's) slaves' (people's) right on Allah if they did that?" I replied, "Allah and His Apostle know better." He said, "The right of (Allah's) slaves on Allah is that He should not punish them (if they did that)." (Reported by al-Bukhariy, Hadis Number 6500, Ibn Hajar, 1989b:410).

This hadith explains that humankind is a subject and has the responsibility to worship Allah SWT and it is forbidden from worshiping anything else other than Allah SWT (polytheism).

In relation to the verse in Surah al-Zariyat (51:56), Ibn Kathir (1992b:255) quoted Ibn 'Abbas r.a. by saying that humankind was created to pay allegiance to Allah SWT by worshiping HIM, either voluntarily (*taw'an*) or by being coerced (*karhan*). This differs from the views of Mujahid r.a. quoted by al-Syawkaniy (1993e:131), that humankind was created to acquaint itself with Allah SWT. This means that after humankind has truly acquainted itself with Allah SWT, which refers to HIS existence and prowess, it would then pay allegiance to Allah SWT by worshiping Him.

Although there are some differences in the definitions, there are no contradictions. The views of Ibn 'Abbas r.a. quoted by Ibn Kathir (1992b:255), emphasises the *taqwim* (creation) aspect of humankind being a subject of Allah SWT, whereas the views of Mujahid r.a. quoted by al-Syawkaniy (1993e:131), emphasise on the *taklif* (the burden of responsibility) aspect. Hence, it is clear that humankind was created to be subjects or creatures that condescend to the wishes of Allah SWT and is burdened with the responsibility to manifest this condescending in the form worshiping Allah SWT.

The responsibility of humankind's function as a subject was pre-ordained even before humankind was created, which was during the spiritual period (before life era). Allah SWT exhorted, meaning:

"And [mention] when your Lord took from the children of Adam – from their loins – their descendants and made them testify of themselves, [saying to them], "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes, we have testified." [This] – lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, "Indeed, we were of this unaware" (al-A'raf, 7:172).

This verse explains the term of the agreement that was sealed when the seeds of humankind were still in the spiritual world, before it was physically born into this world. Humankind took the oath pertaining to the testimony (*kesaksian*) and the divine aspects of

Allah SWT, which is the reality of *Tawheed Rububiyyah* [4] and *Tawheed Uluhiyyah*[5] (Ibn Kathir, 1992a:272; Qutb, 1987b:1392). It is clear here that this event was the starting point of humankind's life. After humankind had recognised Allah SWT, it surrendered its mind and soul in order to be obedient and pay allegiance to Him. Hence, when God had witnessed this, He delivered His commands through the Qur'an and Hadith, which made it compulsory for humankind to condescend and obey.

All of humankind, especially Muslims, should remember this testimony and agreement while planning actions on all aspects of life in obedience to the commands of Allah SWT and according to their testimony (*kesaksian*) and confession (*pengakuan*). Hence, by taking cognizance of this event, each implementation of a prescribed duty or responsibility must consider the allegiance and obedience to Allah SWT. It would be inappropriate for humankind to declare allegiance to an omnipotent authority but later transgress and betray that allegiance.

In accordance with the Quranic worldview, humankind's function is to be the subject of Allah SWT; hence, it means that all development efforts are solely intended to obtain the blessings of Allah SWT. It places each effort as an act of worship that procures the blessing of Allah SWT in the after life

Besides the function of a subject towards Allah SWT, humankind also functions as the *khalifah* of Allah SWT. The former function is explained in the exhortations of Allah SWT, meaning:

> *"And [mention, O Muḥammad], when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority."[1] They said, "Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?" He [Allah] said, "Indeed, I know that which you do not know"* (al-Baqarah, 2:30).

This verse clearly shows the function of humankind as the *khalifah* on this earth. This is proven by the word *ja'il* (developer) in that verse. According to al-Tabariy (1991a:236) and al-Qurtubiy (1993a:182), the word *ja'il* in the verse means *khaliq* or the Creator (*Pencipta*). Their interpretation is based on the views of Abu Rawq, who said that the word *ja'ala* found in the Qur'an has the same meaning as *khalaqa* (create). Nevertheless, Salim (2002:87-88) said that there was a difference in meaning between the word *khalaqa* and *ja'ala*. The word *khalaqa* means, "To create something from nothing". It contains the basic meaning of 'giving' in a

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[4] *Al-Rububiyyah* originates from the word *rabb*, which means to educate, improve, collect etc. (Mas'ud, 1990:1586), whereas *rabb* means the chief, king, educator, administrator or manager. These are among the good names of Allah SWT. From a terminological perspective, *al-Rububiyyah* means to accept wholeheartedly that Allah SWT is God, the Creator, Owner and Administrator of the Universe who is the All Mighty and Ever Wise without any competition or challenge (Abdullah, 1990:84).

[5] *Al-Uluhiyyah* originates from the word *aliha*, *ya'lahu*, *ilahatan* and *uluhiyyatan*. The word *al-Ilah* is a noun that means something that is worshiped (Mas'ud, 1990a:225), whereas *Uluhiyyah* means worship or servitude (*perhambaan*) (Ibn Manzur, 1994:467). From a terminological perspective, *al-Uluhiyyah* means to lay witness that only Allah SWT the All Mighty deserves to be worshiped, obeyed and paid allegiance in an absolute fashion. The essence of *Tawheed Uluhiyyah* is he proclamation of the "two *kalimah syahadah*" (Abdullah, 1990:87).

physical and psychological form. Meanwhile, the word *ja'ala* means to prescribe a position for something[6]. This means that humankind was created or decided upon by Allah SWT to function as a *khalifah* on this earth, which was the actual intention of creating humankind.

Actually, the role of *khalifah* played by humankind was given priority by Allah SWT compared to all the other creatures. According to al-Raziy (1990:152), Allah SWT gave the role or task of a *khalifah* to humankind as a sign of general sign of honour to Prophet Adam a.s. and all His grandchildren. Besides that, the handing over of the role of *khalifah* is a test and mark of respect to humankind (Quraish, 1996:140). Hence, it is clear that humankind's role as a *khalifah* refers to the responsibility or burden of the task involved in managing, administrating and developing this earth according to the principles of Islam. In other words, humankind is a development actor.

Humankind, which functions as the *khalifah* on this earth, has several specific roles and responsibilities. Besides devoting oneself to Allah SWT (al-Zariyat, 51:56), humankind also has other roles or tasks. Among these roles or tasks are to uphold the laws of Allah SWT on this earth with fairness and impartiality (Sad, 38:26) and to spread prosperity on this earth that contains humankind, animals, plants and all creatures created by Allah SWT (Hud, 11:61). This is based on the Hadith of the Prophet (PBUH) meaning:

> "*Narrated by Abu Hurayrah r.a. that the Prophet (pbuh) exhorted: Ista'marakum means to make you one who bring prosperity (khalifah)*" (Reported by al-Bukhariy, Hadis Number 4684, Ibn Hajar, 1989a:449).

According to Quraish (2009:246),"*khalifah*" has three interrelated elements. First is humans as *khalifah*, which is portrayed in the expressions *inni ja'il fi al-ard khalifah* (we have appointed a *khalifah* on this earth) (al-Baqarah, 2:30) and *inna ja'alnaka khalifah* (we have made you a *khalifah*) (Sad, 38:26). Although the human role is not explicitly explained in Surah Hud (11:61); nevertheless, its implied connotations are clear. Its arguments are that humankind is responsible for making this earth prosperous according to the expression *wa ista'marakum fiha* (you are required to make it prosperous). Second is the universe. This is highlighted through the expression *fi al-ard* (earth) (al-Baqarah, 2:30 & Sad, 38:26) and *wa ista'marakum fiha* (Hud, 11:61). Third is the relationship between humankind and the universe and all that is contained in it. This includes the relationship between humankind and is portrayed through the expression *fa ahkum bayna al-nas* (give a decision about a particular inter-mankind matter) (Sad, 38:26) and the term *fiha* (on this earth) (Hud, 11:61). Although this relationship is not explicitly mentioned in Surah al-Baqarah (2:30); hence, it is implicitly referred to. The argument is that it would be meaningless if the *khalifah* were not given any duty or *istikhlaf*.

According to the Qur'anic worldview, humankind functions as the *khalifah* of Allah SWT on this earth; hence, they interact amongst humans and nature with full responsibility, trust,

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[6] According to Quraish (2003:138-140), the use of the word *khalaqa* shows that Allah SWT creates something out of nothing as well as emphasises that the existence is exquisite; thus, what is more exquisite is the Creator. Whereas, the use of *ja'ala* shows that Allah SWT creates something from existing materials and emphasises that this existence is beneficial and the benefits should be enjoyed by all.

morals, and ethics. Therefore, they are constantly in contact among themselves and the natural resources (*habl min al-nas*).

4.0   Analysis of the Human Function in Conventional Development Theory based on the Quranic Worldview

Humankind's specific function as a subject and *khalifah* of Allah SWT, according to the Qur'anic worldview explained earlier, is realised through two relational dimensions. Humankind's function as a subject of Allah SWT is realised through the vertical relationship with Allah SWT (*habl min Allah*) the Creator. Meanwhile, the function as a *khalifah* of Allah SWT is realised through the horizontal relationship between humankind and nature, acting as creatures on Allah SWT (*habl min al-nas*).

According to Salleh (2003:15), with humankind's status being a subject and *khalifah* of Allah SWT, humankind as the development actor in the Islamic-based development theory has a different function compared to in the conventional development theory. This difference presents itself in two aspects. First, the Islamic-based development actor has a different philosophy and function compared to conventional development. As a subject of Allah SWT, they are involved in development activities as a way of devoting oneself to or worshiping Allah SWT. When in worship, they always defend their feelings of servitude to Allah SWT. As a *khalifah* of Allah SWT, they interact among humans and nature with full responsibility, trust, morality and ethics in accordance with their role as the *khalifah* of Allah SWT on this earth. Second, the Islamic-based development actor is not specifically bound by economic aspects, which are measured by productivity, production and consumerism, as understood by the conventional development actor. On the contrary, as a subject of Allah SWT, the Islamic-based development actor has a continuous relationship with Allah SWT (*habl min Allah*), besides being the *khalifah* of Allah SWT who is in constant relations with other humans and sources of nature (*habl min al-nas*). The reward for upholding both these relationships is not only found in this world in the form of materials but also in the after world in the form of the ultimate heavenly happiness.

The combination of these two main functions reflects the actual traits of humans who function as development actors according to the Qur'anic worldview. According to Salleh (2003:31), as a development actor, humans must defend their status as a subject and *khalifah* on this earth. Hence, from a vertical relationship standpoint with Allah SWT (*habl min Allah*), humans are the subjects of Allah SWT. From a horizontal relationship standpoint between humans and nature (*habl min al-nas*), humans are the *khalifah*. Therefore, development actors were born not only to carry out the stereotype and secularistic functions such as to consume, grow, learn, work, have a family, reproduce and eventually pass on. They were also not presumed to be only producers and consumers by considering physical, mental, skills and all elements physical by nature. All activities pertaining to production and consumerism are part of human tools used to prove their allegiance to Allah SWT, which has been preordained since humans were in the spiritual realm (al-A'raf, 7:172 & al-Hadid, 57:8). Besides that, it is also a tool to fulfil the needs of a human's daily life. Moreover, in any activity or action, their status as a subject and *khalifah* of Allah SWT is inseparable.

In relation to that, when implementing the development process, humans cannot become the development subject because development is actually for humans and not vice

versa. Only then, could development actors actually produce development that falls in the category of worship (*ibadah*) and obtain the blessings of Allah SWT.

5.0   Conclusion

In conventional development theory, humans are presumed to be economic creatures whose function is only to produce or consume. Hence, only aspects such as physical and mental strength, skills and all that is in a physical form are considered. Besides that, humans are also presumed to be the measure of all things, the undertaker and source of all rights. It is clear that humans in the conventional development theory are not mere physical objects or tools. They are thought to be born only to carry out a stereotype and secularistic function such consume, to grow, learn, work, have families, reproduce and eventually pass on. The human's function in the conventional development theory clearly contradicts human functions according to the Qur'anic worldview, which is to be the subject and *khalifah* of Allah SWT. The status of humans as the subject and *khalifah* of Allah SWT permits the Islamic-based development actor to possess a philosophy and function that differs from that of a conventional development actor. As a subject and *khalifah* of Allah SWT, they get involved in development activities as a form of showing allegiance to Allah SWT. Therefore, they would steadfastly defend their stand of allegiance to Allah SWT as HIS subject and the responsibility of a *khalifah* that they shoulder.

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1*Corresponding Author: Mohd Shukri Hanapi
Centre for Islamic Development Management Sudies (ISDEV),
University Sains Malaysia, 11800 Minden, Penang, Malaysia

E-mail: hshukri@usm.my / hshukeri@gmail.com