

(1999) that Allah tested the angels to show them that Only He has the knowledge of everything. Further to the explanation of this verse by Ibn Katheer, Ibn Abass was reported to have said, that Adam was taught the names of his children (mankind) and animals, by saying to Adam “this is a camel, this is a horse, etc. until he knows the names of everything.

This leads us to the belief that natural and social reality has an independent existence prior to human cognition (i.e. realist view of ontology), as everything has a name that the Creator Has already ascribed to it, which whether we know or we do not know, remains to be the name provided to that “thing” by the Creator. This shows that “real” reality exists out there, but the Only One with that knowledge is Allah. To know this knowledge, we ought to be close to Allah that He may teach us, through the fear of Allah, as mentioned in a verse in the *Qur’an* “.... So be afraid of Allah; and Allah teaches you. And Allah is All-Knower of each and everything” (2:282).

From a subjectivist ontological standpoint with respect to Islam, there are also proofs that point to the fact that everything we perceive to be real is as a result of our experiences, out of which we socially construct our reality. Among these proofs is as stated in the *Qur’an* “And Allah has brought you out from the wombs of your mothers while you know nothing. And He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts that you might give thanks (to Allah)” (16:80). This verse clearly signifies that mankind came to the world without any knowledge whatsoever. But with time, acquires knowledge out of experience via the senses of hearing, seeing and feeling.

Conclusion

The present short discussion has contributed new knowledge to the literature of philosophical standpoints in management research by discussing the ontological and epistemological stances with respect to Islam. It was shown that the ontological and epistemological standpoints with respect to Islam are between the two extremes of both objectivist-subjectivist epistemology, and realist-subjectivist ontology. It is worth noting that Muslims use the epistemology of Allah to know His ontology. The main source of knowledge is the *Qur’an* and the *Sunnah* through which we get to acquire the knowledge of Allah (epistemology) which will in turn, lead us to know His existence (ontology) as the sole

Creator via His Creations. This is captured in a pictorial overview from Fig. 1. Future research is encouraged to further expand and enrich the understanding of the philosophy of research from other religious perspectives.

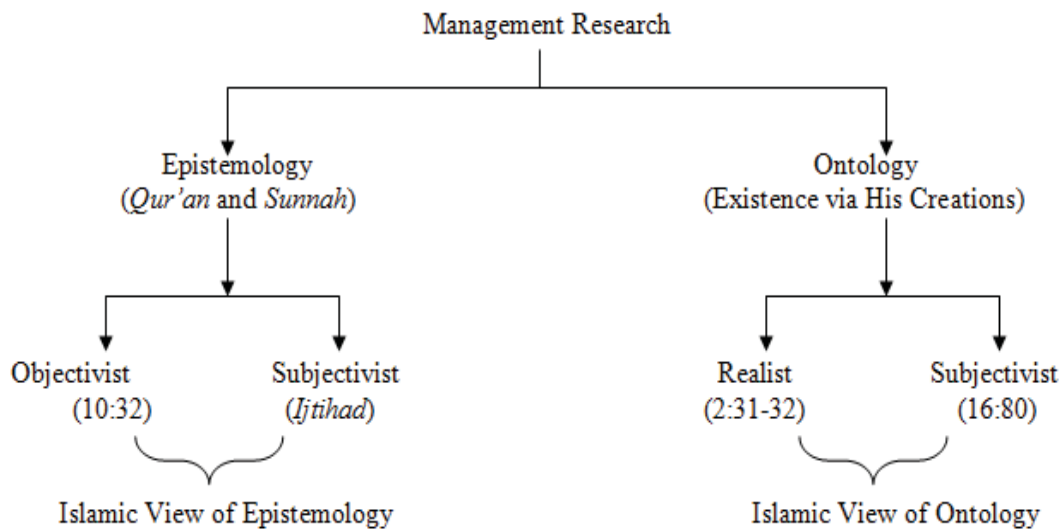


Fig.1 Pictorial Overview of Epistemology and Ontology from Islamic Viewpoint

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