

The impact of Islamic work ethics on organisational culture among Muslim staff



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Muslim scholars have defined ethics as enduring traits and characteristics in the individual that cause actions appropriate to those traits to be issued spontaneously without the need for human thought and reflection. Islamic ethics state the rightness or wrongness of these attributes within the framework of Islamic concepts, while the concepts of Islamic work ethics deal with the functioning of the framework of Islamic concepts in the form of human work activities in various organisations. Furthermore, work ethics can be effective in the organisation when it can shape the culture of the organisation. Research shows that Islamic work ethics have a significant relationship with various individual, professional and organisational factors. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between Islamic work ethics and organisational culture. The statistical population of this research consists of 1500 Muslim staff of 30 service organisations (financial, educational, medical and hotel organisations) in Moscow, Russia, in 2021, of which 306 people have been selected as statistical samples using Krejcie and Morgan's sample size table. Data analyses were performed by statistical software, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of this study confirm the significant and positive relationship between Islamic work ethics and organisational culture among the Muslim Russian staff ($\beta = 0.53$; $T = -8.65$).

Contribution: This study examines the relationship between Islamic work ethics and organisational culture in Russia and has expanded the results of previous studies conducted in other contexts.

Keywords: religion; Islam; ethics; Islamic work ethics; organisational culture.

Introduction

Human beings have two dimensions: material and spiritual, both of which require strengthening to grow and flourish. God almighty, who has created the world and has introduced human beings as the noblest of all creatures (Surah Al-Isra, Ayat 70), has shaped nature to be conquered by human beings and has provided facilities required in this regard (Surah Al-Baqarah, Ayat 29). With prudence and effort, humans can benefit from divine graces and lay the foundation for their material and spiritual growth and excellence. Meanwhile, occupation and work are among the issues that play a fundamental role in making material and spiritual advancements. In fact, having a job is an inevitable necessity for the survival of communities (Esenaliev & Ferguson 2019). Each person supplies for themselves and manages their life by working and the self-efficacy of any society depends on the amount and type of performance of its employees. Moreover, working brings vitality, whereas unemployment leads to poverty, depression, corruption and social frustration (Bertram-Hümmer & Baliki 2015). The topic of ethics discusses human values: 'how to live' and 'how to behave'. Meanwhile, the present research has focused on determining the relationship between Islamic work ethics and organisational culture. 'Job' is generally defined as any type of activity that is performed whether with the intention of receiving remuneration or not, has an afterlife goal or a worldly one, is material or abstract, involves physical or mental work, as well as industrial and production work, service work or is a religious or economic act (Murtaza et al. 2016).

Accordingly, we have an inner attitude and psychological judgement about the ugliness and beauty of the 'deeds' or 'conditions' of human beings. Meanwhile, making judgements about the ugliness and beauty of 'appearance' is very simple, whereas determining the ugliness and

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beauty of a person's behaviour, conditions and personality is a rare phenomenon. The ethical knowledge discusses the beauty and ugliness of the human spirit and practice and is generalised to human desires and actions (Ali & Gibbs 1998). The beauty and ugliness in ethics are called good and bad. The area of ethics is mostly concerned with human growth and excellence. Ethics and education will make human beings beautiful and admirable in all existential realms. Contrary to the beauty of appearance, the beauty of character is acquired (Ali 1988). 'Islamic ethics' contains such topics. In the general approach of religion, Islamic ethics is the blossoming of human nature and is based on a specific understanding of human beings. This research focuses on the role of Islamic ethics in jobs.

The first motivation of any person for working is probably to meet their needs. However, earning an income is not just to meet life needs but helps to provide welfare facilities for oneself and one's family. A community's economy grows whenever the majority of people work. This also leads to increased national production and revenues. Government revenues are increased due to taxes and it is possible to provide public services to the people (Drobníč, Beham & Präg 2010). From a religious perspective, not only people must think about others and society in their work but they also should note that their work will be desirable to God if others benefit from it. Moreover, the reward of the Hereafter awaits them (Qasim et al. 2021). Religious belief is an extremely important factor for creating motivations and a pious person will work in line with their beliefs. People who believe in the afterlife do a lot of work for the afterlife. It has been seen throughout history from the sacrifice of jihadists to the spending of the wealthy (Aflah et al. 2021). One cannot ignore the blessings of the world and the needs of the world in order to remain a real religious person and make advancements in the area of spirituality. A believer seeks to achieve the best of both worlds (Surah Al-Baqarah-Ayat 197). In other words, welfare in this life is to enjoy livelihood. Therefore, it can be concluded that people who seek to achieve best of the both worlds must make ethics the top priority of all their affairs and this behaviour is considered a culture for all of them. With regard to the importance of this subject, the present study aimed to evaluate the role of Islamic work ethics on the organisational culture of Muslim staff of 30 service organisations in Russia in 2021.

Islamic work ethics

Humans are the only creatures who are allowed by God to shape their character and determine their existential dimensions. Individual work ethic is an important procedure in the employment of individuals. Several studies have shown that work ethics are much more important than talent when considering a person for employment (Alder & Gilbert 2006). In its best form, work ethics refers to the internalisation of work as a natural state and monitoring a person's abilities and energies (Athar et al. 2016). In the last few years, work ethics has been considered by several studies due to the failure of large companies. Nevertheless, many studies are

based on the experiences of European and American countries (San-Jose & Retolaza 2018). Despite the fact that the topic of work ethics in the west has been expressed by Max Weber, the key elements mentioned by this scholar are not universal (Jones 1997). Work ethics are the commitment of the mental, psychological and physical energy of the individual or group to the collective idea in order to acquire the inner strengths and talents of the group and the individual for development (Al-Aidaros & Mohd Shamsudin 2013).

For instance, Islam has a certain concept of work ethics, which comes from the Quran and Sunnah. Islam has provided the ideological basis of personality traits that lead to economic development (Bhat 2017). The Islamic work ethics are based on Islamic principles and methods, and Islam is assumed to be a comprehensive and complete method of life (Sulaiman et al. 2021). Work ethics in Islam makes expectations so that the person is respectable. Such a view makes the person hardworking, dedicated and responsible. In addition, it provides them with social and creative relationships (Ahmad 2011). Islamic work ethics makes the person completely committed to their work in the organisation for the sake of God's approval. As mentioned by Islamic teachings, God loves the person who does his job accurately and completely (Surah Al-Mutaffifin, Ayat 1). The Quran emphasises righteous action and states with an expressive and beautiful interpretation that 'man can have nothing but what he strives for' (Surah An-Najm, Ayat 39). Meanwhile, ethics can be defined as a set of ethical values that distinguish right from wrong. Unethical behaviour in the workplace leads to organisational failure and the objection of all people. Work ethic is defined as the commitment of the mental, psychological and physical strength of an individual or group to collective thought in order to acquire the inner strengths and talents of the group and the individual for development in any way (Hutasuhut et al. 2021).

In Islam, it is the duty of every Muslim to follow the value method of the Quran and Sunnah. A method based on Islamic work values provides a model for management that can meet the interests of all groups. Issues in the field of work ethic have been different at various times and in different countries. Human science experts have expressed their interest in the subject of work ethics following the introduction of Max Weber theory, based on which work ethics must be diligent and anti-capitalist (Abuznaid 2006). Work ethics, derived from Weber's theory, encompasses elements such as diligence, long working hours without paying attention to comfort at work, a sense of pride in work and doing the right thing, inclining to success and investing wealth wisely (Weber 2001). These elements are used in Western organisations and some Islamic countries seek to perform these elements without their domestication. Meanwhile, the gradual growth of work ethics and the meaning of work in the Western world may be related to the nature of European and American societies and the values of these societies. It is noteworthy that there are certain ethical values in societies with different cultures. In this respect, one of the values is the Islamic work value (Bin Salahudin et al. 2016). Since the

beginning of Islam, Muslims have had their own unique views on work and have developed an almost coherent and orderly view of work ethics. Contrary to many religions, Islam is an all-encompassing belief that includes all aspects of life. It also involves all general and private aspects of humanity, politics, economy and all activities related to business (Bhat 2017). In fact, Islamic work ethics are beneficial to all individuals and organisations.

The basis of work ethics in Islam is the responsibility of a human being (whether male or female) for their actions not only towards the employer or the worker but also in relation to themselves, as well as the work that must be performed in the end. In other words, Islamic work ethics are a set of ethical principles and a tendency to work with a spiritual approach, which distinguishes right from wrong (Hassi, Balambo & Aboramadan 2021).

Organisational culture

In general, culture is a vague concept and often refers to an undefined aspect of the organisation. Whilst many extensive academic definitions for organisational culture have been proposed, there is no official and acceptable definition for the concept. Nevertheless, contradictory opinions have been expressed about the meaning of organisational culture in the academic field (Emmanuel 2017). Organisational culture can be defined in the form of various terms, such as team leader behaviour, communication styles, messages published in the organisation and corporate celebrations. Given that culture involves many elements, it is not a surprise that the terms used to describe specific cultures are very different. Some of the common terms used to describe cultures include perseverance, customer orientation, innovation, entertainment, ethics, research-oriented, technology-oriented, process-oriented, hierarchical levels, family support and risk-taking (Dimitrios et al. 2014). The culture of any organisation defines appropriate behaviour within the organisation. In addition, the culture encompasses common values and beliefs of employees that are determined by the leader of the related organisation and are then developed and strengthened by various methods. Ultimately, they shape the behaviours and perceptions of employees of the organisation (Hanges, Lord & Dickson 2000).

In other words, given the extreme difference in the area of activity, related industry and business conditions there is no one-size-fits-all cultural model for all businesses that could respond to the needs of all organisations. As defining culture is difficult, organisations might face problems when attempting to maintain their objectives related to organisational culture. Moreover, identifying and communicating perceived organisational culture inconsistencies may also be difficult for employees (Cameron & Quinn 2012). Organisational culture can be a reflection of the main values of the organisation, which include the business methods, workflow management, interaction and behaviour towards customers. All of these show the exact character of the organisation and how it should be managed. In brief, the culture of the

organisation is the set of beliefs that govern the organisation in practice (Schein 2004). However, the lack of compliance of values claimed to be owned by the organisation with organisational culture is considered a problem, meaning that the main organisational values are not merely a list of meaningless words, which is completely understood by employees.

In fact, a strong organisational culture prioritises the core values of the organisation and is the centre of attention in all aspects of its daily performance (Trice & Beyer 1993). It is worth noting that organisational values are in line with organisational culture when it is ethical. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed based on the importance of work ethics and Islamic teachings:

H1: Islamic work ethics have a significant relationship with organisational culture.

Methodology

In this descriptive, correlational and applied research, the statistical population included 1500 Muslim staff of 30 service organisations (financial, educational, medical and hotel organisations) in Moscow, Russia, in 2021. The authors focused on organisations that mostly had Muslim staff. In this study, the authors applied the 24-items Organisational Culture Assessment Instrument by Cameron and Quinn (2000) and the 17-items Islamic Work Ethics Questionnaire by Darwish (2000). In addition, the reliability of the Islamic Work Ethics Questionnaire and Organisational Culture Assessment Instrument was confirmed at a Cronbach's alpha of 0.78 and 0.81, respectively. Overall, values above 0.70 are indicative of the suitable reliability of research tools. In addition, the validity of the instruments was confirmed based on the opinions of 10 experts in the areas of sociology, management, theology and content validity results. Using the Krejcie and Morgan table (1970), 306 subjects were selected by simple random sampling. In total, 314 out of 350 distributed instruments were considered appropriate. Regarding gender, 184 subjects were male and 130 were female. Moreover, all subjects were Muslim. In terms of age, 98 subjects were below the age of 30, whereas 157 and 59 were aged 30–45 and >46 years, respectively. Furthermore, 32% of the participants had a BSc, 43% had an MSc and 25% had a PhD. In the end, data analysis was performed in SPSS.

Data analysis

Firstly, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was applied in SPSS to confirm the normal distribution of the data. The significance of Islamic work ethics and organisational culture was estimated at 0.214 and 0.321, respectively, which confirmed the normal distribution of the data (Faal Qayyumi & Momeni 2017). This allowed the use of non-parametric tests. In the next stage, we assessed the relationship between research variables using Pearson's correlation coefficient in SPSS (Table 1).

TABLE 1: Correlation matrix of research variables.

S.No	Variable	Islamic work ethics	Organisational culture
1	Islamic work ethics	1	-
2	Organisational culture	0.73	1

TABLE 2: *T*-test results: Research hypothesis test.

Variable		Path coefficient (β)	<i>T</i>	Results
Independent	Dependent			
Islamic work ethics	Organisational culture	0.53	8.65	Positive and significant

According to Table 1, there was a positive correlation between Islamic work ethics and organisational culture ($P = 0.73$). In addition, the *t*-value was applied to analyse the significance of the relationship between research variables. The significance of the correlation path of research variables is confirmed in the case of obtaining *t*-value above 1.96 or below -1.96 and the research hypothesis is confirmed at the error level of 0.05.

According to Table 2, there was a positive and significant relationship between Islamic work ethics and organisational culture. In this study, the *t*-value was estimated at 8.65, which was higher than 1.96. Therefore, it could be expressed that the relationship between the research variables was significant ($\text{Sig} = 0.95$). On the other hand, the impact intensity was reported to be -0.53 , which indicated the predictability of organisational culture based on Islamic work ethics.

Discussion

The approach of today's world is to return to rationality and ethics. In addition, ethics is one of the most important religious discussions and one of the most significant objectives of the divine prophets. In this concept, every deed is performed for God's approval. According to Islamic teachings, human beings must consider God's approval in anything they do. In the Islamic ethics method, the main goal is to gain God's approval and not praise and denounce people for reaching heaven and staying away from hell. As the main objective of ethical science is achieving happiness and perfection by human beings and given that they depend on gaining God's approval, the real ethics is the Islamic ethics because it lays the foundation for humans' perfection and happiness. In Islam, Islamic ethics is used as a guideline for right and wrong deeds. In addition, Islam approves the use of ethics in the community. The governance of Islamic work ethics has many benefits for organisations as part of society. In workgroups and organisations, Islamic ethics determines the trajectory of activities and forms organisational culture. From the perspective of religion, work is ongoing in the realm of existence and the person can be synched with the universe and its creator with proper function. Therefore, any kind of lawful work is desirable and is considered human virtue and divine worship. Accordingly, Islamic beliefs encourage economic activities. Given that the worldly life is a farm for the hereafter (Surah Ash-Shura, Ayat 20) and one of the best deeds is to gain lawful revenues, ethical work

guarantees the hereafter and human value of the person. Economic work is preferred by Muslims for various reasons, such as providing livelihood, meeting the needs of society, self-esteem, intellectual growth, physical health, removing the ugly face of poverty, spreading morality and eliminating social corruption, preserving religion and gaining the reward of the hereafter along with the desirability of work, all of which encourage the believer to work. The spread of religious culture about work lays the foundation for people to make all out efforts for economic growth. As people pay more attention to the work itself than to its type, they will try to get rid of unemployment in any way and prefer any lawful job to unemployment. Moreover, religious culture governance has a positive effect on labour productivity and reduction of additional costs such as waste of resources and waste of time. In addition, it improves human relations in the job market. Economic work links the world to the hereafter and well-being in this world and the hereafter is guaranteed by this type of work.

In the present study, there was a significant positive relationship between Islamic work ethics and organisational culture ($\beta = 0.53$, $T = 8.65$). Moreover, organisational culture could be strengthened by improving Islamic work ethics in organisations. The predominance of ethics-oriented culture in the organisation leads to improving the business environment and ultimately increasing organisational output. The development of social values and Islamic teachings at all levels of the organisation will have many positive effects on the organisation. Islamic culture-based society and organisation are value-oriented and the norms that govern it have many positive points. The business has also been a value issue for a long time.

One of the ways to operationalise this issue is to rely on and use this high capacity in the community. If applied correctly, this capacity can increase the level of efficiency in the correct implementation of business orientation. In order to strengthen Islamic work ethics and its impact on organisational culture, continuous review and monitoring and, if necessary, reforming and revising the activities of the organisation for promoting business culture, while sustainably monitoring organisational activities will improve the level of efficiency and increase capacity and prevent wastage of efforts of managers and employees in this regard. In addition, the use of holy Quran Ayats such as 'so when you have finished [your duties], then stand up [for worship]' (Surah Al-Inshirah, Ayat 7) and holy hadiths, narrations and hadiths of the Holy Prophet of Islam such as 'working and dedicating efforts to one's family are similar to fighting for God' (Majlesi, d. 1110/1698) will be extremely effective in institutionalising the issue of business and Islamic work ethic among the society members. This is mainly because of the fact that there is a lot of important information about work and efforts based on Islamic ethics and their use in a society that is religious and has a high level of acceptance of Islamic teachings among the people. This guides the authorities towards achieving the determined goals and extremely contributes to Islamic

culturalisation. Islamic work ethic creates and strengthens a culture in the organisation that supports desirable traits such as honesty, commitment and responsibility, discipline and cooperation. Work ethic should strengthen the culture of honesty in the organisation. Honesty should exist in every part of the organisation's work, from dealing with customers to treating colleagues and managers. This is interpreted as doing the right thing under any circumstances even if no one realises our mistakes. Employees who put Islamic ethics at the top of their agenda consider God to be the overseer of their actions, which increases their self-control. From the moment of recruitment by a company, people are given certain responsibilities and duties that must be carried out. Doing the tasks accurately will be extremely important for employees if strong work ethics and a culture of accountability are institutionalised in the people and the organisation. These individuals will also be willing to dedicate all efforts to achieve the best results.

Islamic work ethics will find its true manifestation if the commitment and responsibility of employees are accompanied by good results. Many employees do the least that is expected of them, while others go beyond that and shine above expectations. They work harder, perform better and certainly have results beyond expectations. These people are employees with strong and reliable work ethics who have understood Islamic work ethics and have considered commitment and accountability as a work culture. Work ethic comes from within each individual. Even though organisational managers can repeatedly remind the employee of the correct behaviour in the organisation, the employee will not be productive and have a satisfactory performance if they do not have the necessary discipline to observe the regulations of the organisation. It takes discipline, focus, commitment and determination to do the job well. Utilising Islamic work ethics are a factor to strengthen the culture of discipline in the organisation. Ultimately, each person, as an employee, is part of an organisation and part of a whole and must work with others. Basically, work ethics are formed in people's relationships with each other and is completed by modelling managers. It also depends on how much work ethics can help achieve the goals of the organisation. Therefore, it is appropriate to develop work ethics in accordance with Islamic teachings to include all individual, group and organisational aspects and to form a culture of honesty, commitment and responsibility, discipline and cooperation.

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The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

Authors' contributions

S.C., R.J., F.J.I.A., A.N.Z., N.N., T.M., S.H.S., W.S. and O.B. contributed to the design and implementation of the

research, to the analysis of the results and to the writing of the manuscript.

Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards of research.

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Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

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