

Work Ethic and Professionalism in Islamic Perspective

Abdul Samad Danish

Lecturer, HITEC University, Taxila Cantt.

Asif Nawaz Khan

Scholar at HITEC University, Taxila Cantt.

Muhammad Siddique

Scholar at HITEC University, Taxila Cantt.

Abstract

This article aims at conceptualizing work ethic and professionalism from Islamic point of view, connect the theological principles and yes practical applications in present era of work. The paper examines the Islamic texts, mainly the Quran and Hadith to outline the main foundations of the Islamic Work ethic (IWE). The study brings out tenets such as hard work, honesty, accountability, and social responsibility as the basic elements that make up the Islamic work ethic. Major Islamic values such as Ihsan (being the best one can be), Amanah (honour and trustworthiness), and Adl (justice) are highlighted as the foundation of creating the outstanding value of the employees. While these values are religious responsibilities first and foremost they also provide practical wisdom that is instrumental in enhancing effectiveness and ethics in business. This article puts into contrast the Islamic view of work with those of secular and Western work ethics. This is done by pointing out the identical as well as the many distinguishing aspects present in both. Profession align with Shariah (Islamic law) and attain proper conduct and well-being of the individual and society in the Islamic perspective. The paper serves a vivid discussion on how leadership and management are applied within an Islamic framework, calling for an understanding view that both spiritual values and professional skills are used together. This text looks into the outcomes of IWE for the businesses of today and methods of integrating Islamic ethics into management systems, human resource policy, and social responsibility of the production. Lastly, a model for the sense of professionalism in the Islamic setting that integrates social objectives at an individual level with the career aspirations of the person is presented. This in turn leads to a balanced work environment that is socially fair. This in-depth analysis strives to add to the debate regarding ethical work practices and, therefore, provide enlightenment to both Muslim and non-Muslim professionals who aim to adopt Islamic ethical principles into their professional lives.

Keywords: Work Ethic, Professionalism, Islamic Principals, Societal Goals, Workplace Environment

Introduction:

Work ethic and professionalism are two key concepts that significantly influence the behavior of individuals and their success at the workplace. Work ethic is not only about being punctual, diligent, and efficient at work, but it also means having commitment and passion for the work and always approaching it with integrity. While professionalism is concerned with the conduct, aims,

and character of those possessed of a professional occupation or profession, the active component refers to the engagement in a particular field of study, inquiry, or practice as a profession. The one that comprises such features as the leading ones like reliability, accountability, and ethics adherence. Nowadays in the highest competitive and rapidly changing workplace scenario, personal achievement and organizational efficiency certainly require both professionalism and work ethics (Ali, 2010; Beekun, 1997). These principles guarantee that a performer not just is meeting, but exceeding the manager expectations. This creates a culture where people not only follow, but they perform an action which may be described as good job.

In the Islamic perspective, the principle of work encompasses an important spiritual and social or communal implications of human life. The Quran and Sunnah highlight the dignity in labor and the necessity of a worker's endeavor corresponding to the utmost level of quality. The Islamic preaching's promote unity of life where work is done while the worship ceremonies are going on, division of family responsibilities and serving the community (Ali, 2005). Ihsan and excellence in doing tasks is the main principal of Islamic work ethic and is explicated by encouraging Muslims to perform their jobs sincerely and to the best of abilities with perfection and complete nature. In addition, adherence to the moral precepts of Islam like Amanah (trustworthiness) and Adl (justice) form the inner compass of Muslim professionals, distinct and unassailable as the North Star, navigating all their professional dealings with righteousness and accountability (Abeng, 1997). Therefore, in Islam working acts as a way of life and as means of worship too as well as the way through which people with their efforts making the world better.

The main topic of my research is the application of Islamic values to work ethics and the role of Muslim professionals in practice. The core of the research is concealed in the foundational texts of Islam, the Quran and Hadith. Therefore, it aims to not just discover but to uncover the core values and teachings that are the foundation of any Muslim's conduct at the place of work. The exploration of notions like Ihsan (excessive care), Amanah (confidence) and Adl (justice) that serve as the basis of Muslim work ethic is among the fundamental aspects which will guide my research. In addition, the study aims to put forward these practices in contrast with what appears among the secular and the Western professional ethics which is a means to present the unique Islamic approach.

The research not only speculate theoretical explanation, but also gives practical examples of how these dominating Islamic principles can be followed by the modern organizational methods. This can be achieved through analyzing how Islamic ethical frameworks could be built into corporate governance, human resource management, social responsibility and others. The present study thus implies the model of the professionalism of Islam so as to provide a structure that would simultaneously satisfy the individuals' quest career aims as well as align these aims to the ones of the society for a just and harmonious workplace environment. This study is significant both for Muslim and non-Muslim professionals who aspire to blend modern ethical values and Islamic

ethical teachings into their careers, hence improving the integrity and inclusiveness in organizations.

Islamic Sources of Work Ethic and Professionalism

In addition, the Quran, which is considered to be the holy book of Islam, frequently emphasizes on the value of labor, as well as hard work and proper fulfillment in many verses which means these moral qualities are very essential part of a Muslim's life. One significant verse is from Surah At-Tawbah (9:[al-Isra 105], "And say, 'To do [as you will] because Allah enjoys to see your deeds and so also [enjoys] the Messenger and the believers." Thus, you will be returned to the Hider of the unseen and the visible while He tells you of what you were doing before. " This verse underscores the importance of being diligent and sincere in one's work, as it is observed by Allah and contributes to one's ultimate accountability. Another pertinent verse is from Surah Al-Mulk (67:"And He knows that you do not have power over yourself; it is He who causes the earth to be temperate for you – walk among the mountains, and eat of His provision – and it is to Him you will be raised (nearly)." "This leads to the indication of the fact that consistency and effort are a must to use such facilities. In these addresses, similar statements are used to highlight that these things like the persistent effort, being self-focused, and the striving for the highest levels are a person's living of the spiritual contemplation and the only way to fulfill their mission on the world.

Alongside with the Quran, the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as in his habits and activities also supply the Islamic approach to the working life and the instructions as how to deal with the matters of the work. "A Hadith in which it was said, 'No one has ever eaten food that is better than that which results from one's labor with his own hands' (Abu Hurairah). This means attaching significance to the labor and living by oneself which are very admirable standards. Another Hadith highlights the importance of integrity in professional dealings: "To purify and faithful man is going to share the company of the Prophets, the upright, and the martyrs" (Tirmidhi). This shows, accordingly, that dealings in business and trustworthiness are highly honorable in Islam. Secondly, the prophet Muhammad told us: "And Allah prefers, when one of the people does a job, that (the job) be done satisfactorily" (Al-Bayhaqi). It motivates Muslims to aim for perfection (Ihsan) in life by practicing utmost truthfulness to their beliefs. Collectively, the set of teachings instruct Muslim professionals in the respect of standards of professionalism, characterized with diligence, integrity, and excellence, providing a guarantee of efficiency of work and its ethical well-grounding.

The Islamic jurisprudence, Fiqh, is an essential tool for giving the guidelines both for the secular and professional life by providing a comprehensive framework that deemed necessary in the life of a Muslim. Fiqh is founded upon the Quran, Hadith, consensus (Ijma), analogical reasoning (Qiyas), and thus it comprises an extended and elaborate ruling system; the latter of which specifies the ethical behavior in different professions. On the other hand, Fiqh indicates principles regarding fair trade, employee's rights, and contracts. It promotes justice and equity offering equal

opportunities to everyone. It creates a blur among the various synonyms of fairness namely, equity, applauding the instances wherein one practice honesty sans any of the ill practices e.g. fraud, exploitation as well as bribery (Kamali, 1991).

In addition, Fiqh urges the Muslim to strive to benefit the community by doing good works and dissuades such acts that injure individual members or the community as a whole. It considers the crucial of being bound by one's moral duties with honesty and certainly. It demonstrates the Islamic values of Amanah (trust) and Adl (justice). Similarly, Muslims who commit to these principles are in the best position to practice the appropriate level of professionalism by reflecting religious teachings. The joining of Fiqh with professional life not only helps to increase personal accountability, but also contributes to creating a social consciousness among the people, which in turn, leads to a level of equilibrium in the society as a whole. Hence, the process of jurisprudence in Islam offers a perfect method for shaping a high rate of ethical work ethic that is not only good, but also fulfill its social responsibilities.

Key Islamic Principles Shaping Work Ethic and Professionalism

The principle of Tawhid (the Oneness of Allah), which lies at the heart of Islamic faith, is the very foundation upon which goes the daily life of a Muslim, encompassing work as well. Tawhid implies that Allah alone is the God, and the principle of 'no deity but Allah' becomes a premise of a Muslim's worldview on work and professional relations. In order to have worshipping vision Muslims are asked to set as being an act of worship for performing every job no matter the position while feeling that they are serving Allah. This view indeed generates a sense of purpose and commitment to particularly, it does to the individuals allowing them to work with a high responsibility and integrity. Allah is omnipresent, which implies that He is also aware of all actions. Therefore, Muslims must worship Allah by being morally upright, avoiding deceptive practice and strive to be perfect in their professional ventures (Nasr, 2002).

Ikhlas or properly called sincerity is another important principle of Islamic work ethics alongside cherished professionalism. It entails actions of worshipping Allah only, but with no hopes for attaining recompenses as gifts or to be recognized. As an aspect of qualified behavior, Ikhlas guarantees that people are earnest and honest in their jobs. It translates to doing your best even when there are no supervisors around or you are not being offered the attractions of material wellbeing. Truly-done deeds are thought to be the most effective and to bring more blessings, consequently producing trusted as well as respected working relationships. This is just one virtue that means actions are done with integrity and the desire for ethical and every standard of the professional environment (Schimmel, 1975).

Justice (Adl) and trustworthiness (Amanah) are the moral principle that should be rooted in Islamic business. Adl focuses on equality and gives fair plays to people and groups, displaying that individuals and companies should treat each other in a respectful manner without the exploitation. Fairness principle describes a situation when give all the employees fair treatment and install integrated system of payments as well as business practices. While Amanah represents

the concept of being trustworthy and dependable, 'adl signifies fair and just characteristics of a person. It requires many people to abide by their terms of reference and respect the importance of reliability and integrity. Therewith, such principles are the key elements of ethics which put all Islamic businesspeople on the same level, by forcing them to be fair and transparent in their interactions with each other (Ahmad, 1995).

Alongside these and other the Shams and al-Bitar values, the two concepts of excellence and Ihsan (divine blessings) are also daunting. Ihsan urges Muslims to give their best, not just to follow the laws exactly, but to perform at the highest level in everything they do in order to achieve the highest quality of whatever they do. This principle is reflected in the Prophet Muhammad's saying: "Allah enjoyed what a person was doing, he or she had to make [it] in a very high quality" (Al-Bayhaqi). Blessings of Barakah represent the divine favors conveyed to one those delight in doing good and are considered as good omens. When one work enthusiastically, honorably and in conformity with Islamic concepts then, in their belief that being blessed with Barakah, or a positive divine influence, this leads to the spiritual and general wellbeing of both individuals and organizations (Esposito, 2003)..

Practical Applications in the Workplace

The principles of unity, honesty, justice, trust, sincerity and strength are in essence the real-world guidelines of ethical conduct which provide me with the directions to strive for excellence as well as the atmosphere of responsibility and integrity in the work place. In terms of practice, these principles are used to set a foundation for morals that guide a Muslim's business dealings, ways of communicating with fellow colleagues, and ethics on overall conduct at workplaces.

Honesty and Integrity:

Trust is honesty personified, harnessed and employed. A workplace ethic is to commit to truthfulness during all communication and not cheating or being devious. Keeping promises and fulfilling commitments are also a part of it. For example, businesses are expected to provide clear product information to customers, and customers need to be completely aware of things that they buy without concealed defect and misloading claims which are misleading. Workers shall give out the exact information on the duration of their work and refrain from any occurrence of fraud (dishonesty), including but not limited to those such as tampering with reports or claiming the work done by others.

Time Management and Efficiency:

The development of Ihsan, the principle of striving for excellence, has been a major component of the religious instruction of Muslims in their efforts to be successful and productive at work. Time management is key in avoiding neglecting one's duties by using time irresponsibly. In other words, time is money. In fact, this realization requires a constant attention to the task list, meeting deadlines and minds open to new ways for improving workflow and efficiency. On the other hand, a project manager might integrate productivity-boosting tools and practices in the aims to

complete projects on time or below budget. Here, he or she can show his engagement with excellence and responsibility as values.

Customer Service:

Barakah (divine favors) become possible through providing excellent customer service operations. Through their approach of kindness, patience, and honesties, businesses observe both their ethical duty and their ability to create a connection with their potential customers; thus, lead to the development of loyalty. For instance, a customer service employee who receives consumer feedback compassionately and expeditiously, deals with problems and contacts back to see if everything has been done well. Apart from acting in line with the principles of Ihsan, this strategy is in fact developing a good reputation and also achieving sustainable business success.

Islamic Perspective on Leadership and Employee Relations:

Servant leadership is one of the central Islamic teachings about leadership. In this paradigm, a leader is considered as a caretaker within his/her team and it is the welfare and growth of employees (the team) that are of primary focus. The methodology is centered on the pillars of Adl (Justice) and Amanah (Trustworthiness). Good leaders are described as just, compassionate, and empathic. They create venues that are friendly to all the workers and a working zone which is good to be associated with. For example, the Islamic manager may strive for fair wages by enforcing this rule, providing workers with opportunities of professional growth and for the purpose of correcting grievances at the same time, transparency is a step towards the solution. Worker relations do develop on the basis of mutual understanding, trust and community sentiments that respond well to the work environment's harmonious and fruitful atmosphere. Hence, the hardworking is practiced through the presence of honesty, efficiency, provided outstanding customer service and ethical leadership. Hence, Muslim professionals by taking those principles as a pillar can shape the work environment which will both through productivity and morality ideally works for individuals and organizations.

Challenges and Contemporary Issues

Challenges in Applying Islamic Work Ethic

That Islamic work ethic was applied in modern organization presents us with a lot of challenges. Another challenge that is likely to arise is the complexity of modern workplaces, which tends to accommodate staff members whose origins vary from a cultural aspect to a traditional belief. This heterogeneity among workers can be the cause of nothing but misinterpretation or conflict because of the differing views and perceptions of those that are not familiar with them. Indeed, intercommunal engagement may occur, which will undoubtedly require earned trust and frequent ground rules to prevent conflicts from developing.

Another issue experienced is of conflict of judgment in accordance with secular business practices that disagree with Islamic directives. For instance, when it comes to conventional banking and its reliance on interest (riba), sharia banking is the answer, which in its turn forbids usury. It can cause serious conflicts to Muslim professionals in the business institutions which have traditional

financial structure. Besides, an intense competition of today's market can give rise to corruption through deceit, or unfair treatment while the Islamic principle of honesty relates to justice and fairness (Ali & Al-Owaihyan, 2008).

Contemporary Issues: Workplace Conflicts, Discrimination, and Globalization

Workplace conflicts and discrimination are recognized issues that current days encounter, and they contradict what we make out of the Islamic working ethics. Muslims while observing their religious practices, they are particularly susceptible to such discrimination, bias and stereotypes, against their particular values, customs, and recipes. Severe discrimination in the workplace can often lead to a negative environment where people are upset, therefore lowering the amount they work. Not only that but globalization involves the new issues of which are the employees' management and of regulating in different environments. Similarly, the issues relating to global businesses might involve working in areas where Islamic notions are either ignored or disregarded and in such circumstances the adherence to the Islamic principles they have prescribed might be compromised (Syed & Pio, 2010).

Islamic Ideals Providing Solution and Recommendation

Islamic principles may propose meaningful answers and guidance for addressing these challenges rather than eliminating them. In respect of the realms of labor disputes, the principle of Shura which represents consensus and openness among employees is employed in order to foster peaceful dialogue. The organizations can help to solve grievances and conflicts more genuinely by designing policy aimed at the involvement of inclusive decision-makings. The principle of Adl (justice) also purposes justness to all workers, and it is considered crucial that there are no discriminative policies and workers are the ones who get equal benefits.

The field of Islamic ethics is one that can help multinational corporations apply fair labor policies and ethical and moral business models in the framework of globalization. As an example, the principle of Amanah (responsibility) helps in organizing fair business practices, whereby companies adhere to ethics, irrespective of the general regulations. Furthermore, by adopting Islamic finance principles within the business operations which include profit-sharing and risk-sharing, the area of ethics is provided with suitable alternatives in convention financial practices and, therefore, match the goals and values of the Islamic finance. The implementation of these tenets as a corporate policy and standard procedure will therefore lead to an ethical, inclusive, respectful and, ultimately, sustainable working environment that will ensure well-being of workers with different religious commitments and beliefs.

Conclusion

Through this research we have shown the great influence of the Islamic teachings which helps to establish good work ethics and professionalism among all members of the society. The primary tenets of Islam like Tawhid (divine oneness), Ikhlas (sincerity), Adl (justice), Amanah (trustworthiness), Ihsan (excellence) and Barakah (divine blessings) all together steer the Muslims towards doing their work with morality, seriousness, and an idea of divine purpose.

These concepts highlight the ethical conduct, stress the high standards of functions and provide a cozy environment by practicing justice. Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh) is thereby providing an integrated system of process control, under which practices and trade installs moral standards and ethics. The Islamic approach to fulfilling one's goals in the globalized world is really appealing for its diversity of reasons. Honesty, fairness and accountability could be brought into Islam work ethics and so trust and efficiency could be increased in organizations. The most important thing is the idea of equity and equality, it is that one of the main factor that helps in creating the more inclusive working environments where the member of this community feel valued and respected. In addition, this can cause elevated job satisfaction and productivity in the end when excellence and sincerity is accumulated by individuals in their responsibilities accomplishment. Particularly due to the diversifying and globalizing world today, Islamic principles represent a strong ethical background, a handrail leaders could use in making right professional choices in a fast changing, multicultural and multinational business environment. The potential future academic performance may comprise testing implications of the Islamic approach to work in environmental and various other industries, exploring different integration mechanisms in different cultures and organizations. Exploring the jobs of Muslim professionals in secular workspaces would also undoubtedly contribute credible info on options and challenges of adhering to Islamic moral framework in different settings. Eventually, the recognition of and the implementation of the Islamic principles at the workplace can help to solidify the moral, general peace, and prosperity of the global economical society.

References

- Abeng, T. (1997). "Business Ethics in Islamic Context: Perspectives of a Muslim Business Leader." Ali, A. (2010). "Islamic Work Ethic in Arabia." *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 1(1), 5-19.
- Abeng, T. (1997). "Business Ethics in Islamic Context: Perspectives of a Muslim Business Leader." *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 7(3), 47-54.
- Ahmad, K. (1995). "Islamic Ethics in a Changing Environment for Managers." *Journal of Business Ethics*, 14(6), 497-507.
- Al-Bayhaqi, A. I. (1994). *Shu'ab al-Iman*. Dar al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah.
- Al-Bukhari, M. I. (1976). *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Darussalam.
- Ali, A. (2010). "Islamic Work Ethic in Arabia." *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 1(1), 5-19.
- Ali, A. J. (1988). "Scaling an Islamic Work Ethic." *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 128(5), 575-583.
- Ali, A. J. (2005). "Islamic Perspectives on Management and Organization." *Edward Elgar Publishing*.
- Ali, A. J., & Al-Owaidan, A. (2008). "Islamic Work Ethic: A Critical Review." *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*, 15(1), 5-19.
- Al-Tirmidhi, M. I. (1975). *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*. Dar Al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah.
- Beekun, R. I. (1997). *Islamic Business Ethics*. International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT).
- Beekun, R. I. (2012). *Islamic Business Ethics*. International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT).

- Business Ethics Quarterly*, 7(3), 47-54.
- El-Ashker, A. A., & Wilson, R. (2006). *Islamic Economics: A Short History*. Brill.
- Esposito, J. L. (2003). *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*. Oxford University Press.
- Faridi, F. R. (1991). "Islamic Principles of Business Organization and Management." *Islamic Quarterly*, 35(3), 203-222.
- Kamali, M. H. (1991). *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence*. Islamic Texts Society.
- Khaliq, A. (2007). "Management from an Islamic Perspective: Principles and Practices." *Research Management Journal*, 5(2), 9-23.
- Nasr, S. H. (2002). *The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity*. HarperOne.
- Rizk, R. (2008). "Back to Basics: An Islamic Perspective on Business and Work Ethics." *Social Responsibility Journal*, 4(1/2), 246-254.
- Schimmel, A. (1975). *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*. University of North Carolina Press.
- Syed, J., & Ali, A. J. (2010). "Principles of Islamic Leadership: A Comparative Study." *Journal of Management & Organization*, 16(5), 691-707.
- Syed, J., & Pio, E. (2010). "Veiled Diversity? Workplace Experiences of Muslim Women in Australia." *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 27(1), 115-137.
- Wilson, R. (2006). "Islamic Finance in Europe." *Journal of Financial Services Marketing*, 11(4), 277-289.