

Islamic Work Ethic and Employee Performance: The Role of Job Satisfaction as a Mediator

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Abstract: This study examines the direct influence of Islamic work ethic on employee performance. This study also investigates the role of job satisfaction as a mediation variable in the relationship between Islamic work ethic and employee performance variables. This study involved 69 respondents as samples that were determined using a data collection method, namely purposive sampling, and using a software, namely SmartPLS version 3.0, to employ partial least square (PLS). The empirical results of this study found that Islamic work ethic significantly influences employee performance. Meanwhile, job satisfaction can significantly mediate the relationship between Islamic work ethic and employee performance. Finally, this study discusses the implications, limitations, and further research.

Keywords: Islamic work ethic; IWE; employee performance; job satisfaction

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INTRODUCTION

The morality issue arising in the work environment indicates that one needs to stick to moral principles. Morality is considered one of the main foundations of success and is the benchmark for the long-term quality of a business. Morality is considered to help employees and employers have certain characteristics such as honor, justice, honesty, persistence, reliability, and loyalty (Düşmezkalender et al., 2021). Therefore, a set of rules must be applied to employees (Hakim et al., 2019), one of which is by applying ethical values in the company to reduce the consequences of deviation in the workplace. The principles of Islamic religious are widely practiced in Indonesia, which is one of the countries with a majority of the Muslim population, including at work. As a result, it is important for managers to start studying ethics based on Islamic religious principles (Jawad et al., 2013) because they are considered capable of shaping one's attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors (Nasution et al., 2020).

Islamic work ethic (IWE), which is based on the principles of Islamic teachings, refers to a set of morals that regulate and direct one's attitudes and behaviors at work in accordance with the teachings of the Quran and the words of the Prophet Muhammad SAW

(Mohammad & Quoquab, 2016). The strong relationship that someone has with God may influence their attitudes and behaviors (Rokhman et al., 2012), in several studies suggested that it can increase the efficiency and quality of an organization (Aldulaimi, 2016). IWE puts an emphasis on ambition that has noble emotion, honesty and hard work (Mohammad et al., 2018), selflessness, cooperation, accountability, good social relationship, and creativity in the workplace. IWE is considered an ideal moral to be applied in a Muslim work environment (Gheitani et al., 2019) because it can encourage cooperation, equality, unity, and spirituality in the workplace (Ahmad, 2011).

Previous empirical studies conducted by several researchers suggested that IWE that develops within a company can improve performance and work more efficiently (Ud Din et al., 2019). The concept of Islamic work ethic will teach employees to have confidence and enthusiasm in carrying out their work seriously to achieve the expected goals. IWE can be a guide for employees to have certain personalities, for instance, being disciplined at work, being responsible for carrying out duties, working sincerely, making decisions rationally, and being honest at work (Saban et al., 2020). In addition to employee performance who adopt more behaviors that refer to IWE tend to feel more satisfied with their work and organization (Yousef, 2001). Therefore, it can be used as an important asset for the company to maintain its sustainability (Hakim et al., 2019; Mohammad et al., 2018; Sari et al., 2019). However, there have been not many studies that discuss the relationship between Islamic work ethic, employee performance, and the relationship of job satisfaction capable of mediating IWE on employee performance in the organizational sector that is based on the values of Islamic teachings or nonprofit faith-based organization (FBO). Based on the background that has been explained, this study attempts to fill the gap in the relationship between variables examined in one of the nonprofit FBOs in Central Java.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

Islamic Work Ethic

The word Islamic work ethic was taken from Webber's theory of Protestant work ethic (Ud Din et al., 2019). Islamic work ethic exists as a comprehensive, moderate, and realistic branch of work ethics based on the Quran "divine command theory" as well as the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW to identify ethical behavior. Ethics in Islam are not only religious morality of certain actions, but also cover all aspects of life physically, spiritually, morally, and in the form of worldly things (Salahudin et al., 2016), one of which is work. IWE puts an emphasis on cooperation at work and consultation as a way to overcome obstacles so as to avoid mistakes (Rokhman et al., 2012).

According to the work ethic based on Islamic principles, work is seen as something that can improve economic, social, and psychological life based on faith in God (Romi et al., 2020). Islamic work ethic considers that working is something good (Sari et al., 2019), which is by the meaning of Surah At-Taubah: 105 that Allah will give those who work what they are working for. The Prophet Muhammad SAW said, "If he works for himself so as not to beg others, that too is in the way of Allah." (H.R Tabarani).

Islamic Work Ethic and Employee Performance

Performance is a behavior of how a target is achieved (Asbari et al., 2021). Islamic work ethic can direct and assist employees in performing their duties properly (Hakim et al., 2019; Sari et al., 2019). The regression analysis data presented in the study of Awan et al (2014) revealed that IWE has a significant influence and increased employee performance by 34%. This result is supported by (Imam et al., 2015) who suggested that Islamic work ethic used as a guideline for employees in a company is proven to improve their performance.

Employees who implement Islamic work ethic tend to achieve better performance because they strive to carry out their responsibilities that are considered as obligations (De Clercq et al., 2019).

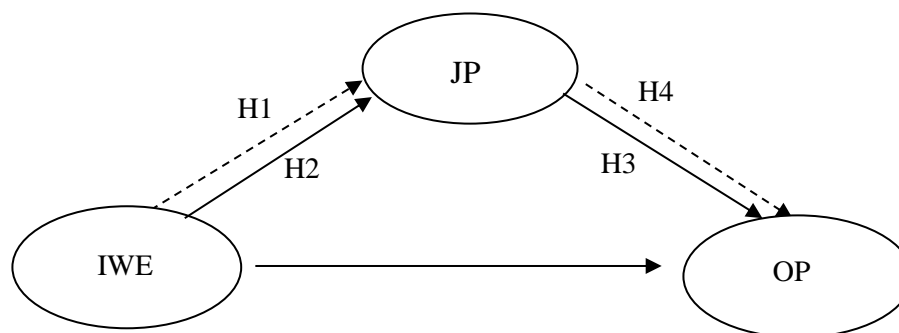
H1: Islamic work ethic has a significant positive influence on employee performance.

Islamic Work Ethic and Job Satisfaction

Several studies conducted on Islamic work ethic suggested that it has a positive influence on job satisfaction (Rawwas et al., 2018; Taufail et al., 2018; Ud Din et al., 2019). Employees with strong IWE will assume that their obligation to work can be a personal satisfaction. As a result, they tend to feel satisfied with their work (Khan et al., 2015). IWE can bring out the intrinsic motivation of employees to work so that they can feel happiness in their work and satisfied with the work they do (Ud Din et al., 2019). Based on the Islamic beliefs, Islamic work ethic is the main component. Therefore, if employees demonstrate high IWE, they will have higher satisfaction (Taufail et al., 2018).

H2: Islamic work ethic has a significant positive influence on job satisfaction.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study



Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance

Job satisfaction is an emotional condition that refers to the positive feelings generated by the experience obtained while someone is working (Onyemah et al., 2018). Several previous researchers such as (Dinc, 2017; Loan, 2020; Taufail et al., 2018) stated that job satisfaction has resulted in a significant positive influence on its relationship with employee performance. Job satisfaction is said to be able to influence performance as long as the job satisfaction is fulfilled. In other words, when an individual feels satisfied with what they get at work, they will seek to improve their performance. They will not likely do the same if they do not find any satisfaction with their job. The phenomena that are often considered

as triggers for the emergence of dissatisfaction are that employees do not have opportunities to achieve something, different values between what is received and what is expected, and employers rarely promote the employees to higher positions (Saban et al., 2020; Ye et al., 2019).

Several studies also revealed that job satisfaction is considered to be able to mediate the relationship between Islamic work ethic and employee performance. In order to improve performance, it is necessary to increase job satisfaction with the support of Islamic work ethic (Hayati et al., n.d.; Noor et al., 2021).

H3: Job satisfaction has a significant positive influence on employee performance.

H4: Job satisfaction mediates the influence of Islamic work ethic on employee performance.

METHODS

The data were collected from 62 employees who worked at a non-profit foundation located in Colomadu Subdistrict, Karanganyar Regency, Central Java. The data collection was carried out with the purposive sampling method through filling out a questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale. The five points represent strongly agree, while one point represents strongly disagree for each question (Sekaran & Bougie, 2017). This study adopted the structural equation modeling (SEM) approach, or commonly known as partial least square (PLS), using a software namely SmartPLS version 3.0.

The measurement of Islamic work ethic variable was according to the instrument developed by Ali (2001). Several examples of the items used are "Laziness is a bad trait," "Dedication to work is a good thing," and "Being fair and wise at work is a good thing for the welfare of the community." The measurement of employee performance variable used the instrument developed by Williams & Anderson (1991), such as "I complete the tasks assigned properly/as expected," "I carry out the responsibilities specified in the job description," and "I perform the expected tasks." Meanwhile, the job satisfaction variable was measured through the instrument developed by Spector (1994), such as "I am paid enough according to the workload," "I gain recognition when I do my job well," and "I enjoy working with my colleagues."

RESULTS

Respondents' Social and Demographic Profiles

According to the results, 58% of respondents were men with an average age of 20-30 years (71%), 31-40 years (26.1%), as well as 41-50 and 51-60 (1.4% each). The majority of respondents had worked for >3 years (37.7%), <1 year (24.6), 2-3 years (23.2%), and <2 years (14.5%) as demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondents' Profiles

Description	Total	Percentage
Number of Samples	69	100%
Sex		
Male	40	58%
Female	29	42%
Age		
20-30 years old	49	71%
31-40 years old	18	26.1%
41-50 years old	1	1.4 %
51-60 years old	1	1.4 %
Duration of Employment		
<1 year	17	24.6%
<2 years	10	14.5%
2-3 years	16	23.2%
>3 years	26	37.7%

Model Measurement and Hypothesis Testing

The results of reliability and validity tests on the structural model demonstrate a good model (fit) indicated by a second factor loading value of $0.5 < LO < 0.9$ which can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2: Cross Loading

Indicator	Variable		
	Islamic Work Ethic	Employee Performance	Job Satisfaction
IWE1	0.786	0.478	0.418
IWE2	0.845	0.616	0.415
IWE3	0.812	0.491	0.419
IWE4	0.773	0.435	0.428
IWE5	0.754	0.503	0.501
IWE6	0.714	0.795	0.638
EP1	0.700	0.842	0.645
EP2	0.573	0.816	0.493
EP3	0.562	0.638	0.302
EP4	0.460	0.743	0.581
EP5	0.544	0.829	0.547
EP6	0.569	0.752	0.509
JS1	0.410	0.445	0.689
JS2	0.391	0.462	0.727
JS3	0.270	0.253	0.592
JS4	0.608	0.662	0.796
JS5	0.398	0.374	0.750
JS6	0.520	0.580	0.784

Based on the cross-loading values, the results of the discriminant validity test, displayed in Table 2, have been analyzed. A statistical method used to evaluate the relationship between

a particular item and every construct in a model—including its reflection—is called cross-loading. according to (Chin, 1998), when comparing variables, an indicator is considered appropriate for discriminant validity testing if its cross-loading value on a specific variable is the highest. Discriminant validity can also be observed through the average variant extracted (AVE) value for each indicator whose required value must be > 0.50 as a sign that the model is good (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 3: Average Variant Extracted (AVE)

Variable	Average Variant Extracted (AVE)
Islamic Work Ethic	0.611
Employee Performance	0.528
Job Satisfaction	0.598

Based on the results of table 4.6, it is known that the AVE value of the variables Islamic work ethics, employee performance and job satisfaction is > 0.5 , so it can be inferred that each variable has strong discriminant validity.

Table 4: Composite Reliability

Variable	Composite Reliability
Islamic Work Ethic	0.904
Employee Performance	0.869
Job Satisfaction	0.898

Composite Reliability is generally used to test the reliability value of each indicator on a variable. This test can provide a reliable value for a variable if a variable has a composite reliability value > 0.7 . Based on the data shown in Table 4, it is evident that the composite reliability value for all the variables examined exceeds 0.7. Based on the obtained data, it can be inferred that each variable exhibits a significant degree of reliability.

Table 5: Analysis of Hypotheses

Variable	Original Sample O	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P
Islamic Work Ethic on Employee Performance	0.526	0.106	4.945	0.000
Islamic Work Ethic on Job Satisfaction	0.623	0.070	8.943	0.000
Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance	0.345	0.112	3.091	0.002

Source: Results of data processing of PLS bootstrapping output

Furthermore, Table 5 shows the results of hypothesis testing which presents direct relationships between variables using regression analysis. The relationship between Islamic work ethic and employee performance variables has a value of 0.526 with a statistical t-value of 4.945 > 1.96 that is significant in $\alpha = 0,05$ (p-value = 0.000 < 0.05). Therefore, according to the results of the analysis, it can be concluded that H1 is accepted in that Islamic work ethic has a significant positive influence on performance. This result is

supported by previous research conducted by (Mohammad et al., 2018). Subsequently, the relationship between Islamic work ethic and job satisfaction variables has a value of 0.623 with a statistical t-value of $8.943 > 1.96$ that is significant in $\alpha = 0,05$ (p-value = $0.000 < 0.05$). Therefore, it is concluded that H2 is accepted in that Islamic work ethic has a significant positive influence on job satisfaction (Nasution et al., 2020). The third coefficient analysis is the relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance variables that has a value of 0.345 with a t-statistic value of 3.091 where > 1.96 is significant in $\alpha = 0,05$ (p-value = $0.002 < 0.05$). As a result, it can be concluded that the job satisfaction variable has an influence on employee performance (H3 is accepted).

The Role of Job Satisfaction: Mediating the Relationship between IWE and EP

Table 6: Indirect Relationship

Variable	Original Sample O	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ((O/STDEV)	P
Islamic work ethic on employee performance through job satisfaction	0.215	0.078	2.746	0.006

Source: Output bootstrapping results of the influence of mediation

Table 6. The relationship between Islamic work ethic and employee performance can be explained in terms of job satisfaction as a mediating variable with a value of 0.215 (t-statistics of $2.746 > 1.96$) significance level $\alpha = 0.05$ and p-value < 0.05 which indicate that if job satisfaction is included in the relationship, it will be able to partially mediate the relationship between Islamic work ethic and employee performance. Therefore, it can be concluded that **H4 is accepted**.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Islamic work ethics refers to a set of principles and values derived from Islamic teachings that guide an individual's conduct in the workplace. These principles encompass several aspects such as business ethics, dedication, teamwork, accountability, social relations, and innovation. Several previous researchers linked Islamic work ethics to human behavior in organizations (Noor et al., 2021) because human resources are a determining factor in the success of organizational activities. Organizations need to pay attention to the performance of their members for the sustainability of the organization.

Islamic work ethic can help employees do their work properly and guide them to have trustworthy, disciplined, confident, committed characteristics with the company and can instill a sense of sincerity in working in accordance with the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, "Verily, Allah does not accept any good deeds unless they are done sincerely and in pursuit of his countenance." (H.R Abu Dawud) and the verse of Surah Al-A'raf: 29, "And worship Him by sincerely worshipping Him alone." The results of this study are supported by previous studies which stated that Islamic work ethic is the factor that most influences employee performance in a company (Hakim et al., 2019; Hayati et al., n.d.; Mohammad et al., 2018; Ud Din et al., 2019). The more employees apply Islamic

work ethic in their work life, the more efficient their work will be.

This study provides evidence that the Islamic work ethic has a significant impact not just on employee performance, but also on job satisfaction. Put simply, the greater extent to which employees incorporate Islamic work ethic into their professional lives, the higher their level of job satisfaction will be. Furthermore, a noteworthy finding in this study is that the Islamic work ethic, when coupled with job satisfaction, exerts a substantial and positive impact on employee performance. Consequently, it is imperative for the organization to prioritize the examination of aspects that impact employee performance via job satisfaction. One such component involves offering diverse possibilities for employees to express their creativity, while also demonstrating enhanced recognition for their commendable contributions.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations because it only analyzed the samples obtained from a single foundation. Different results may be obtained if the study can use a larger sample from several other nonprofit foundations or organizations and use different research models. These are expected to be able to provide research accuracy for general comparison. Further studies need to explore the influence of Islamic work ethic on employee performance. It is suggested that further studies add other variables that are predicted to improve employee performance, such as organizational justice, work stress, organizational culture, or intrinsic motivation.

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