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BOOSTING HIGH MORALE IN THE WORKPLACE THROUGH ISLAMIC VALUES

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Abstract: The objective of this study is to highlight the role of Islamic values in shaping the foundation of morale in the workplace. Indeed, building a strong foundation in an organization requires moral resilience from all members as a unified whole and supports each other in an integrated manner. However, overcoming moral problems in the workplace is a daunting task. There are various aspects and values that must be integrated, including the religious values held by members of the organization. In regard to Islam, morals and values are originated from the Qur'an and Hadith which provide guidance in practicing the daily life for the Muslims which also can be practiced as work ethics. Therefore, it is necessary to study further the components that strengthen the moral foundation in the workplace through Islamic values. To address this issue, relevant literature is reviewed. The results of this study suggest that Islamic values can support the emergence of high morale in the workplace. Eventually, it can help building the foundations of moral principles in organizations as an effort to deal with various moral problems for the sustainability of the organization.

Keywords: High Morale, Components of Moral, Islamic Values

Paper type: Review article

Introduction

Building and maintaining high morale as a foundation in organization is a complicated and daunting task. It is crucial to understand whether we actively create high morale to be able to build a foundation for high morale or whether it is necessary to create conditions that allow enthusiasm to arise, commitment, involvement, and motivation to foster among workers. If the authority does not immediately diagnose the moral problems within the organization or ignore these problems then it likely to create a bigger problem. So organizations need to overcome all kinds of dysfunctional practices and must have a design to examine the foundation of the building carefully (Bowles & Cooper, 2009).

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The development of moral values in any society is a complex process since it is related to customs, family traditions, community leadership, literature, and individual judgment. However, practicing morality outside the religious context is difficult for many Muslims. In Islam, morality is understood as a list of rules, duties and responsibilities that originated directly from the Qur'an and hadith (sayings and traditions of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions) so that ethical behavior in Islam 'is not manifested in the form of propositions, but as an order and divine act'. All Muslims must accept the Qur'an as the basis of their ethics for two reasons: firstly, Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the word of Allah, and secondly, they believe that it contains answers to all questions and solutions for everyday life (Halstead, 2007). Furhtermore, Halstead (2007) emphasized, in the minds of many Muslims, there is still no clear distinction between the concept of moral obligation and the concept of religious obligation. In the context of religion, morals include one's obligations to the Creator and also one's obligations to fellow human beings. But the question arises what should be done by a Muslim and how they should act related to the ideal moral concept in accordance with religious teachings or demands for a Muslim. Of course, Muslims believe that God has confirmed what is halal (permitted) and haram (forbidden) and leaves it up to the individual to choose to follow God's instructions or ignore them.

The main difference between Islamic and Western morality lies in the emphasis on religious principles, the role of law in upholding and strengthening morality, the understanding of rights, the rejection of autonomy and the emphasis on respect in moral education. In particular, Islamic morality emphasizes that the ultimate goal is the hereafter which is a motivator for moral behavior. In Islam, scholars recognize that in the soul of a good person there is an integrated and orderly internal unity so that the soul governs the body, as Allah S.W.T has governs the universe. Moral education in Islam is education that contains physical, spiritual and psychological elements that encourage and guide Muslims to good and right actions (Al-Saffa, 2005). From an Islamic perspective, autonomy or personal and moral freedom (like the theory of rights or individualism) is something that is not acceptable since it separate the Muslim from their faith. As we have seen, in Islam goodness is not just an individual matter so that society has an obligation to uphold moral behavior and also uphold religious practices for every Muslim as a follower. In the end, teaching and instilling morality in accordance with the values adhered to by Muslims is a moral obligation (Halstead, 2007).

Some studies investigated the role of the Islamic values on building individuals' morale. For example, Forster and Fenwick (2015) identified how Islamic values implemented in managers as individuals could influence management and business practices in Morocco. Nevertheless, they emphasized that the pattern of influence has its own or unique trace in terms of religiosity and the character of each manager. Furthermore, Halstead (2007) explored the involvement of the link between morality and religion according to the Islamic view. The result of the study revealed that there is no separate ethics in Islam. For most Muslims, what is halal (permitted) and haram (forbidden) is understood in Islam as God's command to do what is right and good. In the end, moral education refers to the inner change of a Muslim who has a spiritual nature and its implementation is implemented through the internalization of universal Islamic values. While, other studies confirmed that moral values in Islam will direct personal traits to do good (Razali, 2020) and prohibit hedonism that only pursues physical modernity (Fandi et al., 2020). In this way, Islam commands its people to do good deeds and forbids the wrongdoing (Zaroug, 1999).

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However, according to Bowles and Cooper (2009), many studies conducted on all components in an effort to increase and maintain high morale. However, the findings are still inconclusive. Thus, it is necessary to emphasize the moral component for every Muslim so that it is hoped that it can create a new enthusiasm for work and build a high moral foundation. Considering this, this study discusses the importance of morality in the workplace from an Islamic point of view as the foundation for organizations to achieve sustainability. It emphasizes that the Islamic doctrines presented through the Al-Qur'an and Hadith as the embodiment of Islamic values play an important role in every aspect of Muslims' life, including the workplace.

Literature Review

The Basic Concept of Islamic Morale

The "moral" comes from the "moralist" derived from Latin and it has a meaning as a customs or habits (Mautner, 1996) as beliefs formed by the core values of an individual. Thus, morals guide individuals in determining actions when in a dilemma that is formed "from values" (Haron et al., 2020). Futher, values embedded in human life define and shape an integral part of the implicit culture component. And then, they are assumed to be beliefs used and adhered to by members of society to determine the difference between good and evil. Individual values and beliefs are a reflection of the decisions chosen. Furthermore, values play their role as a social function, namely as shared values that are adopted jointly by members of the family, tribe, community and nation which have an important influence on human civilization (Haron et al., 2020).

Especially for individuals, when they are in a positive mood, they tend to be less likely to refrain from activities that have the potential to have harmful consequences or impacts on others. Conversely, in a negative mood, individuals will tend to avoid activities that pose a danger or threaten others and also tend not to engage in activities that have the potential to have positive consequences for others (Noval & Stahl, 2017). For example, study by Day et al. (2006) regarding morals among nurses showed that morals consist of several key themes which can be separated into intrinsic or personal factors and extrinsic or structural factors (see Figure 1). Intrinsic factors impact on nurses' personal or professional concepts that control nurses which impact on their moral level such as skills development opportunities, professional value/respect, work group relationships, and caring. Meanwhile, extrinsic factors are factors that are controlled by the organization or other external forces that are largely beyond the control of the individual or group where they work, such as operational issues, organizational structure, and the nature of leadership/management style, staffing and communication. Meanwhile, a person's reaction in responding to work has a strong influence on moral perceptions that are formed in the workplace as shown in Figure 1 that the nurse's moral literature can be divided into several main themes which are separated into themes as intrinsic or personal factors and external or structural.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.11113/ijibs.v18.139

Figure 1. Staff Morale Factors

Instrinsic Factors	Extrinsic Factors
■ Professional worth/respect ■ Opportunity/skill development ■ Work group relationships ■ Patient care	■ Organisational structures ■ Operational issues ■ Leadership traits/ management styles ■ Communication ■ Staffing

Source: Day et al. (2006)

In this context, human behavior is considered ethical when it is able to contribute to efforts for cultivating values in line with the command of Allah S.W.T. and it will be guided by the Islamic ethical system according to divine, transcendent and universal principles. Islamic ethics presents a complete guide in the context of moral and adab management to build a strong civilization. The Islamic ethical system emphasizes the role of spiritual motivation in human attitudes toward good or evil. Optimally, ethics, religion and law are interconnected and complement or not contradictory so that they constitute an implementation or moral practice. In Islam, the correlation between Religious Charity and Social Charity cannot be denied that the role as Homo Social. In other words, to live life together in society, must have the value of "Amar Ma'ruf Nahi Munkar" and prevent evil. This concept is substantively imperative and must be implemented, because it will get rewards and rewards from God (Haron, et al., 2020). Halstead (2007) claimed, there are various virtue teachings in the Qur'an including justice, piety, gratitude, integrity, honesty, and chastity. Every Muslim must conform his every soul, deed and behavior according to the Qur'an both towards ritual obligations and moral and legal obligations. Furthermore, in Islam that the Prophet Muhammad is a role model in perfect moral actions that has a beautiful pattern of behavior. The Prophet Muhammad had a mission to perfect human morality by exemplifying his own Islamic ethical values. Thus, the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad contained in the hadith complement the commands of the Qur'an which provide moral guidance.

In particular, from a modern Islamic point of view, education is very much needed in building a moral awakening that is able to place one's inner heart correctly. Coaching through the establishment of an Islamic environment bearing in mind that modern Western understandings of 'soul' tend to emphasize esoteric or transcendental nature. Meanwhile, the term 'soul' in Islamic practice is understood as an invisible reality. It is understood through physical existence the reality that soul and body are essentially one. Meanwhile, Western moral education has been understood by Islamic theorists to have limitations, namely: it fails to present recognition of sustainable conditions that exist in the midst of ever-changing conditions; reject revelations from Allah SWT, faith or metaphysical insights that serve as valid moral sources and thereby reject the notion of moral absolutes; and further (3) limits one's appreciation and offers little room for creativity in exploring the distant interconnections or 'essence' between people and things. The main point is that Western moral education leads individuals to the important question 'What does it mean to be good for someone?' As for the basis of western theory by Durkheim, Dewey and Kohlberg argue that moral meaning is passed down between individuals and society. Meanwhile, from an Islamic perspective, socially moral truth cannot replace the authority of the creator's revelation and inner

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experience, namely its source moral understanding; moral ideals are formed and rise from the spiritual self to a complete existence (Hussain, 2007).

Further, Halstead (2007) affirmed, there is an overlapping understanding between Islamic morality and morality in the western liberal perspective both in terms of the concept of human virtue and in terms of fundamental values. Where the main difference is the emphasis on religious principles, the role of law, rights, denial of autonomy or moral freedom and emphasis on respect. Each of these categories can be understood by those who have a mindset based on a framework of Western values, but there are some values that are not considered moral values in the Western so these values are defined and categorized differently and prioritized in different ways. In more detail, there are three main moral values in Islam: (a) morality: refers to duties and responsibilities in shari'ah and Islamic teachings; (b) adab: refers to manners; and (c) the good moral qualities of a Muslim. Thus, Muslims believe that only Allah S.W.T. has the highest power.

Components of Islamic Morale

In Islamic morality, various components of the human body, mind and spiritual are characterized by human nature and behavior (Hussain, 2007). There are various views of experts on the moral components of Islam such as by Al Arkoubi (2012) that there are 6 (six) approaches in the spirituality paradigm i.e. namely moralist, modernist/functionalist, eco-humanist, existentialist, postmodern, and religious. First, moralist: spirituality is the source of ethics, corporate social responsibility, and employee welfare with the aim of nurturing a culture of caring, humanitarian results and promoting virtues and moral principles including courage, altruistic love, humility, compassion, patience and forgiveness. Second, the modernist/functionalist paradigm: spirituality is used by leaders to improve performance and increase control and productivity in the workplace where organizational and leader discourse is filled with spiritual ideas. Third, the eco-humanist paradigm: emphasizes spiritual connectedness with other humans, nature or the environment. Fourth, the existentialist paradigm: the assumption that spirituality is the basis for finding goals that give meaning to the actions and work of employees. Fifth, postmodern: the role of proponents of this paradigm is as pioneers either through the publication of articles or books in an effort to encourage debate about workplace spirituality. Sixth, the religious paradigm: the scholars of this school recognize that religion is a belief system and a source of meaning for leaders, minds, awareness, and ways of integrating and implementing all components.

Boudlaie et al. (2022) also emphasized that humility is an important component that is emphasized in every Muslim. Meanwhile, according to Fendi et al. (2020), Islam does not agree with the view of Hedonism with the ideology of hedonism which only pursues physical modernity. This opinion is supported by Razali (2020), the results of the study concluded that Islam prohibits hedonism and encourages an attitude of *mashlahah*. Islam prohibits mankind from emphasizing the value of hedonism as quoted in the translation of Qur'an Surrah Hud, verse 116, which reads '…and those who are unjust only bemoan the luxury of pleasure they have, and they are the people who sin.' Islam also views that worldly pleasures are only temporary pleasures in this world, while eternal human life is life in the hereafter. Humans do not only pursue material pleasures in this world but they serve as caliphs who lead themselves and other humans so that they present the best conditions and also play a role in maximizing worship.

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This study identified that there are various views of experts related to the components of Islamic morale which have similarities to one another. Related to ethics, the principles contained in western ethics are said to be universal as norms used by all people, time, place and context which include the theories of relativism, utilitarianism, dentology, egoism and policy theory and then these theories are used in decision making by an individual. Meanwhile, in Islam ethics are principles and values that are guided by Islamic sources from the Al-Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad as well as precedents by experts in Islamic law (Sharia and Fiqh). There are many terms in the Qur'an that explain ethical concepts such as maslahat (public interest), khayr (good), qist (equality), birr (truth), 'adl (balance and justice), haqq (truth and truth), ma'ruf (known, approved), nahi munkar (avoiding bad and dangerous things), and Taqwa. In addition, according to the Al-Quran, Muslims are ordered not only to do good but also to avoid doing evil (Zaroug, 1999). Thus, Western values focus on hedonism, which is contrary to Islamic values which view that worldly pleasures are only temporary pleasures and the afterlife is an eternal life (Haron, et al., 2020). In particular, this study tries to summarize the models of moral values developed in Islam (see Table 1).

Tabel 1. Values of Islamic Morale

Values	Author (Year)
▪ Embed obligations, duties and responsibilities as regulated in sharia; manners associated with good guidance; personal characteristics expected of a Muslim in everyday life.	Halstead (2007)
▪ Islam rejects hedonism because it only pursues physical modernity which focuses on worldly pleasures and ignores the afterlife	Razali (2020), Haron et al. (2020) and Fendi et al. (2020)
▪ Islam advocates and prioritizes the attitude of maslahah	Razali (2020)
▪ Postmodern, existentialist, modernist/functionalist, religious/mystic, moralist, and eco-humanist	Al Arkoubi (2012)
▪ Khayr (good), maslahat (public interest), birr (truth), qist (equality), 'adl (balance and justice), haqq (truth and truth), ma'ruf (known, approved), nahi munkar (avoiding things - bad and dangerous things), and taqwa (piety)	Zaroug (1999)
▪ Attitude refers to the humility	Boudlaie, et al. (2022
▪ Adab as the politeness**,** courtesy, etiquette**,** refinement, culture, good upbringing, good breeding and on the other	Al-Qaradawi (1985)

Source: Authors' compilation

Boosting High Moral In the Workplace Through Islamic Values

In the teachings of Islam, every individual must be able to clearly interpret right and wrong as stated in the Quran and Sunnah (Al-Qaradawi 1985; Al-Quran 58:7). With reference to the Quran and Sunnah, firstly, the application of Islamic principles begins with the Koran as the word of Allah SWT as a collection of beliefs and instructions for the actions of every Muslim, namely without the limitations of space and tradition, time. Second, namely the Sunnah through the Prophet Muhammad as the messenger of God who guides ethical practice in the lives of Muslims (Haron et al., 2020). In general, the factor that influences

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the success of high morale in the workplace is the approach used by the organization towards management. One approach that can be taken is to build commitment and create a feeling that workers and management are an integral part of the team so as to build sustainable commitment. It can also be done by motivating workers either through direct rewards or punishments (Weakliem & Frenkel, 2006).

In addition, as emphasized by Noval and Stahl (2017), most of the empirical studies and existing frameworks explain prescriptive and proscriptive morality by using the same factors as individual cognitive-moral development, namely without considering the mechanisms that link certain antecedent factors to one factor. or some other form of moral behavior. Positive antecedents, for example facilitating both forms of ethical behavior both prescriptive and proscriptive although the available evidence shows, conceptually that actions that avoid harmful or bad consequences for others as a prohibition or increase the welfare of others are of different types, with different psychological bases. Also the unique antecedents such that the positive and negative moods of an employee have both beneficial and detrimental effects on ethical behavior depending on the type of ethical behavior. According to Abeng (1997), the Al-Qur'an and the traditions practiced by the Prophet Muhammad SAW recommend certain codes of conduct for proper ethical behavior in business which can be summarized in three elements: 1) Leniency: the basis and core of good manners include politeness, forgiveness, eliminating difficulties, and redress; 2) Service motive: in carrying out business activities, Muslims must intend to provide the required service to their own community and humanity in general; 3) Remembering Allah: Muslims are required to be aware of the existence of Allah SWT everywhere, including when conducting business activities so that they are in accordance with the morality and noble values stated in the Al-Qur'an.

Various alternatives that can be done by organizational management to be able to instill and improve morale in the workplace. For example, carrying out the selection of supervisors carefully or tolerably so as to increase morale. But to increase to the highest level requires difficult steps, which is the same as retaining workers when the company is experiencing a decline in productivity problems due to being in a period of low market demand or demand. In this condition, when a company wants to increase morale higher, the effect of morale on productivity has a decreasing nonlinear nature and can be negative or bad (Weakliem & Frenkel, 2006). Furthermore, the role of managerial discretion has been considered important especially in situations where there is no particular expectation of being selected. In this term, mood exerts a strong influence on decision-making and managerial ethical behavior. Activities or activities that fall under managerial discretion that can be implemented are community programs such as finding social problems or causes and seeking alternatives to large-scale layoff issues. often. Likewise other activities, namely anticipating and seeking solutions to unethical or dangerous actions (e.g. bribery, fraud, or job discrimination) (Noval & Stahl, 2017).

In more detail, Bowles and Cooper (2009) provides an approach to the issue of the importance of morality in the workplace that is useful for encouraging employee enthusiasm to improve performance in difficult times. Of course, there are various challenges for leaders in solving these problems which makes it difficult for many organizations or companies to achieve high morale. The several components that can be used as an approach, namely through measurements and strengths that can be utilized to create high gains in productivity, customer loyalty, and financial results are as follows:

DOI: https://doi.org/10.11113/ijibs.v18.139

• **Restructuration**

Firstly, management is the main key in almost all cases to increase morale, while other approaches are still not quite right. In this case, although top management also has a role in increasing employee morale, but local or departmental managers, supervisors, team leaders have a much bigger role in raising high morale in the workplace because they have the power for example to fire, hire, review performance, giving raises or bonuses, and more. The action that can be taken as an option when conducting a management identification survey as the main problem is to flat stucture of the organization. Restructuring has major benefits, for example: reduced costs due to reduced levels of management requirements; improve communication where each level acts as a 'sponge' in the information flow chain; and, with less management it is easier to direct and control team activities, and finally, team members are free to make more decisions individually and as a group.

• **Measuring Morale**

In the next stage, the challenge is the effort to maintain high morale. Actions that can be taken at the time of measurement show that employee morale is declining and the seriousness level is decreasing. The measurement process is carried out by looking at the initial trend and target actions. There are trends or tendencies that can be defined, including: low morale due to Human Resources policies or changes in implementation, for example a new compensation system or rewards that cause employee morale when overall organizational capabilities tend to increase. Changes made to the organization that resulted in a decline in employee morale required swift and decisive action. Thus, high morale requires the support of implementing organizational strategy; and then followed by a moral process (measurement-implementation).

• **Working with Unions**

Third, with high morale, it has a big impact on the organization, namely making the workplace easier to manage so as to increase productivity. In addition, several other benefits of high morale are reducing work accidents, sickness, absenteeism, stress, and holidays. But high morale can be increased when the organization cooperates well with unions which can result in higher customer satisfaction? Organizations need to build the basis for a moral model within the company by recognizing every aspect of employee work life. For example, organizations should consider building employee morale by joining aggressive unions without being intimidated or coerced.

There are also some experts that claimed work environment as an important aspect that determine the success of organization in order to anticipate the phenomenon of moral in the the workplace (e.g. Erichsen & Reynolds, 2020; Minnameier, 2014; Patterson-Silver Wolf et al., 2013) since a healthy or conducive environment will influence the moral of employee through bad or good behavior. Thus, it will determine the failure or success of organization for the sustainability. Finally, Bowles and Cooper (2009) asserted factors affects morale of workfoce i.e. individual job and image of organization, compensation and benefits, career and development, job security, communication, productivity, working conditions, management and supervision and decision making.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.11113/ijibs.v18.139

Discussion

It is clear that employee moral in the workplace is determined by intrinsic or personal factors and external or structural factors (Day et al., 2006). This study identified that Islamic values through its component can be applied as an effective approaach to suport high morale in overcoming the problem of unethical behavior in the workplace to achieve sustainability. Indeed, specific method carried out by the organization in overcoming the problem of unethical behavior in the workplace are highly dependent on the concept of policies adopted by the management of the organization so that in the end it is expected to increase employee morale of worker. The most important thing is that the organizations must continue to pay attention to the important aspects in the lives of employees according to their identity.

Besides the component of Islamic morale, environment is very important aspect that determine the success of high morale of employee in order to build the commitment of worker i.e by providing supportive or conducive work environment. Furthermore, one approach can be taken into consideration which is to encourage the work enthusiasm to spur employee productivity at work through increasing the role of Islamic morals as well as through training or education. Therefore, empowering the morals of employees through various policies is an effective way to lead them to polite behavior by referring to Islamic values so that they are able to overcome moral problems in the workplace and ultimately increase organizational productivity. According to several experts (e.g. Hussain et al., 2007; Halstead, 2007; Shamsavary et al., 1993) that moral education will build an understanding of Muslim employees on what should and should not be done by understanding the reasons for Islamic moral values. In addition, moral education provides employees with the motivation to behave morally based on primary Islamic sources from the Qur'an and hadith.

Another approach is by encouraging employee involvement in various ways such as supportive environment, for example, forum related to the moral issues especially from Islamic point of view to build awareness on implementation of Islamic moral values. Thus, employees are encouraged to be actively involved in optimizing their potential so as to be able to provide enlightenment which will bring changes to their attitude and behavior to be more positive towards the importance of increasing moral values in the workplace by referring to the identity of a Muslim who acts and behaves according to demands. Religion, namely the Al-Qur'an which originates from the revelation of Allah SWT and Hadith as an example from the Prophet Muhammad SAW.

Conclusion and Implication

This study reviewed relevant literature to support the idea that Islamic values can play an important role in improving the morale of Muslims in the workplace. Studies from Muslim and Western scholars were reviewed to obtain a thorough understanding of the concept of morality in the workplace through the application of Islamic values which originate from the guidance and teaching of the Al-Qur'an to address the study objective. Specifically, this study provides insight into the importance of the role of Islamic values in encouraging high morals so that it can become a foundation for organizational sustainability in overcoming moral or ethical problems that have been getting worse lately. Otherwise, it will hinder organizational success as a result of moral degradation in the workplace. It is expected that, this study will

enrich future studies on the field to understand the importance of implementing the Islamic values not only in the personal life, but also at the workplace for greater organizational sustainability.

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Conflict of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Data availability

Data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon request.

Ethics Declaration

This research analysed secondary data obtained from publicly available sources. No direct participation, interaction, or intervention involving human subjects was undertaken; therefore, formal ethical approval was not applicable.

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