

ISSC 2016 : International Soft Science Conference

The Relationship between Islamic Religiosity, Islamic Work Ethics and Job Performance

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Abstract

<http://dx.doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2016.08.100>

The efforts in sustaining the excellence level of job performance have been widely discussed, either by researchers or organizations itself. However, the practitioners still confronts difficulties in sustaining job performance, especially in Muslim countries. This due to human's complex behavior and many other factors such as job stress and dissatisfaction. Whereas, as a Muslim, the employee's should be self-control, patient, resilience, tolerance, and make a complete resignation to Allah's will. Furthermore, a Muslim should believe that Allah is All Wise, and that there is great wisdom behind everything that Allah does. Thus, along with these Islamic religiosity awareness, each individual will be compelled to behave ethically. Although there are numerous studies on ethics have been conducted, either in Islamic perspective or general perspective. There is a lack of study that investigate the impact Islamic religiosity awareness in workplace. Thus, in response to the impact of both Islamic religiosity and Islamic work ethics in enhancing as well as sustaining job performance, this paper presented, discussed, and investigated empirically for possible implications between Islamic religiosity, Islamic work ethics and job performance. Smart-PLS have been used as analysis tool. Future researchers are expected to expand the study on job performance from Islamic perspective.

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Keywords: Job Performance; Islamic Religiosity; Islamic Work Ethics.

1. Introduction

Outstanding job performance from each employees is important for an organization to sustain its success and prosperity (Bonache & Noethen, 2014; Siddiqui, 2014). Therefore, previous researchers



have been investigated various factors that lead to great job performance, such as work ethics (Abdi, Nor, & Radzi, 2014), personality (Fang et al., 2015), engagement (Shimazu, Schaufeli, Kamiyama, & Kawakami, 2015), job satisfaction (Reio & Kidd, 2006), and so forth. However, to investigate the quality of job performance in Islamic countries, all of these general concepts is not enough. In Islamic community, an organization should evaluate and sustain their job and organizational performance in an additional way, which is fostering employees with Islamic mindset that will lead to individual awareness on their main intention to work. As a Muslim, they should realize that their main intention to work is to worship Allah and attain His Blessing (Sharabi, 2012). Through this awareness, each individual will put a great endeavor to perform well in their tasks, even though they are faced with problems. This is because they belief that Allah will help and give blessing to his servants who are patient.

Furthermore, it is an obligation to a Muslim to buckle down and not being lazy or being such a parasite (Abeng, 1997; Al-Kilani, 2010), as well as aware that Allah always sees His servants. This awareness will simultaneously lead the individual to behave ethically. Thus, this paper would like to study the implication of Islamic religiosity and Islamic work ethics towards job performance.

Overall, this paper aims to examine the extent of job performance can be improved, by introducing awareness of Islamic religiosity and Islamic work ethics in the workplace. This study is designed to examine religious awareness of Muslim employees in Malaysia, specifically in Islamic Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The findings of this study might contribute to the new fields of study on how to enhance job performance and overall productivity. In fulfilling the objectives of the research, two hypotheses were proposed that being discussed in next sub-section.

2. The Relationship Between Variables

2.1. The Relationship between Islamic Religiosity and Job Performance

Employment or work life has become a part of the main necessity of an individual life. However, without a great execution and a magnificent achievements, working solely cannot provide a productive life for an individual (Pfeffer & Veiga, 1999), especially as a Muslim. Thus, in order to attain and sustain great quality of job performance of a Muslim, a different approach is required, namely the awareness of Islamic religiosity. In this context, Islamic religiosity awareness in work life means a Muslim should work as an act of worship to God (Basharat, 2009). As stated in the Qur'an Surah Adh-Dhāriyāt verse 56: "And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me". This implies that one of the purposes of human creation is to make human being realize the importance of intention before begin and end any kinds of activities, which is to worship God and doing any tasks assigned for the sake of His Blessings (Sulaiman, Ahmad, Sbaih, & Kamil, 2014). This awareness will encourage each individual Muslim to perform their tasks effectively. In line with Stephen Covey (1989) statement in his book "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People", which stated that highly effective people are people who always "begin with the end in mind".

Additionally, through fostering Islamic religiosity awareness, a Muslim will always put an effort to behave well in their daily life and avoid any unethical behavior. This is due to their fear toward Allah, as well as their belief on Allah will always watching them whenever and wherever they are.

Alongside Ibadah (worship) and the benefit for the organization as well as economy, through working, people can socialize with a wide variety of individual characters and experiences. Thus, through working, people will be wiser, critical thinker, and more dedicated in their life. Overall, in order to sustain and enhancing job performance quality of employee, an organization ought to observe its employees' insight on their religiosity and ensure their ethical standards from Islamic perspective. Thus, it is hypothesized that there is positive relationship between Islamic religiosity and job performance.

2.2. The Relationship between Islamic Work Ethics and Job Performance

Along with the expansion of global business and modern development around the globe, the issues on social accountability and ethical behavior among all level of employees still hotly discussed. This is due to the importance of ethics in enhancing job performance that widely proved, either by the researchers or the organizations itself (Abdi et al., 2014). Unfortunately, in today's society, most of the individual, even in Muslim countries, they refused to follow the rules and do not behave accordingly. Many Muslims ignoring the Islamic ethical standard in doing business (Osman-Gani, Hashim, & Ismail, 2013) or performing a job, as they only strived for massive profit and high job performance without following the Islamic work ethics. Thus, it is important to educate individual Muslim to perform well in their job by complying all the Islamic work ethics (IWE).

Therefore, in order to avoid from behaving unethically in the society, people should possess themselves with strong moral values, especially Muslims society who has been guided by Qur'an and Hadith in their daily life. Islam is the way of life, while it leads to both individual and organizational success, if all individuals learn the principles and can get the guidelines to conduct Islamic way of living, as Islamic teachings are accepted for all generations (Beekun & Badawi, 2005). Furthermore, each of the individual could live in peace if they are obedient to Allah's will in every matter of life (Abuznaid, 2006; Syed & Ali, 2010), as this is the actual meaning of Islam. Thus, this paper would emphasize on IWE and how it leads to great job performance. IWE highlight the behavior which is either prohibited or promoted for individuals in an organization (Yousef, 2000). Furthermore, through IWE, the work can be well organized and simultaneously contributes in economic growth as well as mobilizing the organizational and individual success (Ali, 1996).

Conversely, it is also assumed that employees are usually unproductive and unsuccessful in their life because of their attitudes which involving them in such unethical activities (Abbasi & Rana, 2012), as the effect of selfish and greedy in order to achieve their own ultimate projected interests (Ajmal & Irfan, 2014). Hence, it is vital to each individual to implement IWE in the workplace, in order to gain high productivity and increase overall performance, either individually or organizationally. Overall, it can be concluded that individuals with high IWE implementation can show better performance as compared to unethical individual. Thus, it is hypothesized that there is positive relationship between Islamic work ethics and job performance.

3. Conceptual Framework

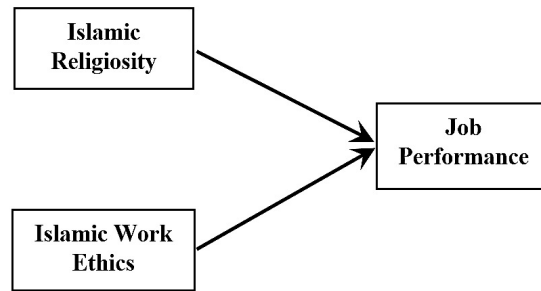


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents a proposed framework for this study. The framework stresses on two factors that are Islamic religiosity and Islamic work ethics as independent variable and job performance as the dependent variable. Based on the framework which demonstrated in the figure above, two hypotheses has been develop. First, this study proposes a positive relationship between Islamic religiosity and job performance. Lastly, this study proposes a positive relationship between Islamic work ethics and job performance.

4. Research Methods

4.1. Sampling Design and Research Procedure

In conducting this study, probability simple random sampling technique, quantitative correlation method, and descriptive correlation approach have been utilized. The data collection was carried out through survey questionnaire approach, which distributed to 150 Muslim from administrative staff in Islamic Higher Education Institution (HEI) in the northern Malaysia. The questionnaire is the adoption from the previous study which emphasized toward measuring the Islamic religiosity, Islamic work ethics, and job performance. The questionnaires have been modified into bilingual (English and Malay languages). The survey results were analyzed through Smart-PLS software. Bootstrapping was conducted in order to test the significance level of the t-value (test statistic).

4.2. Measurement

The instruments used in this study were adopted from existing research models. In measuring job performance, this study only focuses on measuring task performance dimension, which consists of 9 items scale that developed by Goodman & Svyantek (1999). Islamic religiosity is measured by utilizing the Dimensions of Religiosity that developed by. From 7 Dimensions that classified by Kendler et al. (2003), this study only focused 10 items of general religiosity dimension, which consist of 5 items from daily spiritual experiences measurement, and the remaining 5 items from religious coping measurement. While IWE was measured in 17 items from the scale developed by Ali (1992).

5. Findings

5.1. Data Analysis Results

This study analyse the data by utilizing Smart PLS (Partial Least Square) software. The results for the reliability analysis, composite reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is presented in the following table:

Table 1. Reliability Analysis, and Composite Reliability, and AVE.

Variable	Total Items (N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	AVE	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability
Job Performance	9	4.064	0.747	0.630	0.926	0.938
Islamic Religiosity	10	4.361	0.787	0.568	0.902	0.923
Islamic Work Ethics	17	4.278	0.776	0.522	0.941	0.948

In Cronbachs Alpha, the reliability below than 0.70 was considered as the weak and the values were within 0.70 is an acceptable value and the value that surpasses the value 0.80 was considered as great reliability. In composite reliability, the acceptable value of composite reliability test can be seen if it shows the value of 0.70 or greater. Lastly, in Average variance extracted (AVE), the value must be greater than 0.50. Briefly, based on the table, it demonstrated that each variables in this study have a great reliability.

5.2. Hypothesis Testing

In order to assess the significance and relevance of the Structural Model, the authors examined the path loadings between constructs by using computed T-statistics. The significance of T-statistics is obtained after bootstrapping using 499 bootstrap samples in Smart-PLS. Path analysis on the structural model is conducted in order to test the hypotheses. The results of T-statistics, path coefficient (beta or β), and the hypothesis is summarized in the following table.

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing.

Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient (Beta)	Std. Error	t-value	P Values	Decision
H1	Rel \rightarrow JP	0.201	0.078	2.650**	0.011	Supported
H2	IWE \rightarrow JP	0.475	0.109	4.378**	0.000	Supported

Note:

**p<0.05 (two-tailed test)

JP: Job Performance

Rel: Islamic Religiosity

IWE: Islamic Work Ethics

In the case of two-tailed, the absolute and significant value of T-statistic or t-value must be 1.96 or higher. Thus, based on bootstrapping, the table above concluded that there is significant relationship between Islamic religiosity and job performance with t-value 2.650, as well as between Islamic work ethics and job performance with t-value 4.378. Additionally, based on collinearity statistic or variance

inflation factor (VIF), the results shown above than 1 but lower than 5, which means that all of predictors are moderately correlated and there is no collinearity issues in this study. The VIF value of Islamic religiosity towards job performance is 1.502. While the VIF value of Islamic work ethics towards job performance is 1.719. Overall, through this analysis, it can be concluded that two hypotheses that developed in this study is supported and accepted.

6. Conclusion

Islamic teachings play a crucial role in an individual, family, and professional lives of a Muslim. Thus, a real Muslim should never grumble or complain on the tasks assigned and always endeavor to remain committed and perform tasks given to them properly. In as much as all the things they do is out of sincerity towards to be blessed by God. Not only solely to get worldly rewards, but also to obtain a reward in the Hereafter. A Muslim will experienced high satisfaction when they are putting high effort and a whole sincerity in all tasks given to them, as well as ‘tawakal’ on any results or rewards. Thus, through this concepts, this paper emphasized on the awareness and implementation of Islamic religiosity and Islamic work ethics in work life of each individual, in order to attain great performance.

The findings of this study stated that there is significant relationship between Islamic religiosity towards job performance, as well as between Islamic work ethics towards job performance. This finding is in line with numerous theoretical researches (Sulaiman et al., 2014; Yousef, 2000; Rokhman, 2010), which revealed that people who have higher religiosity (Sharabi, 2012) and Islamic work ethics (Ahmad, Rofie, & Owoyemi, 2013) are more inclined to work properly.

Therefore, this study stressed on numerous managerial implications, as the management of the organization should determine the accurate way in giving deep awareness on Islamic religiosity and Islamic work ethics on each individual Muslim. Additionally, the utmost importance, the employer also have to constantly evaluate the employees’ understanding and awareness on religiosity and work ethics in Islamic point of view. Furthermore, if they put Islamic religiosity as the base of daily activities, it will lead to a great success as well as long lasting prosperity, either for the individual or the organization itself.

This study might contribute to new fields of study, such as Islamic work engagement and Islamic job performance. Overall, fostering Islamic religiosity awareness to each of employees, will lead the workplace atmosphere become more ethical as well as simultaneously sustains great performance, either individually and organizationally.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our gratitude to all the participants that made this study possible as well as to the anonymous referees for their constructive and useful comments on the paper.

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