

## ANALYSIS OF WORK PRACTICES IN ORGANIZATIONS BASED ON ISLAMIC DOCTRINAL STANDARDS REACHES THE WAY FORWARD

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**Abstract:** *Organizations or government agencies are constantly faced with various forms of threats either from within or outside the environment and these threats can affect the performance, productivity and future of an organization. Today, the average threat to an organization stems from individuals within the organization itself and in turn involves other members who damage the identity of the government organization. Typically, these threats are closely linked to issues of ethics and integrity. Neglect of these two principles can open up opportunities for malpractice, corruption, misconduct and abuse of power in an organization. This article explains the practice of excellent work culture in an organization as stipulated by Islam and applied in the current days. The article exemplifies how Islam stresses on the application of excellent work culture and moral values to be practiced in strengthening an organization. The main purpose of this writing is to identify the elements of work culture in Islam and the characteristics of excellent work culture that every Muslim should know. Apart from that, this writing also aims to describe the challenges in implementing Islamic work culture. In the era of globalization, portraying good work ethics among Muslims is essential. Good work ethics are not only about being a diligent, persistent and loyal workforce, but it is also about being a workforce who integrates Islamic values into their daily life, which do not derail from the values as prescribed in the Qur'an and As-Sunnah. This article also explains how the concepts, conditions, ethics and characteristics of work culture in Islam remain relevant and practicable in today's society. The basis of work culture for Muslim is to seek the pleasure of Allah SWT. The individual's connection with God shapes their ethical work culture*

*to be extra careful and diligent in their work practices. They will strive to do their best to obtain the pleasure of God and foster good relationships among their colleagues within the organization. This article also highlights the need for every Muslim to embrace Shariah-compliant practices in all aspects of their work. This writing instrumented the qualitative research as its methodology by conducting a library study of the sources of the Quran and hadith as well as scientific materials such as journal articles, reference books from religious scholars related to the scope of the study topic. The results of this writing can be used as a reference and guidance to increase the level of awareness, open the minds of every Muslim as well as remind each party to fulfill their rights and responsibilities towards every job entrusted to them. Work in the Islamic concept is often associated to the term charity which has a wider scope than simply working for profit or wages. It is hoped that this writing can be used as a guideline or standard for all employees and organizations to work in line with Islamic requirements.*

**Keywords:** *Practice, Culture, Work, Excellence, Worship*

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### **Introduction**

Work ethic is an important thing that needs to be observed in the management of an organization in order to produce an excellent work culture and to produce employees who are committed, professional and integrous in fulfilling their responsibilities as employees. The success and excellence of an organization depends on the work ethic practiced in the organization, not only by the employees but also the management, whereby the management also has to observe and practice the ethics that have been set Islam truly emphasizes on the practice of excellent work ethic and culture because work is considered as an act of worship that requires the mental, physical and spiritual strength of the individual to produce quality work (Masitah Idris, 2018).

Islam also states that a *halal* or legitimate work is considered as a duty entrusted by Allah, and every work that is pleasing to Allah and accompanied by good intention is considered as an act of worship. Therefore, it is obligatory for every individual to perform *halal* work. Among the work ethics in Islam are: 1. Work for the sake of Allah 2. Work sincerely and truthfully 3. Work diligently and efficiently 4. Work cooperatively and guided by the mind 5. Work with the goal of giving happiness and benefits to others. Malaysia has adopted the concept and approach of excellent work culture in administrative management since 1989. This concept focuses on outputs and inputs, which is the work processes. Excellent work processes are not only to produce good outputs or services alone, but it is also to prevent abuse of power, corruption, bureaucratic management and various forms of negligence that often occur in administrative management. Work culture in an organization includes the way of working that is seen to be able to bring about positive changes in the achievements and performance of an organization (Sharifah Hayaati al-Qudsy, 2008). This organizational work culture involves employee performance, attitudes and the level of productivity shown by employees (Syed Ismail Syed Mustapa, 2020). Work culture in organizations also involves interactions between employees and management (West & Turner, 2013). This two-way interaction will influence the ability and success of an organization to materialize its organizational goals. In addition, there is also a significant correlation between job satisfaction and job performance. Job performance will directly increase job satisfaction through increased rewards. Even job performance can also be well predicted by job satisfaction (Laura Koppes, 2014). Therefore, management must be fair and honest in evaluating work performance to produce an excellent work culture. A progressive and healthy work culture is essential in ensuring the well-being in the workplace. A healthy

work environment also positively motivates employees in an organization, which in turn can be a factor leading to the increase of an organization's excellence and performance. The Culture of jealousy among colleagues, bureaucracy in the office and biased culture among the top leadership are among the issues that often happen and faced by the employees being evaluated (Dr Nuurrianti Jalli, 2019). This culture should be diminished and avoided in order to produce excellent quality employees and work culture.

However, there are still many in society, especially civil servants who are unable to practice and appreciate the work culture as outlined in Islam. Malaysia can be said to be facing a crisis of integrity in its daily work culture. Acts of corruption in particular as well as various other forms of misconduct are a testament to this issue of integrity crisis. Lack of integrity values not only affects individuals and organizations but also the entire nation.

Integrity issues such as acts of corruption, questionable values, harassment and breaches of ethics and rules are 'poisons' to the effective implementation of policies. Erosion of integrity values among civil servants will also result in administrative malpractice and misconduct in the organization (Nur Hafizah Yusoff & Nurul Atikah Zulkepli, 2021; Megat Ayop Megat Arifin & Abd. Halim Ahmad, 2016a). In addition, there is also a culture of stealing bones such as gossip with colleagues, surfing the internet outside the field of work, doing personal affairs during office hours and online shopping (Zulkifli Abd Hamid, 2017).

Specifically, the issue of teacher quality is often highlighted by various parties, especially when there are problems in schools involving students, management and teachers themselves. Various issues have been raised involving new teachers who lack the character and role of an educator. This includes allegations against senior teachers who have been saturated to teach. Various organizational problems and shortcomings that arise such as low work motivation, inability of self-efficacy among teachers and so on need to be addressed by cultivating an efficient work culture (Abdul Ghani Kanesan Abdullah, Azians Abu Hassan & Ying-Leh Ling, 2019). Among the academics in IPTs, they are also involved in integrity problems, plus they have to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. Cultivating new norms in online learning and teaching activities requires high commitment from lecturers and many among them are still unable to balance work and family responsibilities (Shazarina Zdainal Abidin et al., 2020). In addition, Nur Nasliza Arina, M.N & Jamilah, A. (2018) stated that public relations practitioners are also not spared from being plagued with work ethic issues. As individuals who are directly and fully involved in the public relations profession, public relations practitioners are often associated with various unethical behaviors while carrying out tasks such as propaganda, soul warfare, lobbying and so on. Mohd Rizal Jasman, Aimi Wafa & Ahmad Kamarul Azmi Jasmi (2020) also stated that there are several corporate organizations such as Tabung Haji, Perbadanan Usahawan Nasional and the like who have appointed qualified individuals to manage it. Undoubtedly in managing such management, there are a handful of interested individuals committing some fraud in winning their wrong intentions. This will reveal the flaws of the work culture among them in turn affect the image of the organization itself.

Thus, there are two main objectives emphasized in this writing. First, identify the elements of work culture in Islam and the characteristics of an excellent work culture that every Muslim should know. Second, describe the challenges in implementing Islamic work culture. Muslims especially civil servants should always be reminded to cultivate excellent work culture as outlined in Islam, moreover they have to face the current era of globalization which requires strengthening in oneself and an organization.

### Definition of Islamic Work Culture

Work culture is associated with work ethic which is one of the many requirements to achieve the goals of an organization (Osman Ayub, 1988). The term ethics comes from the Greek word 'ethos' which means character or personality. On top of that, Gluck (1986) defined ethics as the study of morality. Shea (1988) defined ethics as the behavioral principles that govern an individual or profession and as a standard of behavior. The term ethics among technocrats or experts refers to a way to help improve the professional integrity of the organization's staff (Megat Ayop Megat Arifin, 2016b). Work ethic can be summarized as a guide on the behavior to be followed by human beings that is closely related to life especially for those who marginalize religion in life. Therefore, the practice of moral norms is asserted by the religion and also the country (Rosazman, 2014).

According to the Malaysian Institute of Integrity and the National Integrity Plan, Work culture refers to the values, beliefs and attitudes of employees' values, beliefs and attitudes towards work. This work culture includes things such as understanding of the organizational goals, ways to achieve goals, use of resources and factors of production according to rules, employer-employee relations, employee-employee relations, exercise of rights and responsibilities, conducive work environment, and other elements that are essential to determine the stability of the organization. Ethical and integrity work culture in the organization is very important in the organization as it can ensure the excellent implementation and realization of any program and goals. Islam also emphasizes on quality work culture, and to form a quality work culture in the organization, several aspects need to be given attention to including the acceptance and adoption of a successful work culture which stresses on the commitment, quality awareness, and willingness to accept change among the employees. In addition, the work must be carried out wholeheartedly in accordance with the will of the organization by setting aside all other interests. An organization needs to create excellence-oriented mind-set so that all employees are more committed to their respective tasks. The organization must always encourage employees to embrace and practice management practices that can enhance organizational excellence. The benefits of applying a good work culture include increasing the spirit of gotong royong, togetherness and cooperation in doing good, increasing family spirit in performing a job, developing better communication when interacting with each other, and increasing work productivity either as an individual or as an organization.

Among the goals of work culture in Islam is to know clearly the direction and get guidance from experienced parties and experts in order to foster the spirit of cooperation in the effort to form a united, harmonious, integrity, moral and ethical society. In addition, the work culture in Islam also aims to increase awareness, commitment and cooperation of various parties in an effort to increase integrity so that it becomes a community culture and practiced in all fields. Encourage the spirit of responsibility among employees and encourage the development of Islamic work culture principles (Jasman, Mohd Rizal; Ahmad, Aimi Wafa; Jasmi, Kamarul Azmi, 2020). It also aims to contribute to efforts to strengthen the moral foundation of society and the country and improve the well-being of life. Next, it aims to increase competitiveness and resilience among employees in the effort to thrive over the various challenges of today (Sharifah Hayaati al-Qudsy, 2008). The discussion on work quality from an Islamic perspective is closely related to the aspect of excellence. This excellence refers to *mardatillah* (the pleasure of Allah) and it is not merely measured according to utilitarian considerations which is based on secular concepts but encompasses of Islamic values that are subjective in nature. The fundamental to the excellent quality of work is the construction of excellent personality and morals in employees (Masitah Idris, 2018). Islam has laid a solid foundation in producing

quality work. This is based on the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. which means: "Surely Allah loves a person if when you do a task, then you will do it with *itqan*" (Kanz al-'Ummal, Kitab al-Ijarah min Qism al-Awqal. Dar al-Fikr, No. 9128). The concept of *itqan* is closely related in producing quality work.

### Research Methodology

In completing this study, the authors used library research, documentations, observations and research methods to collect related information. In addition, the authors also collected information from websites published by Quran and As-Sunnah on work culture in Islam. The results of this study indicated that most people in Malaysia have abused the work culture through various methods. This article is based on the descriptive analysis research which involves library-based method. The method chosen is one of the best approaches to get the literature material such as journals, articles and reference books from religious scholars related to scope of the study topic including the classical and modern syariah texts. These materials are scrutinized to develop the concept and scope of analysis to extract the views of distinguished Islamic scholars about the topic.

### Conditions of Work Culture in Islam

Islam places work as an activity that is inseparable from human life. Work is needed required by an individual to earn a living and get from Allah SWT. Islam views working as not only the tool for attaining financial and economic stability, pleasure and comfort desired by human (Kee. Y. sabariah and AG Mohd Ruslaimie, 2020). According to Narjano (2013) work culture in Islam emphasizes on the balance between the worldly life and the hereafter. Meanwhile, according to Atikullah, (2013), all human work and profession can turn into an act of worship. But, this does not mean that all human work and profession automatically becomes an act of worship without any conditions. There are several conditions that must be met to make a daily human work activity counted as an act of worship and rewarded by Allah SWT, namely;

- a) The practice performed must be recognized by Islam and not in conflict with Islamic law. If it contradicts either directly or indirectly, then it is unlikely to be considered as an act of worship (Atikullah, 2003). This is in line with the view of Sharifah Hayaati (2008) who asserted among the conditions of an excellent work culture is that the source of employment must be *halal* and not contain illegal elements or that are *syubhah* such as bribes, fraud, money or capital obtained unlawfully. Whatever is to be done must be in accordance with the rules set by Islam. For example, a person who wants to do food business to earn a living for the family has indirectly performed *ibadah* as the ingredients used are *halal* and provide spiritual as well as physical health benefits to all Muslims. According to Ahmad Rafiki (2020), an organization or leader must ensure that each employee meets the requirements of Islamic law in carrying out employment activities in order to develop the organization.
- b) The right intention. The work is performed with the good intentions of preserving the dignity, pleasing the family, benefitting the whole community and prospering the earth, as recommended by Allah SWT in the Quran which means: "And it is not commanded that people except that they worship Allah SWT in sincerity for him" (al-Bayyinah, 5). Therefore, an *ibaat* that is performed repeatedly but not sincerely then it is only considered as a customary act (Shaik Abdullah, t.th). This is in line with the view of Atikullah (2013) who mentioned that a daily activity that is not included in the basic or special worship is considered valid even without intention to Allah SWT. However, to

make it an act of worship that is rewarded, it must be intended for the purpose of worshipping Allah SWT. That is why according to al-Suyuti (1983) the jurists have laid down a method that reads "the intention is what changes a practice from *'adah* to *ibadah*"

- c) Perform *muamalah* or work perfectly. The practice should be implemented as best as possible to comply with what is set by the Prophet. A practice is only considered as worship if it is done with full commitment, earnestness, awareness and perfection (Atikullah, 2013). Prophet SAW said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ إِذَا عَمَلَ أَحَدُكُمْ عَمَلًا أَنْ يَتَّقَنَهُ

"God loves when one of you does something to perfection."

(Hadith narrated by Muslim).

This is in line with the views of Masitah Idris, Wan Fariza, Ahamd Sunawari fan Noriza (2018) who stated that one of the basic principles in Islamic management is the culture of *Istiqamah* or high commitment which plays an important role in the quality of work and ensure employee excellence in the organization. Ida Yanti & Dian Widiyanti (2021) outline the value of *istiqamah* or commitment and cooperation as an important aspect in completing a program or task.

- d) Not imperiling the daily Muslim obligations. A practice must be done not at the cost of obligatory acts of worship such as prayer, *zakat* and obligatory fasting in Ramadan. Leaving a basic obligation is a forbidden thing. The *fuqaha* 'have laid down the rule that any activity that leads to forbidden things, therefore the activity is illegal (Atiqullah, 2018)

Therefore, when a believer is able to fulfill the above four conditions while handling all the works and affairs of his life, he will be considered to always worshipping Allah, even if he does not sit in the mosque while doing the work. According to Atiqullah (2013), Islam is a balanced and very practical way of life. It does not see goodness and worship as a narrow and limited concept. In fact, it sees all the activities of human life that provide goodness as acts of worship that will be rewarded.

### Ethics of Islamic Work Culture

Work culture in Islam refers to a set of values that are guided by the Quran and the Sunnah. The practice of Islamic work culture will create excellence in all aspects of human life such as economic, social and political. Among the examples of the characteristics of Islamic work culture are:

- a) Work with the determination to dedicate oneself to Allah SWT. As a servant of Allah, then every employee should dedicate himself to Allah SWT by obeying all His commands and stay away from all His prohibitions. Therefore, every employee must ensure that the job is halal and fulfill their responsibilities with full trust. This is in line with the words of Allah SWT which means:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

“O people! Worship your Lord, Who created you and those before you, that you may guard (against evil).

(Surah Al-Baqarah: 21)

- b) Doing work that is halal and justified by Islamic law. Therefore, the employee must leave the illegal employment. Examples of illegal occupations are alcohol, drug, gambling, casino and the like. PMWP (2019) described the work related to the matter not only violates Islamic work ethic, but also causes hostility, contempt and the like.
- c) Doing work is accompanied by good intentions and sincerity for the sake of Allah. Examples of good intentions are such as the intention to support oneself and one's family, provide benefits to society and prosper the earth through the methods allowed by Islamic law. Therefore, the work done must be free from all the nature of ripples, arrogance and show off.
- d) Do the work diligently and diligently. Doing work diligently and diligently fulfilling the trust is very much demanded by Islam. Diligent efforts are made either on the initiative of employees or organizations to spread the understanding of Islam as Ad-din among employees (Osman Ayub, 1988). Rasulullah SAW has said:

إن الله يحب إذا عمل أحدكم عملاً أن يتقنه

*"Indeed, Allah loves it if one of you does a job diligently and to the best of his ability."*

- e) Follow the laws of God and the basics of morality in work. Jobs that are pleasing to Allah SWT must be free from the elements of tyranny, treachery, fraud and abuse of power, property and opportunity. In addition, the job must be able to preserve the five Maqasid al-Syar'iah, namely religion, life, intellect, lineage and property.
- f) Do not leave obligatory worship while working. The work performed does not prevent the employee from performing the obligatory acts of worship such as prayer, fasting, hajj, zakat and others. For example, the employer can provide a work schedule that does not prevent the employee from performing prayers.

### **Characteristics of an Excellent Work Culture**

Islam teaches people to give their best when working. However, the work must be in accordance with religious law by prioritizing honesty, sincerity and high discipline. Work is considered as an act of worship as long as the work is done for a good and true purpose. Islam has outlined several characteristics of work culture that should be embraced in carrying out a job. Among them are:

#### **a) Intention Because of Allah SWT**

The main basis in performing a work is the intention. It is the intention that determines the response received and the intention is also the goal to be achieved in a job. Intention in the context of work, apart from the purpose of achieving the target that has been set, the element of submission to Allah SWT is also important. This is to ensure that all actions and behaviors during the working period are beneficial and good as well as making it as an act of worship. When we work with the intention of pleasing Allah, the hours of working is considered as an

act of worship and will be rewarded as well as blessed by Allah. Therefore, the intention formed from the essence of *Tauhid* will lead to the sense of compassion and sincerity while working. Application of *ihsan* when performing a job entails perfection as the nature of this *ihsan* itself is the perfection of faith (Mohamad Zulfakhairi Mokhtar et. al., 2018; Nor Akrimi Mohd Ali & Anuar Puteh, 2017). Therefore, the process of executing the job will be perfect because we believe that Allah is always watching all our actions and we will avoid ourselves from destructive behaviors during the job (Sidek Baba, 2012).

Therefore, when working is accompanied by good intentions and sincerity, God will always guide us on the right path and away from committing sinful acts. Examples of good intentions are the intention to support oneself and one's family, provide benefits to society and prosper the earth using the methods allowed by Islamic law. This can prevent the occurrence of breach of trust and corruption while working (Mohamad Zulfakhairi Mokhtar et. al., 2018). Prophet Muhammad said:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى

"Indeed, the deeds depend on the intention. And everyone will get a reward based on what he intended. "

(HR Bukhari Muslim)

Sincere intention will lead an employee to become honest and persistent against all the challenges in doing his job. This nature will also keep a person away from doing heinous things and being angered by Allah SWT (Rosni binti Wazir & Ishak bin Suliam, 2017). The person will also become a dynamic person who will always strive for the best, contribute to the progress of the work and achievement of the goal, help others in need, and ensure that all his actions are in accordance with the Islam.

#### **b) Honest and Trustworthy**

According to Islam, work is a demand and a necessity. If the work meets certain conditions, the work becomes an act of worship for Allah and should be implemented with full honesty, trust and responsibility so that the responsibilities and trusts fulfilled will be rewarded in the hereafter. At the same time, work performed as an act of worship also becomes a sacred duty and obligation and is no longer a personal duty in which the individual can reject or accept. An employee must perform his duties to the best of his ability. Trust means to be responsible in performing every duty and obligation entrusted to it. A trustworthy person will hold to the principle that every department entrusted and every task given to him will be accountable not only to superiors or shareholders of the company but also to Allah SWT later. Becoming truthful (*siddiq*) when performing a job refers to the absence of deliberate contradictions between speech and action, and it is indeed important. In the world of work and business, honesty will appear in the form of sincerity and accuracy (*mujahadah* and *itqon*) which can be manifested in terms of punctuality, promises, service, reports, acknowledging one's own weaknesses to be corrected, and not lying as well as cheating (Zalika Adam & Faridah Kassim, 2008).

Trust is not only about financial matters but also is to carry out duties assigned perfectly for the interest of the people who deal with the government (Abdullah Al-Qari Salleh, 2005). God has emphasized that everything entrusted to one is according to one's ability as mentioned by Him in the Quran:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ



“God does not burden a person except what he is able to bear. He gets the reward of the good he strives for, and he also bears the sin of the evil he strives for”.

(al-Baqarah: 286)

Trust is the foundation of community strength, national stability and workers' unity. The role of trust encompasses man's relationship with God and man's relationship with man. An employee who has the nature of trust will not lie, betray customers, take bribes, deceive customers and other spiteful acts (Rashidi Abbas, et. al., 2014).

### c) Disciplined

Working is an unavoidable task and is a responsibility as well as a form of *jihad* in religion. So, employees must adhere to certain disciplines and work ethic. Ethics in the workplace should be learned and practiced in daily life. The effectiveness of ethical principles lies in the individual himself. Without self-discipline and high mental strength a person cannot achieve the desired level of ethics (Megat Ayop & Abd. Halim, 2016b).

Employees must also have a positive attitude in performing tasks to ensure that the objectives are achieved. Setting goals and objectives for each action to be taken will motivate the individual. The employee must also balance between his or her personal interests and the interests of others in his or her community. Working in this context is not limited to certain groups or certain types only (Zainal, 2003), in fact work is a joint responsibility of men and women as Allah SWT said in the Quran:

من عمل صالحا من ذكر أو أنثى وهو مؤمن فلنجزيه حياة طيبة ولنجزينهم  
أجرهم بأحسن ما كانوا يعملون

"Whoever does good deeds, male or female in a state of faith, then we will give him a good life and we will reward them with a reward better than what they used to do"

(al-Nahl: 97)

### d) The Objective of the Life of this World is in Line with the Objective of the Life of the Hereafter

In whatever a manager and an employee do, they must be able to make a connection between the objectives of the life of this world and the life of the hereafter. All efforts made will be counted as pious deeds or *amal jariah* that will receive a commensurate reward from Allah SWT (Osman Ayub, 1988). Everything that is done is under the supervision of Allah SWT. The feeling of always feeling the existence of Allah causes one to feel the importance of doing something at its best. This situation causes those who will always do good and fulfill their responsibilities towards God, man and the environment because they feel that God is always watching and monitoring every deed. (Nor Akrimi Mohd Ali & Anuar Puteh, 2017). If there are managers and employees who try to separate the life of this world and the life of the hereafter in the sense of caring for the life of the world and separating the life of the hereafter, indeed such actions are against the will of Allah. The Qur'an refutes such attitude. Allah SWT said in the Quran:

“But you (disbelievers) choose the life of this world. While the afterlife is better and more permanent”.

(Surah al-A`alaa verses 16-17.)

There must a balance between striving for the best for the hereafter life and worldly life, as Muslims are also urged by the religion to succeed in the worldly life and fulfill their responsibility as human and khalifah appointed by Allah on earth. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbids human beings to only focus on either one. This can be seen from his sayings of:

ليس بخير كم من ترك دنياه لاخرته ولا اخرته لدنياه حتى يصيب منهما جميعا فان الدنيا بلاغ الى الآخرة ولا تكونوا كل على الناس

"It does not belong to the best people among you, namely people who left the world to pursue the happiness of the hereafter. Nor are people who leave the hereafter to pursue worldly happiness. the best is that he can achieve both, because indeed the world is the path to the happiness of the hereafter and do not be the ones who burden (burden) others."

(HR. Ibn Asakir)

#### e) Optimal Use of Time

Islam values highly time. Human age which includes years, months, hours, minutes, and seconds describe that time is divided into specific parts. Time is a commodity or capital that must be utilized and should never be wasted. Allah SWT said in the Quran:

وَالْعَصْرِ ( 1 ) إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ( 2 ) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ  
وَتَوَّاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَّاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ( 3 )

"For the sake of time. Lo! Man is indeed in loss. Except those who believe and do righteous deeds and admonish to obey the truth and admonish to be patient."

(Surah al-Asr verses 1-3)

Every employee should also start work on time or before the assigned time, work hard and not engage in things that could lead them to commit time-wasting acts such as spending time in the canteen, entertaining unnecessary phone calls or performing other things that do not reflect a sense of responsibility in using time. Time is capital that must be put to good use and not wasted. We must be aware of the value of time and we should use it to the best of our ability and not abuse it. High quality workers focus on the efficient and maximum use of time, as well as efficient and structured planning and purpose of work (Nur Naslina M.N. & Jamilah, A., 2018). This is the quality of work described by Yusuf al-Qaradawi:

“A Muslim is afraid that time will pass from his hands while he is in a state of emptiness without having time to do any work. Therefore, he will not postpone his work until the next day because other jobs have been waiting for that day. Muslims also always aspire to make their day better than yesterday and tomorrow better than today.”(Megat Ayop & Abd. Halim, 2016b).

God has urged us to not only embrace the value time but also to the responsibility to perform the assigned actions. Allah said in the Quran:

## فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ حِينَ تُمْسُونَ وَحِينَ تُصْبِحُونَ 17 وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَعَشِيًّا وَحِينَ تُظْهِرُونَ 18

"Then glorify Allah when you are in the evening and when you are in the dawn, and to Him be praise in the heavens and the earth, and when you are in the evening and on you are at noon". (30: 17-18)

### f) Self -criticism Should Be Practiced (Reflection)

Reflection is self -examination, either individually or as a group. Each individual needs to re -examine his or her job and analyze his or her actions and attitudes. If he satisfies his instincts, he should be grateful to God. Otherwise he must correct the mistakes he has made and not repeat them in the future. Umar al-Khattab ra said study yourself before they study it, look at your deeds before others see it and be prepared to face a greater trial (Nur Naslina M.N. & Jamilah, A., 2018; Harun Arrayid Tuskan, 2003). An individual needs to evaluate the production or productivity earned against the energy, thought and money that has been contributed. Management, on the other hand, needs to make an assessment covering the extent to which employees understand the tasks assigned, comply with the rules and instructions that have been set and cooperate with each other.

### Challenges of Implementing Islamic Work Culture

In order to form an excellent work culture in the organization, the staff must move and progress on the right track. In achieving an excellent work culture. commitment from all staff to improve the excellence of an organization is required.

#### a) Not Ready to Accept Change

The work must be performed must be done wholeheartedly according to the will of the organization by setting aside all other interests, especially personal interests. Working is not just for attaining material gain but more importantly it is a religious demand that is done solely to get closer to Allah SWT. The concept of Islamic work culture needs to be understood by every employee of the organization. When it is understood unequivocally and applied holistically in human life, it will lead to the embracement of Islam as an ad-Din in every aspect of life. Allah SWT said in the Quran:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ....

Meaning: "Indeed, Allah will not change the fate of a people except the people themselves who change what is in themselves"

(Surah ar-Ra'd verse 11)

Understanding and implementing Islamic work culture is a heavy task that needs to be implemented comprehensively and takes a long time because it involves the process of developing employee attitudes and behaviors. The understanding of work culture will shape the positive attitudes and behaviors as well as increase work motivation among the workers. The management needs to work on various approaches to ensure that this work culture is practiced continuously thus leading to the realization of the objectives of an organization. Employees need to be bold to shift their paradigm, thinking, value, attitude and behavior for the benefit of the organization and themselves (Syed Ismail et.al., 2020; Nur Nasliza Arina & Jamilah, 2018).

### **b) The Influence of Western Ideology in Organizational Management**

Organizational management that focuses on performance and productivity alone, has led to the occurrence of value crises such as mistrust, corruption, not focusing on work, not using time optimally and other administrative problems. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all Muslims to link every action and reform measures in the administration to be in line with the Islamic concept in order to tackle the emerging issues (Ahmad Nazrul & Wan Norhaniza, 2020; Megat Ayop & Ab. Halim, 2016b).

The influence of Western values in administration is still practiced in the management of organizations today, even though the country has long achieved independence. Physically, Malaysia is independent, but mentally its people are still plagued by that ideology. The excellence of an organization is only measured by the ability to produce products and improve work performance. Religious value is not the main criterion in the measurement, therefore producing selfish people who disregard the welfare of the ummah (Zainal, 2006).

### **c) Concern for Worldly Gifts**

The concept of working in Islam is not just to seek worldly gain but more importantly *ukhrawi* (hereafter) gain in order to gain the pleasure of Allah SWT. Employees need to equip themselves spiritually and religiously in order to always consciously preserve the Islamic work culture. A modern lifestyle with the only focus on the material interests and gains will produce individualistic people (Ezad Azraai Jamsari, 2004). Islam prescribes work not merely for material gain, but rather as the realization of human taqleed as a servant and caliph of Allah S.W.T. which will be re-evaluated in the hereafter. Thus, the fulfillment of various material needs is subject to the limits allowed by Allah SWT. in line with the fulfillment of his various spiritual needs (Solahuddin Abdul Hamid & Che Zarrina Sa'ari, 2014). Every job must be done ethically and morally right. Working is not just for the sake of attaining the material gain, but more importantly it is a religious demand that is done solely to get closer to Allah SWT. God has provided all the necessities for man to live on this earth. It is human who should seek, strive and use the resources bestowed by God in a direction that can benefit everyone and everything. All efforts made will be counted as pious deeds or *amal jariyah* that will receive a commensurate reward from Allah SWT. The reward for a person who does a job has been explained in the hadith of the Prophet SAW:

ما أكل أحد طعاما قط خيرا من أن يأكل من عمل يده وإن نبي الله داود عليه السلام كان يأكل من عمل يده

"No one eats any food that is better than the food of his own hands (work). And indeed the Prophet of God David as. Ate food from the results of his own efforts."  
(HR. Bukhari)

### **d) Lack of Commitment From The People of The Organization**

Work commitment is seen as the effort, hard work and volunteerism of employees to contribute to organizational goals (Norsyamimi Nordin & Mohammad Mujahed Hassan, 2019). Commitment in an organization is very important for incuclating the sense of responsibility among each employee in doing the job. Commitment is a word that is often emphasized in becoming an excellent employee. Therefore, in order to give a good commitment, employees should know the correct and appropriate strategy, so that the task assigned can be planned and performed strategically. Commitment can be seen from a variety

of perspectives depending on the variety of criteria, situations and employee behaviors. An organization needs skills, efficiency, diligence and loyalty from its members. Employees who have a high commitment to the organization are more likely to contribute more than what is entrusted to them. Lack of commitment among employees will adversely impact the progress and performance of the organization (Norsyamimi Nordin & Mohammad Mujahed Hassan, 2019; Zaharah, Abu Daud & Nazri, 2009).

### Conclusion

This work culture clearly requires a high level of commitment and patience from every individual be it the manager or employee. It does not only require an improvement in the quality of work and productivity, but also the needs to raise moral values and find ways so that employees have the awareness to live and work trustworthily, responsibly and honestly as well as sensitive to the well-being of society and the country in general. The process of educating the community to adopt a healthy work culture must be implemented by all parties. In fact, the process of educating the community about this work culture includes the organization of various awareness programs and campaigns on the importance and embracement of religious values and divinity in practice of excellent work culture and lifestyle. Therefore, religious views, universal religious values, as well as elements of *taqwa* and *iman* must be given due attention and emphasis.

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