Beyond Rules

Understanding Workplace Ethics Through Islamic Values

IERIF-funded research | Five Malaysian public universities



To better understand what shapes ethical choices in the workplace, an IERIF-funded research project developed and tested the Tasawwur-Based Employee Ethical Preference Index (TAWAP-i), drawing on Tasawwur principles and the objectives of Maqasid al-Shariah. The study examined ethical preferences among employees across five Malaysian public universities, identifying 10 dimensions that contribute to the index and inform our understanding of workplace ethics and performance.

WHAT SHAPES ETHICAL BEHAVIOR AT WORK?

Jazaa
Consequences in this world and the hereafter
0.470 INDEX SCORE

Religious Satisfaction
Fulfilment associated with religious values
0.470 INDEX SCORE

Piety
Personal religious commitment
0.469 INDEX SCORE

Mean scores establish the ranking: Jazaa 4.699, Religious Satisfaction 4.695 and Piety 4.686. Index scores represent mean values, not percentages.

Values at work

REFLECTIONS

Notably, jazaa, religious satisfaction and piety ranked as the top three dimensions of ethical preference. These findings invite us to reflect on the role of spiritual values in shaping workplace ethics. Seeing work as an act of ibadah (worship) may deepen our sense of responsibility to do what is right, even when no one is watching. The findings also highlight the importance of considering spiritual values alongside organisational factors when understanding ethical preferences at work.

> *A satisfied Muslim employee perceives governance as a form of 'ibadah (worship).*
>
> Al-Attas, 1980 - as cited on the project webpage

ADVANCING MASLAHAH

TAWAP-i offers a potential framework for organisations to better understand employees' ethical preferences and identify areas where workplace practices can be strengthened. Its findings could inform the development of employee training, ethical leadership initiatives and organisational policies that reinforce accountability, transparency, justice and trustworthiness alongside spiritual values. Further research is needed to validate the index across different workplace settings and establish how it can be applied to support more ethical and responsible work environments.

SUPPORTING NATIONAL ASPIRATION

The research aligns with Ekonomi MADANI and supports SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

About the research

PROJECT TITLE

Development and Test of TASAWWUR-Based Employee Ethical Preference Index (TAWAP-i) for Madani Work Performance in Malaysia

MEET THE RESEARCH TEAM



Principal Researcher

PROF. DR HANUDIN AMIN

Professor | Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS)



Co-Researcher

DR IMRAN M. SHAIKH

Senior Lecturer | Universiti Malaysia Sabah



Co-Researcher

ASSOC PROF. DR DZULJASTRI ABDUL RAZAK

Associate Professor | International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)



Co-Researcher

ASSOC PROF. DR MOHD ZULKIFILI MUHAMMAD

Associate Professor | Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK)



Industrial Collaborator

DR PUTERA ALIIF AL'AIN JASNI

Chief Assistant Secretary | Majlis Ugama Islam Sabah (MUIS)

SOURCE AND FURTHER READING

This overview is based on the i-RISE project webpage. It summarises the published page content; it is not the original full academic report. Contact i-RISE for the full report, methodology and policy brief.

View the project webpage | Contact i-RISE