

## Research Article

# Human Resource Ethics and Professionalism: An Islamic Perspective

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**Abstract.**

This paper explores the dimensions of ethics and professionalism in the context of human resources from the Islamic perspective. In its effort to delve deeper, this paper details the Islamic principles that guide ethical behavior and professionalism in human resources management. This understanding encompasses fundamental values such as justice, trustworthiness, and excellence, serving as the moral foundation for human resources practitioners grounded in Islam. A profound understanding of these principles not only provides a moral foundation for human resources practitioners but also has the potential to create a positive work environment. By applying these values, it is hoped that success, both at the individual and organizational levels, can be achieved while upholding the principles of Islamic ethics, thereby positively contributing to society as a whole.

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## 1. Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of contemporary business, the symbiotic relationship between Human Resource (HR) ethics and professionalism stands as a crucial determinant of organizational triumph. Ethical considerations within HR, encompassing principles of justice, equality, integrity, and social responsibility, establish the groundwork for a workplace culture steeped in morality and transparency. Concurrently, professionalism sets forth a framework where the continuous development of skills, adherence to work ethics, and effective leadership converge to elevate individual and collective performance standards.

Islamic work ethics come to the forefront, grounded in the belief that Islam is a perfect religion. Islam constitutes a set of rules (doctrines) and values that can guide individuals in their lives toward the goal of a happy and fulfilling life, both in this world and the

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hereafter. Ethics is also a normative field of knowledge within Islam, as it plays a role in determining what should or should not be done by an individual [1].

In Islam, work ethics are inseparable from the perspective that working is an act of worship. This concept emphasizes that any work done with good intentions, sincere purpose, and by Islamic teachings is considered a form of worship to Allah. Therefore, work ethics in Islam not only encompass aspects of professionalism and morality but also involve a strong spiritual dimension.

From the Islamic viewpoint, daily work can be seen as an act of worship when performed with the right intention, maintaining honesty, and adhering to Islamic ethical values. This creates a close connection between daily life and religious obligations, integrating spirituality into everyday activities. The understanding that working is an act of worship also impacts how individuals approach responsibilities and job tasks. High-quality work and a positive attitude in the workplace are considered ways to draw closer to Allah, making good work ethics a form of devotion.

This research delves into the interconnectedness of Human Resource (HR) ethics and professionalism within the context of Islam, revealing their central roles as the main pillars that form the foundation for organizational success. Through an exploration of these concepts, one can observe the synergy and impact they have on the sustainability of the organization, Islamic ethical values, and the creation of a work environment conducive to personal growth. This exploration also sheds light on the increasing contributions toward organizational objectives. The comprehensive examination not only uncovers the fundamental responsibilities borne by individuals but also underscores the strategic significance of ethical and professional principles within the context of Islam. It is expected that this, in turn, will provide enduring benefits for the development of organizations and society on a broader scale.

## 2. Literature Review

Ethics has two meanings: First, ethics as morality contains real values and norms that serve as guidance for human life in all aspects. Second, ethics a critical and rational reflection. Ethics helps humans to act freely but can be accountable. The word “ethics” comes from the Greek word “ethos,” which is related to character or the positive qualities that distinguish one person from another [2]. In its meaning, it refers to special character, sentiments, moral nature, or beliefs that guide an individual, group, or institution. Ethics is a set of values about good, right, wrong, and false based on moral principles, especially in behavior and actions. Ethics can be defined as “moral principles that govern a person’s

behavior or the conducting of an activity” [3]. Therefore, ethics is one of the crucial factors for the creation of better human living conditions. Work ethics is a reference used by an individual or company as a guide in conducting their business activities so that their activities do not harm other individuals or institutions. Work ethics on the other hand is the application of ethics in the workplace. It is defined as a set of principles based on hard work and diligence [4].

In the context of organizations, ethics is closely intertwined with organizational culture. Organizational culture, as a complex and evolving entity, extends beyond dominant values to encompass social norms, traditions, and habits that develop through day-to-day interactions within the organization. The philosophy guiding an organization’s policies toward employees and customers reflects the essence of the upheld values. Moreover, organizational culture influences not only the execution of tasks but also shapes shared assumptions and builds fundamental trust among its members. Employees, integral parts of this culture, not only perceive its characteristics but actively participate in the process of shaping and maintaining the organizational culture.

Organizational culture, beyond serving as a distinctive feature that sets one organizational entity apart from another, plays a strategic role in defining its identity. Its ability to enhance commitment and stability forms the foundation supporting continuity in achieving common goals. However, alongside its benefits, organizational culture can also pose potential barriers to necessary changes, impede diversity, and even present obstacles in the process of organizational mergers or consolidations.

Ethics in Islam is closely related to Islamic morals and conduct, based on the teachings found in the Quran and Hadith.

Therefore, ethics in Islam becomes one of the crucial factors in creating a better human condition [5] that is pleasing to Allah SWT. The principles of Islamic ethics are not only normative but also depict a worldview that encompasses all aspects of daily life, with primary guidance provided by Allah’s revelation in the Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad as recorded in the Hadith. The understanding and application of ethics in Islam form the foundation of behavior for Muslims, encompassing values such as justice, honesty, compassion, and simplicity, providing moral and spiritual guidance in every action and decision in their daily lives. Therefore, ethics in Islam is not just a set of rules but a comprehensive perspective on how individuals should live based on the teachings and guidance of Allah, aiming to achieve a good life and draw closer to Him.

The ethical framework for achieving professionalism is referred to as professional ethics. Professional ethics encompasses a set of norms and moral values recognized

and adhered to by individuals in a specific professional field. This ethical framework serves as a guide to steer the behavior and decisions of professionals, assisting them in maintaining high standards and building trust among colleagues, clients, and the general public. In this context, professional ethics plays a pivotal role in shaping a culture of professionalism. The principles of professional ethics typically include integrity, responsibility, honesty, and a commitment to providing quality services. Professionals who adhere to professional ethics tend to carry out their duties with full responsibility, prioritizing the interests of clients or the public. For example, in the medical field, professional ethics for doctors may involve principles such as medical confidentiality, fairness in healthcare delivery, and honest communication with patients. Meanwhile, in the legal field, professional ethics for lawyers may encompass principles like client trust, justice, and the obligation to provide the best legal representation.

Professionalism from the perspective of Islam can be explained by a combination of the meaning of two Quranic expressions, namely *al-quwwah* and *al-amanah* [6]. These two concepts are interconnected in the sense that individuals are entrusted with certain strengths (*al-quwwah*) by Allah, and they are expected to utilize these strengths responsibly and ethically, demonstrating faithfulness and trustworthiness (*al-amanah*) in their actions and interactions with others. The ethical use of one's capabilities is seen as a form of fulfilling the trust bestowed upon them by Allah. Both *al-quwwah* and *al-amanah* play roles in shaping the ethical behavior and moral character of individuals through Islamic teachings.

The terminology of professionalism can be equated with the prophetic characteristics of Muhammad, namely *Sidiq*, *Amanah*, *Fathonah*, and *Tabligh*[7], prophet Muhammad is not only known as the Messenger of Allah who brought revelation but also as an exemplary leader and professional who set high standards in ethics, responsibility, and dedication in every aspect of life. His noble qualities, such as trustworthiness (*amanah*), effective communication (*tabligh*), excellence (*ihsan*), humility (*tawadhu'*), and justice (*Adl*), not only provide a foundation for individual morality but also serve as practical guidance for Muslims in carrying out their duties and tasks. In this context, internalizing and embodying the characteristics of Prophet Muhammad not only builds strong and high-quality professionalism but also provides deep inspiration for Muslims to contribute positively in their workplaces and daily lives.

Professionalism is not merely a set of skills; it is a mental disposition that underscores an individual's unwavering commitment to executing their responsibilities with excellence and integrity. Professionalism is all about ethical success and influence; having a reputation for excellence and being thought of as someone who exhibits

professionalism under any circumstance can open doors for you either in the workplace or in your ambition [8]. In embodying this commitment, a well-defined code of ethics becomes essential, providing a framework that outlines the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable actions in the pursuit of professional duties. This ethical framework serves as a guide, shaping the individual's behavior and decisions, and contributing to the establishment of a workplace culture that values integrity, responsibility, and excellence. In essence, professionalism goes beyond the technical aspects of a job; it involves a dedication to upholding ethical standards and a continuous effort to enhance one's skills and knowledge, fostering a culture of trust and reliability in the professional realm.

With the existence of professional ethics, individuals in various professions have a clear foundation for acting with integrity and maintaining a high level of professionalism in carrying out their duties. Professional ethics also contribute to building trust and a positive reputation in society, which, in turn, supports the success and sustainability of the respective professions.

### 3. Methods

This research is a descriptive study, which is an attempt to narrate the current problem-solving based on existing data, then strives to present, analyze, and interpret this data. The method used is qualitative descriptive method. Descriptive research aims to provide a detailed account of a phenomenon and its attributes. This type of research is focused on explaining what occurred, emphasizing the "what" rather than delving into the "how" or "why" of the situation [9]. The focus of analysis in this descriptive study is on how the ethics of Human Resources (HR) can play a significant role in enhancing professionalism within a work or organizational context. This research aims to deepen the understanding of the positive impact of HR ethics on the improvement of professionalism by exploring various aspects involving behaviors, values, and ethical norms applied by individuals within the work environment.

### 4. Results and Discussion

The principles of Islam, as a comprehensive source of moral guidance, provide a solid foundation and profound ethical guidelines to steer individual behavior, particularly in the professional realm. Emphasizing fundamental values such as trustworthiness, justice, and excellence, Islam encourages each individual to carry out their duties and

responsibilities with full integrity and commitment. The ethical principles of Islam extend beyond personal matters, encompassing the professional world and forming a rich moral framework to navigate challenges and everyday decisions in careers. By understanding and internalizing these principles, individuals can shape a strong professional identity and make positive contributions to society, aligning with Islamic values that advocate for justice, honesty, and balance.

Professionalism and the Islamic perspective on the world of work have a deep and mutually influential relationship, especially when it comes to how individuals navigate their professional lives. This significant connection goes beyond merely executing tasks and responsibilities in the workplace but permeates deeper aspects of daily life. In this view, professionalism is not just a set of norms and behavioral standards in the workplace; rather, it reflects the Islamic vision of how every facet of life, including careers and jobs, can be approached with a high awareness of moral values, integrity, and dedication.

Work is a task that resembles an obligation carried out by an individual when needed [10]. On the other hand, the meaning of work for a Muslim is a sincere effort, employing all assets, thoughts, and remembrance, to actualize or manifest the meaning of oneself as a servant of Allah who must submit to the world and position oneself as part of the best community (*khairu ummah*) [11].

The concept of work in Islam carries a broad meaning. Firstly, work is understood in a general sense, encompassing all forms of effort undertaken by humans, whether material or non-material, intellectual or physical, and concerning matters of the world or the hereafter. In the Islamic perspective, the understanding of work is extensive, covering the entire mobilization of human potential. Secondly, work is perceived in a specific sense, fulfilling the necessities of human life such as food, clothing, and shelter (clothing, food, and housing), which are obligations that must be fulfilled by every individual. This serves to determine one's status and degree, both in the eyes of people and in the sight of Allah SWT.

In the context of Islam, ethics and professionalism refer to the character of Prophet Muhammad SAW as the primary exemplar for the Muslim community, embodying an understanding that involves instilling moral values and ethical principles inherited from his teachings and actions. The four main qualities often associated with ethics and professionalism in Islam, namely *Sidiq*, *Amanah*, *Fathonah*, and *Tabligh*, establish a robust foundation to guide the Muslim community in engaging in everyday life with moral integrity, trustworthiness, profound understanding, and proactive involvement in disseminating the teachings of Islam.

The trait of *Sidiq*, which refers to honesty and truthfulness, brings about a significant impact within the realm of professional work. The presence of this trait establishes a robust foundation to guide the behavior of a professional in various aspects of work, ranging from transparent communication to integrity in decision-making. In the context of professionalism, the existence of the *Sidiq* trait is not merely an additional value but serves as a pillar supporting the building of reputation, trust, and the sustainability of an ethical and productive work environment.

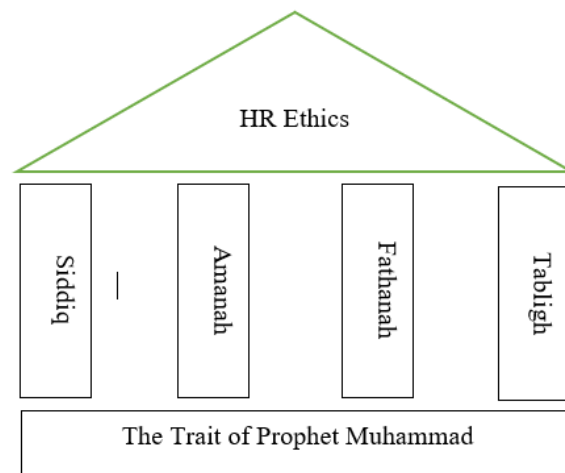
The trait of *Amanah*, encompassing trust and responsibility within the realm of professionalism, has a profound impact on various aspects of work, delineating the behaviors and attitudes of a professional in fulfilling tasks and responsibilities. This includes a wholehearted commitment to entrusted tasks and promises, wise resource management, openness and transparency in executing work, the maintenance of trust by considering the reputation built, responsibility for mistakes with a readiness to learn and improve, and the safeguarding of confidential or sensitive information. The trait of *Amanah* is also reflected in responsible decision-making, where a professional considers the impact of decisions not only on themselves but also on all parties involved.

By internalizing the trait of *Amanah* in professionalism, an individual not only creates a reliable and respected work environment but also plays a crucial role in building the foundation for success and integrity in both career and organizational contexts.

The trait of *Fathonah* carries the meaning of being intelligent both intellectually and emotionally. Intellectual intelligence encompasses the ability to understand, analyze, and integrate information deeply. Professionals with high intellectual intelligence can quickly comprehend the complexity of tasks and make informed decisions. Emotional intelligence involves the ability to understand and feel emotions, both from oneself and others. Professionals with high emotional intelligence can understand the feelings of colleagues, clients, or superiors, enhancing interpersonal relationships.

The trait of *Tabligh*, which reflects the spirit of conveying messages or information to educate or provide good understanding sourced from Islamic teachings, becomes essential in forming communication that is not only informative but also effective in the context of professionalism.

As we navigate this extensive literature, it becomes evident that HR ethics and professionalism are not isolated concepts but interconnected elements shaping the very fabric of successful organizations. By weaving together moral principles, fair practices, and a commitment to continuous improvement, organizations can forge a path toward sustained success and contribute positively to the broader societal landscape. The



**Figure 1:** HR Ethics Based on the Trait of Prophet Muhammad.

synthesis of these concepts serves as a guiding framework for individuals and organizations seeking not only to navigate the complexities of the contemporary business world but also to thrive within it.

## 5. Conclusion

The exploration of Ethics and Professionalism in Human Resource Management (HRM) through the Islamic perspective reveals a comprehensive framework that integrates ethical principles into the domain of organizational management. Islamic teachings underscore the importance of emulating the character traits of Prophet Muhammad in all aspects of life, including professional conduct. The ethical guidelines provided by Islam encourage HR professionals to prioritize justice, transparency, and fair treatment of employees.

In summary, Human Resource Ethics and Professionalism from an Islamic standpoint emphasize a holistic approach to organizational management. By integrating Islamic principles into HR practices, organizations can foster a culture of integrity, fairness, and compassion, ultimately contributing to the development of a socially responsible and ethically sound workplace. This perspective serves as a valuable guide for HR professionals seeking to navigate the complex challenges of the modern workplace while upholding ethical standards grounded in Islamic values.



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