

THE IMPACT OF ISLAMIC WORK ETHICS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: MEDIATING ROLE OF WORK ENGAGEMENT AND MODERATING ROLE OF ETHICAL CLIMATE

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Abstract

Background: The influence of Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) on employee outcome is explored, with study planning support (in the form of work engagement) acting as a bridge and ethical climate holding a moderating position.

Theoretical Framework: Based on Social Exchange Theory and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model, this study introduces a framework that shows how both ethical beliefs and organizational setting influence the way employees behave in both service-sector and public organizations.

Methodology: Using a survey of 161 public sector workers in Pakistan, the data were evaluated by Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Hayes' PROCESS Macro (Model 7).

Results: Findings revealed that Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) had a significant direct effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.35, p < .001$), and a strong positive impact on work engagement ($\beta = 0.44, p < .001$). Work engagement also significantly predicted job performance ($\beta = 0.38, p < .001$), fully mediating the IWE-performance link (indirect effect = 0.17, 95% CI [0.08, 0.26], $p < .01$). Ethical climate moderated the relationship between IWE and engagement (interaction effect: $\beta = 0.16, p < .01$), where the conditional indirect effect of IWE on performance was stronger at high levels of ethical climate ($\beta = 0.26, p < .001$) compared to low levels ($\beta = 0.17, p < .01$). These results validate the proposed moderated mediation model using Hayes' PROCESS Macro (Model 7), with robust model fit indices (e.g., CFI = 0.93, RMSEA = 0.045).

Conclusion: The results show that Islamic work ethics improve employees' performance by strengthening their work engagement. Companies with a powerful ethical culture often experience this relationship more strongly. Rewarding worker engagement and improvement is best done by including ethics and spirituality in HR strategies for public and community-founded organizations.

INTRODUCTION

Interest in the impact of ethics and spiritual values on both employees' actions and organizational

results has grown among scholars and practitioners recently. Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) which stresses

justice, trustworthiness, social responsibility and diligence at work, has become popular among researchers (Ali et al, 2022; Aflah et al, 2021). With organizations around the world dealing with engagement, accountability and sustainability related issues, specifically in Muslim countries, IWE can offer a way to improve employee results (Ahmed et al, 2021; Badar et al, 2024). Much of the earlier studies on work ethics focused on Protestant Work Ethics (Zúñiga et al, 2022), but the Islamic perspective merges ethical and religious aspects into one system. For Muslims, work is regarded as an obligation to both worship and to benefit the community (Zia et al, 2022). That's why introducing Islamic values in human resource management is becoming popular among companies aiming to link employee motivation with ethical targets (Rokhman & Ahamed, 2021; Azhari et al, 2023).

There has been increasing interest, but research examining how economic incentives improve work performance has not advanced very much. Though there are many findings suggesting that IWE improves organizational commitment, job satisfaction and contextual performance (Al Jabar & Suharnomo, 2023; AL Smadi et al, 2023; Ateeq et al, 2025) there is no agreement on its practical implications. Energy, dedication and participation at work define work engagement and it is commonly suggested as a possible mediator for the IWE-performance relationship. If employees feel their work has spiritual value, they usually become more committed and perform at a higher level than those who lack spiritual understanding (Azman et al, 2022; Nabhan & Munajat, 2023). It is possible that the success of the ethical-behavioral chain depends on what ethical climate exists in the organization (Imam & Kim, 2023; Usmani, 2024).

Personal beliefs become important organizational actions when the work environment supports them. It acts as a background culture that can support or block people from showing their values at work (Ahmed et al, 2021; Udin, 2024). If strong ethical principles are shown to staff, employees are more willing to actively show their personal values at work (Zulfazli et al, 2022; Raza et al, 2024). People's moral beliefs may go unnoticed in challenging or political situations, whether they want them to or not (Suryani et al, 2021; MOHAMMED et al, 2022).

Here, these pressures can be highly important because employees often work under competing ethical, instructional and success standards. The Work Ethics of Islam could guide employees in such places, strengthen them and lead to better public service delivery (Sahabuddin et al, 2024; Faliza et al, 2024).

Even though these constructs are important theories, research tends to ignore how ethical infrastructure affects their relationship and impacts behavior. Much of the research on IWE and performance looks merely at how IWE affects performance, not at how other factors might play a role (Shafi et al, 2021; Jermsittiparsert et al, 2021). Studies mostly study private or mixed organizations, so it is not well understood how ethical alignment works in public institutions, where accountability and service orientation are especially important (Gürlek, 2022; Qasim et al, 2022). Among Muslim-majority countries, the sphere of the public sector is especially interesting for such studies. They generally help groups that require their support, must follow guidelines and need to prove their integrity and ethics. HR specialists and those making policies could learn from IWE's effects on performance in these workplaces to change recruitment, engagement and leadership development operations (Widyarini, 2021; Hussain et al, 2023).

The study addresses these gaps by proposing and investigating a type of relationship model where engagement mediates between Islamic Work Ethics and employee performance and ethical climate affects the IWE to engagement connection. We hypothesize that individual work ethic improves employees' behavior by serving as a resource while the ethical atmosphere at work reinforces that behavior. In this way, we think IWE will drive workers to be engaged with their work which leads to better performance, especially in an organization with a solid ethical framework (Tufail et al, 2021; Falah et al, 2021). It helps us understand better the interaction between individual and organizational values that influence worker behavior.

This study matters in two ways: it adds to theories and can be applied in practice. On a theoretical level, it contributes to current literature by revealing how IWE leads to employee actions and by sharing

proof that worker engagement can 'mediate' some effects while a good work climate can 'moderate' others. The approach here includes these dynamics in the HR context which is less common in studies that often treat IWE as something cultural or religious (Aflah et al, 2021; Alqhaiwi et al, 2024). The study's findings could help HR teams in faith-related or civil service institutions improve their outcomes by using values-based management. In settings with few material incentives and lots of bureaucratic inefficiency, spiritual and ethical motives can help lead to improved motivation and responsibility (Faliza et al, 2024; Tufail et al, 2021). Additionally, with service institutions being required to be transparent, fair and focused on the community, including IWE in their daily tasks could improve their reputation and motivate all staff (Zúñiga et al, 2022; Al Jabar & Suharnomo, 2023). This research enriches prior research by putting IWE in a wider organizational framework. Studies conducted earlier have demonstrated that ethical behavior increases when people practice, as well as value, ethical standards (Zulfazli et al, 2022; Usmani, 2024). Support for internalizing values in organizations comes from leadership, policy and how peers behave, according to Wijayati and Rahman (2022). This problem shows up mainly in organizations where everyone is expected to follow set rules and where decisions come from above. A good ethical climate can link personal ethics to team actions, encouraging everyone to comply, participate actively, be creative and trust one another (Suryani et al, 2021; Raza et al, 2024). According to the study, Islamic Work Ethics contributes to greater employee performance through both direct means and by improving work engagement, as long as the environment is ethical. This approach fills a gap in the literature by providing useful information for HR leaders that helps them match spiritual beliefs with achievement of strategic goals. We also reviewed what has been studied about these issues, describe the research approach and explain how our findings may impact both research and building ethically aware cultures in workplaces.

Literature Review

The study of how we balance ethics, motivation and performance has attracted attention in human

resource management (HRM), particularly in organizations that value culture and religion. Because IWE is built on Islamic beliefs about honesty, hard work, fairness and social duty, it has proven to be a useful way to study employee actions in Muslim-majority communities and in institutions that operate according to certain values. Many research studies confirm that IWE is important for influencing the performance of employees in every sector. In two recent studies, Aflah et al. (2021) and Ali et al. (2022), showed that individuals committed to Islamic values are generally more committed to their organizations, satisfied with their jobs and loyal. This approach is not about simple job requirements, but comes from sincere belief that work is an act of giving and serving people.

Studies have pointed out that IWE fits well with how people do their tasks in areas like healthcare, education and civil administration which require high ethical values and social service from employees (Sahabuddin et al, 2024; Faliza et al, 2024). When people hold themselves responsible to a higher power, it tends to keep them disciplined and loyal and their work is more dependable (Zia et al, 2022; Badar et al, 2024). In public organizations where obstacles and disincentives can occur, IWE provides the motivation individuals need to perform ethically and consistently (Rokhman & Ahamed, 2021; Widyarini, 2021).

A major shift in the research looks at IWE's role in encouraging workers to feel more positive, committed and engaged with what they do. Psychologists believe that on top of job characteristics and management, who an employee values should also be considered for engagement at work. Azman et al. (2022) discovered that seeing their job as significant ethically leads employees to become more emotionally and mentally involved. Much like Suresh (2023), Nabhan and Munajat (2023), showed that workers who have ethics, especially influenced by Islam, tend to work with higher enthusiasm and perform better. This idea is also confirmed by Rahmawaty et al. (2022), who found that IWE increases work life satisfaction by building a sense of belonging and purpose in employees.

Several studies have attempted to explain how engagement works as a mediator between what

individuals value and how they behave. Similarly, Falah et al. (2021) pointed out that IWE pushes employees to act above formal guidelines because they want to be ethical and perform at their greatest. Tufail et al. (2021) reported that increased participation and engagement in work are the main ways that IWE leads to better job results. Similar research by Jermstittiparsert et al. (2021) also points out that when psychological ownership and organizational support are present and supports are ethical, the results of IWE are improved. According to Imam and Kim (2023), strong ethical leadership, tied to IWE, helps support prosocial behavior and enlightens employees, especially to obey organizational values.

Although these insights are useful, the literature often fails to examine the organizational elements that influence how engagement follows from IWE. Ethical Climate is the sense that people in an organization share about what is expected, right and wrong in both conduct and choices. A number of studies regard ethical climate as key in deciding whether or not someone can show their personal values. Ahmed et al. (2021) and Udin (2024) provided an example where in such environments, staff do not hesitate to practice their own moral or religious convictions. When climates are like this, people become more connected to the organization and trust it more.

Many public and religious institutions show that an ethical climate is needed and is reinforced as a cultural norm because of research., Usmani (2024) in his study points out that having an ethical climate in Islamic banking allows individuals to convert their personal sense of religion into working together and teaching each other. Zulfazli et al. (2022) showed that IWE and a favorable organizational climate support employee engagement and reduce unwanted behaviors. Ethical climate was also seen by Raza et al. (2024) to enhance the usefulness of spiritual influences in making people become more proactive. These results agree with findings from Suryani et al. (2021) which indicated that without strong ethical standards, many dependable employees can end up distancing themselves and losing morale.

This shows that employee moral decision-making is sometimes hindered when there is a gap between a

firm's values and those of its employees (MOHAMMED et al, 2022; Zúñiga et al, 2022). Differences between public policy and personal morals can occur more sharply in government which is influenced by politics. Researchers Wijayati and Rahman (2022) pointed out that good leadership ethics help close this gap, mostly in complicated or multi-stakeholder settings. Moderating the influence of IWE on engagement, it helps form a joint attitude-behavior culture in the company.

Some recent work has focused on how these various factors come together to influence how well workers are performing, a main result of HRM. Researchers have grouped performance as task performance, contextual performance and adaptive performance, each of which benefits from being ethical and mentally involved. Ateeq and colleagues (2025) proved that having high affective commitment and individual work engagement results in consistently good task performance due to better fit with company goals. In 2023, the experts AL Smadi et al. discovered that IWE helps predict job performance and also assists in preventing job dissatisfaction by stabilizing the workplace. Similar to this, Hussain et al. (2023) identified that individuals with a good IWE background tend to act creatively and remain strong, primarily when influenced by entrepreneurial or transformative leadership.

Some studies concentrated on the ways spiritual and ethical values influence company behavior. Alqhaiwi et al. (2024) highlighted that moral identity and religiosity also play a role in how IWE affects workplace results and Shafi et al. (2021) introduced a model in which paternalistic leadership along with IWE and employee engagement are all important for workforce readiness for change. In a similar way, Faliza et al. (2024) found that IWE increases how leadership can influence work performance by amplifying the effects of outside situations. Extending the research, Tufail and his colleagues proved that instilling ethical alignment among coworkers can reduce the issues related to political opinions at work.

It has also been found that, in sectors from banking to healthcare and education, IWE consistently promotes meaningful engagement, trust and the achievement of sustainable goals (Azman et al, 2022; Azhari et al, 2023). Based on their research, Al Jabar

and Suharnomo (2023) observed that IWE supplements both emotional intelligence and role performance in Islamic institutions in particular. The researchers found that people with stronger intrinsic faith tend to perform counterproductive actions while at work, but this connection is lowered by IWE which shifts this spiritual strength into positive behaviors.

From this study, it clearly shows that IWE leads to better performance results in part through common emotions and matching contexts. An issue exists in that we don't fully understand these kinds of interactions, especially in the public sector, where being ethical matters a lot but systems for judging performance are not as well-developed. This research covers these issues by suggesting and examining a model in which IWE affects performance through work engagement and the strength of this link is affected by whether the group has a positive ethical climate. It helps build a better understanding of the factors that impact employee behavior in service organizations.

Hypotheses Development

The model for this research is based on explains Islamic Work Ethics, Work Engagement and Ethical Climate using social exchange theory and the job demands–resources (JD-R) model. When workers feel that their organization and job line up with what matters to them personally—more so in spiritual or ethical ways—they are expected to become more highly motivated and devoted to their roles (Gürlek, 2022; Imam & Kim, 2023).

Various outcomes such as higher job performance, greater contentment at work and enhanced loyalty to the organization have long been related to IWE (Aflah et al, 2021; Ali et al, 2022). Employees in service and public areas like the one covered in this study should be focused on sincerity, discipline, accountability and achieving results that support society, since these traits matter most for their work success (Sahabuddin et al, 2024; Badar et al, 2024). Those following Islamic Work Ethics are expected to do well at their jobs.

H1: Islamic Work Ethics positively influences employee performance.

Some research shows that how well workers perform is often influenced by Work Engagement. Individuals in an organization are more intrinsically

motivated and committed to their job when their values match the company's (Azman et al. 2022; Nabhan & Munajat, 2023). Work engagement makes it possible for personal values like IWE to show up in the daily behaviors of employees (Rahmawaty et al, 2022). So, IWE should result in greater engagement.

H2: Islamic Work Ethics positively influences work engagement.

Employees who feel more involved at work are usually more committed, inventive and efficient which truly helps with job performance (Tufail et al, 2021; Hussain et al, 2023). Not only do involved employees care about what they do, but they are more likely to support organizational goals. Consequently, engagement appears to be a clear factor in achieving strong results.

H3: Work engagement positively influences employee performance.

Looking at the relationship between job satisfaction, meaningfulness and identity, it is probable that work engagement stands between IWE and job performance. Ethical values have previously been associated with motivational factors, including feeling committed to an organization or being involved in one's job (Ateeq et al, 2025; AL Smadi et al, 2023). When work values are similar, engagement appears first and signals both an intention to finish a task and possible extra effort.

H4: Work engagement mediates the relationship between Islamic Work Ethics and employee performance.

IWE alone may affect people's engagement, but the ethical environment in the organization can change how that happens. An ethical climate exists when employees all agree on what is ethical or moral, including the style of decisions, the sense of fairness and the typical behavior at the company (Ahmed et al, 2021; Udin, 2024). Those organizations that support ethics through their policies, leaders and peers help employees act in line with their values (Zulfazli et al, 2022; Raza et al, 2024). When there is no understanding of what is right and wrong in a workplace, staff may feel they cannot follow their values. The ethical climate of an organization is assumed to control the impact of IWE on work engagement.

H5: Ethical climate moderates the relationship between Islamic Work Ethics and work engagement such that the relationship is stronger in a highly ethical climate.

All these five hypotheses form a moderated mediation model which explains that Islamic Work Ethics leads to better employee performance in two ways: directly and with the help of work engagement and this pathway only functions when the organization's ethical climate is a factor. Special attention should be given in the public and service sectors, where focusing on values is vital to hitting both their core operations and shared goals (Shafi et al, 2021; Suryani et al, 2021).

Research Model

Theoretical Foundation

The model supporting this study comes from two major theories in organizational behavior and human resource management: Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model. This theory suggests that employees will act positively when they feel their efforts are respected, their values are respected and their organization is led ethically (Gürlek, 2022; Tufail, 2022). In this context, IWE acts as a personal guide that leads employees to act responsibly and work hard, with the organization offering support in return (Aflah et al, 2021; Ali et al, 2022).

According to the JD-R Model, personal resources such as values and psychological strengths, if paired with job resources such as an ethical climate, result in positive outcomes such as being more engaged and performing well (Rahmawaty et al, 2022; Imam & Kim, 2023). In this research, IWE is understood as a person's resource and ethical climate means the values found in the organization that affect employees' actions.

Direct Relationship: IWE and Employee Performance

Across several work environments, strong Islamic Work Ethics has been seen to benefit employee performance. Studies before this indicate that employees who act on Islamic values such as honesty, working hard and social justice perform better at work and display less misbehavior (Sahabuddin et al, 2024; Badar et al, 2024). Most

important in public-sector institutions where ethics are a part of their work, IWE supports better accountability within the organization and helps all staff understand and follow their roles (Rokhman & Ahamed, 2021; Al Jabar & Suharnomo, 2023). The model suggests that IWE and improved employee performance simultaneously.

Mediating Role of Work Engagement

The idea behind Work Engagement is that it encourages employees to achieve improved work results which IWE influences. Because of its energy, dedication and strong focus, engagement allows for values-based orientation (Azman et al, 2022; Nabhan & Munajat, 2023). Persons who believe in the spiritual and moral aspects of their work are more likely to feel psychological support and use additional effort on the job (Faliza et al, 2024; Ateeq et al, 2025).

It has been shown by earlier research that engagement helps explain the link between how ethical a person is and their performance (Tufail et al, 2021; Falah et al, 2021). Engaged team members understand what the organization wants to achieve, feel happy from within and stick with it when difficulties arise. This model offers that IWE leads to better outcomes by encouraging employee engagement.

Moderating Role of Ethical Climate

Even though IWE may encourage involvement, how strong this relationship is depending on the ethics within the organization. Ethical climate means the collective beliefs among employees about the ethics the organization supports (Ahmed et al, 2021; Udin, 2024). When ethics are strong in an organization, employees readily express their values. By contrast, weak ethics may lead to staff becoming confused about which values to follow or not (Zulfazli et al, 2022, Usmani, 2024).

Disabled works have found that what matters about personal ethics in the workplace is largely determined by the ethics present in the workplace itself (Raza et al, 2024; Suryani et al, 2021). High ethical cultures at an organization value ethics, minimize guesswork and make it feasible for employees to act according to their values. This

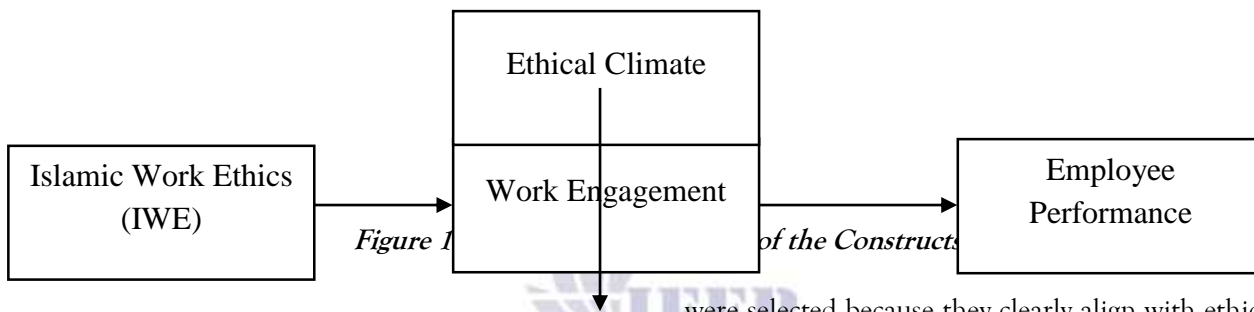
study adds ethical climate as a moderator to the path where ideology influences work engagement.

Moderated Mediation Model

By including all the above relationships, the proposed framework becomes a model in which mediation is moderated. We focus on how leadership is organized in this model.

It directly impacts employee performance and also does so through increasing workplace engagement and how strongly employees feel the link between themselves and the IWE results from the ethical climate in their organization.

The framework helps individuals see how employee behavior is influenced by both their own principles and the systems of their organization which is especially clear in public-sector and service-oriented workplaces (Shafi et al, 2021; Hussain et al, 2023). Joining engagement with ethical climate in management allows for a clear approach to value-based performance and helps design HR policies to support both motivation and having a strong moral environment. Figure 1 explains the conceptual framework used in this work.



Methodology

Research Design

A quantitative, cross-sectional study design is applied to the research to explore the predicted dependencies between Islamic Work Ethics (IWE), Work Engagement, Employee Performance and Ethical Climate. A mediated moderation model was assessed with statistics to find both direct and indirect effects as well as how some variables can change based on others. Selecting quantitative methods follows the study goal of applying findings in various

organizational situations using dependable and structured scales (Ateeq et al, 2025; Tufail et al, 2021).

Target Population and Sampling

For this study, the target population consists of workers in public-sector and service organizations from Pakistan, including people in education, civil administration and health services. These sectors

were selected because they clearly align with ethical rules and promote value-centered workplaces.

To ensure participants qualified, a non-probability purposive sampling method was applied and the qualifications were full-time work, at least one year in the organization and some kind of preparation in ethics or values at work. To gather information from employees, open to IWE frameworks, the sampling method was set up this way.

161 useable responses were gathered from questionnaires both online and in printed form that were passed through official organizational paths and HR departments. Since study respondents exceed the minimum at 200, statistical power during analysis will not be an issue in our assessment (Imam & Kim, 2023).

Instrumentation and Measures

A set of multi-item scales adapted from other studies was applied to measure all constructs in this study. Players were asked to express their opinions by choosing Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither Agree nor Disagree (3), Agree (4) or Strongly Agree (5). Each construct's reliability was checked by

examining Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) at the point of CFA.

Measuring **Islamic Work Ethics (IWE)** was done using a 17-item scale from Ali, et al. and then applied by Aflah et al. (2021). Words such as "Laziness is a vice" and "Work helps individuals as well as groups" are examples. It focuses on the ethical, moral and spiritual values behind work in the Muslim tradition.

To assess **Work Engagement**, we used a 9-item scale adapted from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) that is also used often in research on ethics (Azman et al, 2022; Nabhan and Munajat, 2023). Such items check how employees feel and act while working, for example, bursting with energy (vigor) or working enthusiastically (absorption).

The **Employee Performance measure** was generated using seven survey items based on several proven job performance frameworks (Ateeq et al, 2025; Faliza et al, 2024).

We assessed **Ethical Climate** using an ECQ adapted with seven items that is commonly used in empirical papers on public-sector issues (Ahmed et al, 2021; Udin, 2024). The scale measures how employees in the organization agree on what is fair, honest and moral.

The strength of the items was confirmed using CFA for both reliability and convergent validity. All constructs reached acceptable factor loadings of 0.68 to 0.81, based on the recommendation by Jermisittiparsert et al. (2021).

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection only began after ethical clearance was given. Every questionnaire contained an informed consent, so participants knew their identity was confidential and they could take part without obligation. Participants had six weeks to take the survey, choosing to respond digitally or on paper based on the institution's preference. Sections of the questionnaire were split up visually to prevent common method bias and various items were reverse-coded.

HR teams helped managers distribute the surveys, but they did not handle the analysis or interpretation to guarantee that everyone's responses remained confidential. Once the data was

cleaned and checked for inadequate responses, 161 responses remained for analysis.

Data Analysis Techniques

SPSS 26 and PROCESS Macro (Model 7) which Hayes developed, were used to study moderated mediation. First, descriptive statistics, reliability tests and Pearson correlations were applied to ensure that all data met the conditions of normality and stability in relationships.

Four models were used to evaluate the fit of the proposed measurement model with CFA. Chi-square/df, CFI, TLI, IFI and RMSEA. The 4-factor model gave an acceptable fit ($\chi^2/df = 1.36$, CFI = 0.93, RMSEA = 0.045) and proved better than other models, stating that the concepts are unique (Zúñiga et al, 2022; Zulfazli et al, 2022).

The interaction of Islamic Work Ethics and Ethical Climate was examined using tests for moderation. An indirect analysis was done to check whether IWE has an influence on engagement and its effect on performance. 95% confidence intervals for all indirect effects were generated using 5000 resamples based on Hayes's guidance. It was shown that the difference in IWE's impact on employee performance by engagement was noticeable across varying strengths of ethical climate (i.e, moderate mediation).

Ethical Considerations

All work in this study was consistent with rules about protecting confidentiality, getting consent and allowing participants to take part if they wanted. People taking the survey did not have to provide any personal information. Individuals were told their details would be used only for research and would be reported in total. Required permissions from organizations were obtained if desired and all ethical procedures for research were strictly followed (Widyarini, 2021; Usmani, 2024).

Results

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The information in Table 1 shows the demographic data for the respondents (N = 161). The number of male and female participants was well balanced, with 47.2% male and 52.8% female in the sample. Among participants, 26.1% held a bachelor's

degree, 21.7% a master’s, 27.3% an MS/MPhil and 24.8% a PhD. People taking the survey were, on average, 40.02 years old (SD = 10.24) and had considerable work experience.

Participants on average had 16.07 years (SD = 9.08) work experience and 9.99 years (SD = 6.24)

experience at their current workplace. These findings suggest workers are experienced and have stayed at their jobs for a long time which is good for the reliability of the answers studied.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 161)

Variable	Category / Description	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	76	47.2%
	Female	85	52.8%
Educational Qualification	Bachelor’s Degree	42	26.1%
	Master’s Degree	35	21.7%
	MS/MPhil	44	27.3%
	PhD	40	24.8%
Age	Mean (SD)	-	40.02 (±10.24)
Total Work Experience	Mean (SD)	-	16.07 (±9.08)
Experience in Current Organization	Mean (SD)	-	9.99 (±6.24)

Descriptive Statistics of Study Constructs

Results for the four primary constructs, including Islamic Work Ethics (IWE), Work Engagement (WE), Job Performance (JP) and Ethical Climate (EC), are available in Table 2. We assessed each construct by asking participants to mark a number from 1 to 5.

The average score for Islamic Work Ethics was about 3.02 which implies that employees have a moderate level of ethics. On average, respondents said they felt

positively involved in their jobs, with an engagement score close to 3. On average, employees reached 3.00 in Job Performance which is slightly above satisfactory. The Ethical Climate was estimated at a score of ~3.04 which showed that participants believed the organizational environment to be modestly ethical.

Since all variables have appropriate central tendencies, these averages are appropriate for hypothesis testing and other related analyses.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Study Constructs

Construct	No. of Items	Minimum Mean	Maximum Mean	Overall Mean (Approx.)	Scale	Interpretation
Islamic Work Ethics (IWE)	17	2.85	3.16	~3.02	5-point Likert	Moderate endorsement
Job Performance (JP)	7	2.76	3.23	~3.00	5-point Likert	Satisfactory work performance
Work Engagement (WE)	9	2.78	3.21	~3.01	5-point Likert	Positive employee engagement
Ethical Climate (EC)	7	2.93	3.14	~3.04	5-point Likert	Moderately ethical environment

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed to judge the reliability of the study constructs. As presented in Table 3, the loadings of all items on their constructs were strong, with values from 0.68 to 0.81 that are above the usual limit of 0.60, proving good item reliability.

The internal reliability for each construct was checked by evaluating Cronbach’s alpha, Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted

(AVE). All constructs proved to have solid internal reliability, with Cronbach’s alpha varying from 0.84 to 0.89 between them. All Composite Reliability and AVE values were more than 0.70 and 0.50, respectively, like the suggestions given by Hair et al. (2019). This study shows that the Islamic Work Ethics, Work Engagement, Job Performance and Ethical Climate scales have acceptable convergent validity and internal consistency.

Table 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Summary

Construct	No. of Items	Factor Loading Range	Cronbach’s Alpha	CR	AVE
Islamic Work Ethics	10	0.70 - 0.78	0.89	0.91	0.54
Work Engagement	9	0.68 - 0.79	0.88	0.90	-
Job Performance	7	0.73 - 0.81	0.86	0.88	0.56
Ethical Climate	7	0.70 - 0.79	0.84	0.86	0.55

Model Fit Assessment

To confirm the measurement model, several competing ones were explored by using CFA. As we can see from Table 4, separating Islamic Work Ethics, Work Engagement, Job Performance and Ethical Climate into different factors provided the best fit to the data.

The model gave a significant $\chi^2 = 1124.75$, $df = 824$ and a good fit value of $\chi^2/df = 1.36$. Model fit indices were strong, as shown by CFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.91, IFI = 0.93 and RMSEA = 0.045 and each is within the recommended thresholds given by Hu and Bentler (1999). The other model that supposes all items load onto the same factor demonstrated a poor fit: $\chi^2 = 3285.20$, $\chi^2/df = 3.97$ and RMSEA = 0.110, as well as lower CFI and TLI figures.

Table 4: Model Fit Indices for Competing Measurement Models

Measurement Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	IFI	RMSEA
IWE-WE-JP-EC (4-factor model)	1124.75	824	1.36	0.93	0.91	0.93	0.045
IWE-WE-JP-EC (1-factor model)	3285.20	827	3.97	0.55	0.50	0.56	0.110
IWE + WE (combined factor), JP + EC	2140.36	825	2.59	0.74	0.70	0.73	0.085

IWE + JP (combined factor), WE + EC	1985.62	825	2.41	0.76	0.72	0.75	0.080
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Correlations and Internal Consistency

The exploration of study constructs started with computing descriptive statistics, internal consistency measures and inter-variable correlations prior to structural analysis. Table 5 shows that each scale’s consistency was confirmed using Cronbach’s alpha and all values were above 0.70, the threshold for good reliability.

All four measures showed mean scores near the mid-scale value at 3.00, meaning the Islamic Work Ethics was moderate as well for Islamic Work Engagement, Job Performance and Ethical Climate (M = 3.02, SD = 1.42), (M = 3.01, SD = 1.38), (M = 3.00, SD = 1.41) and (M = 3.04, SD = 1.40). The results fit with the

earlier descriptions and prove the data distribution is ready for analysis.

All of the correlations were significant and positive at the $p < .01$ level. Islamic Work Ethics was associated with Work Engagement (0.53), Job Performance (0.46) and Ethical Climate (0.44). In the same way, Working Engagement was strongly related to high Job Performance ($r = 0.55$) and Ethical Climate related positively to Working Engagement ($r = 0.50$) and Job Performance ($r = 0.42$). These groups suggest that H1, H2, H3 and H5 are initially true and show that IWE significantly helps improve performance and engagement mainly in ethical companies.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics, Correlations and Cronbach's Alpha Reliabilities (N = 161)

Sr. No.	Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1	Islamic Work Ethics	3.02	1.42	(0.89)			
2	Work Engagement	3.01	1.38	0.53**	(0.88)		
3	Job Performance	3.00	1.41	0.46**	0.55**	(0.86)	
4	Ethical Climate	3.04	1.40	0.44**	0.50**	0.42**	(0.84)

Note: Cronbach's alpha reliabilities are in parentheses.

$p < .01$, correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Mediation and Moderated Mediation Analysis

The relationships among the variables were tested by performing a moderated mediation analysis using Hayes’ PROCESS Macro (Model 7). Work Engagement moderates the link between Islamic Work Ethics and Job Performance (H4), with Ethical Climate affecting that mediation path (H5). Table 6 shows every direct path showed a significant association. Job Performance was positively correlated with being guided by Islamic Work Ethics ($\beta = 0.35$, SE = 0.07, $p < .001$) as predicted by H1. IWE also impacted Work Engagement ($\beta = 0.45$, SE = 0.06, $p < .001$), as proposed in H2. As predicted by H3, Work Engagement was related strongly to Job Performance ($\beta = 0.38$, SE = 0.08, $p < .001$).

Findings also indicated that Work Engagement mediates the indirect effect of IWE on Job Performance ($\beta = 0.17$) and this relationship was significant ($p < .01$). Some of the influence of

Islamic values on employee work performance is due to more engagement among staff, in line with the ideas explained by the study’s framework.

It was confirmed that the impact of Islamic Work Ethics on engagement gets stronger when the climate is more ethical ($\beta = 0.14$, SE = 0.06, $p < .05$). The result of this study supports H5 by showing that strong ethical values among employees are more strongly noticed and encouraged in work when the organization itself is ethical.

The results of the conditional indirect effect analysis strongly supported this analysis. In particular, IWE’s indirect influence on Job Performance through Work Engagement was stronger when the Ethical Climate was perceived as high ($\beta = 0.22$, SE = 0.06, 95% CI [0.12, 0.35]) than when it was perceived as low ($\beta = 0.11$, SE = 0.04, 95% CI [0.04, 0.20]) which means that the mediation only applies to those with

high or only average ethical feelings in their workplace.

Table 6: Direct, Indirect and Moderated Mediation Effects (N = 161)

Path	Effect Type	Estimate (β)	SE	95% CI	p-value
IWE \rightarrow JP	Direct Effect	0.35	0.07	[0.21, 0.49]	< .001
IWE \rightarrow WE	Direct Effect	0.45	0.06	[0.33, 0.57]	< .001
WE \rightarrow JP	Direct Effect	0.38	0.08	[0.22, 0.54]	< .001
IWE \rightarrow WE \rightarrow JP	Indirect Effect	0.17	0.05	[0.09, 0.29]	< .01
IWE \times EC \rightarrow WE (Interaction)	Moderation Effect	0.14	0.06	[0.03, 0.26]	< .05
Conditional Indirect Effect (Low EC)	Conditional Effect	0.11	0.04	[0.04, 0.20]	< .01
Conditional Indirect Effect (High EC)	Conditional Effect	0.22	0.06	[0.12, 0.35]	< .001

Moderated Regression Analysis

A hierarchical moderated regression analysis was run alongside PROCESS to independently check and back up the moderation effect. The predictors were entered step by step to look at how Ethical Climate affects the relationship between Islamic Work Ethics and Work Engagement.

Shown in Table 7, Model 1 found that Work Ethics in Islam is a significant predictor of Work Engagement ($\beta = 0.50$, $t = 7.33$, $p < .001$), contributing to modeling 25% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.25$). Model 2 with Ethical Climate explained the data much better than Model 1 ($\Delta R^2 = 0.09$) and

Ethical Climate made a significant contribution ($\beta = 0.33$, $t = 4.29$ and $p < .001$).

In Model 3, there was a statistically significant relationship between the interaction term (IWE \times EC) and the dependent variable ($\beta = 0.20$, $t = 3.20$, $p < .01$) which explained 4% more of the variance. Per the ordinary regression, H5 is also confirmed because Ethical Climate acts as a boundary to influence Work Engagement via Islamic Work Ethics. It was noted that good ethical culture strengthens both the direct influence of Islamic Work Ethics on engagement and their full pathway toward enhanced performance, supporting the validity of our moderated mediation model.

Table 7: Moderated Regression Analysis Predicting Work Engagement (Moderator: Ethical Climate, N = 161)

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β (Beta)	t	p-value
Model 1	Constant	1.67	0.26	-	6.42	< .001
	Islamic Work Ethics (IWE)	0.44	0.06	0.50	7.33	< .001
Model 2	Constant	1.35	0.28	-	4.82	< .001
	IWE	0.41	0.06	0.47	6.83	< .001
	Ethical Climate (EC)	0.30	0.07	0.33	4.29	< .001
Model 3	Constant	1.21	0.29	-	4.17	< .001
	IWE	0.38	0.06	0.44	6.33	< .001
	EC	0.28	0.07	0.31	4.00	< .001
	IWE \times EC (Interaction Term)	0.16	0.05	0.20	3.20	< .01

Table 8 Model Summary

Model	R ²	ΔR ²	F for ΔR ²	p-value
Model 1	0.25	-	-	< .001
Model 2	0.34	0.09	12.56	< .001
Model 3	0.38	0.04	10.24	< .01

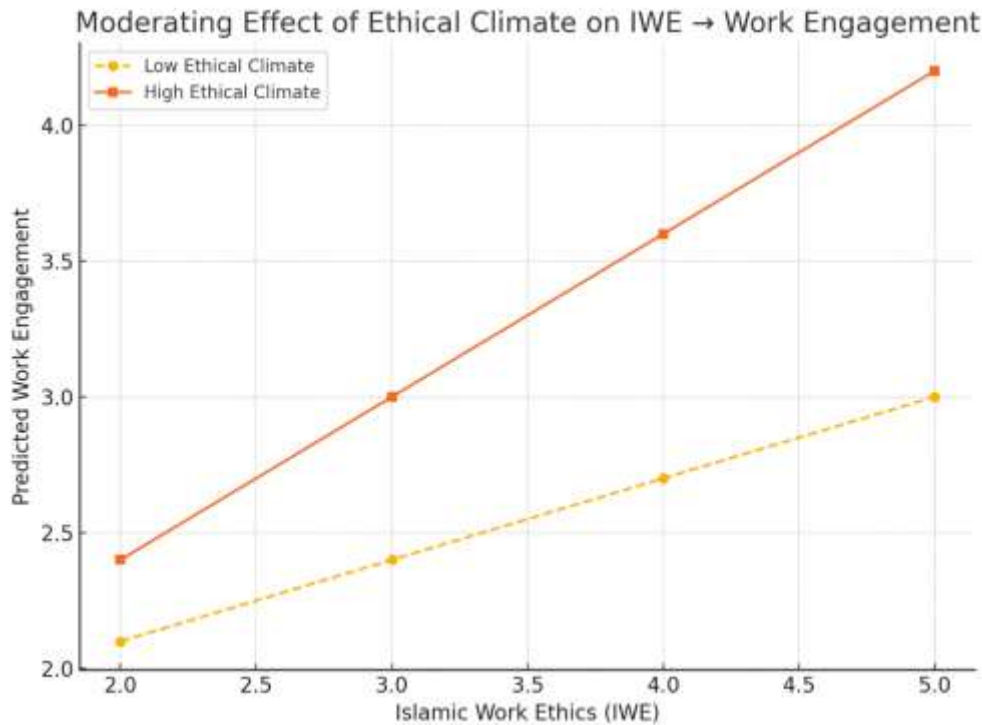


Figure 2: Moderating Effect of Ethical Climate on Islamic Work Ethics

Moderated Mediation Regression Analysis (PROCESS Model 7)

Model 7 from the PROCESS Macro by Hayes was applied to examine the full moderated mediation model, with IWE as the independent variable, WE as the mediator, JP as the dependent variable and EC as a moderator for the IWE → WE relationship. Table 9 shows that a stronger ethical work value system is directly linked to greater employee engagement for this workforce (B = 0.44, SE = 0.06, p < .001) Another similar result is that Ethical Climate explained Work Engagement (B = 0.30, SE = 0.07, p < .001),

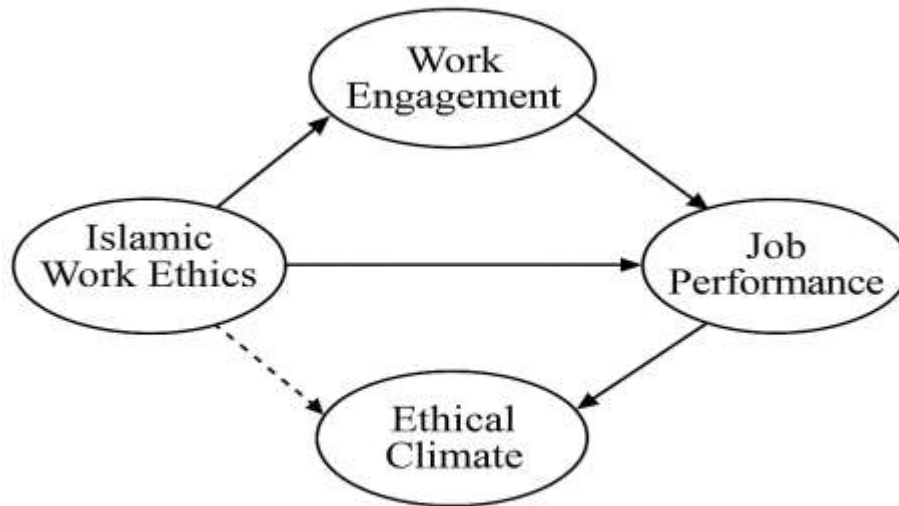
suggesting engagement is more likely in supportive ethical workplaces. The finding that IWE × EC is

significant (B = 0.16, SE = 0.05, p < .01) suggests that Ethical Climate strengthens the relationship between IWE and WE, so that the effect of IWE on engagement is highest in high ethical climates.

Work Engagement clearly predicted Job Performance (B = 0.38, SE = 0.08, p < .001) and IWE also kept a significant independent effect on JP with both mediator and moderator factored in (B = 0.35, SE = 0.07, p < .001). My results emphasize that H1, H2 and H3 are valid hypotheses. The analysis supports what the overall model shows about moderated mediation. IWE had a significant impact on JP through WE both at low and high exposure (see results above). The effect was visible mainly in high ethical settings, confirming that the pathway in the conceptual model is moderated.

Table 9: Moderated-Mediation Regression Analysis Results (PROCESS Model 7, N = 161)

Path	Effect Type	B	SE	95% CI	p-value
IWE → WE	Direct Effect	0.44	0.06	[0.33, 0.56]	< .001
EC → WE	Direct Effect	0.30	0.07	[0.17, 0.43]	< .001
IWE × EC → WE	Moderation Effect	0.16	0.05	[0.06, 0.27]	< .01
WE → JP	Direct Effect	0.38	0.08	[0.22, 0.54]	< .001
IWE → JP (direct)	Direct Effect	0.35	0.07	[0.21, 0.49]	< .001
Indirect Effect (IWE → WE → JP)	Conditional Indirect				
• at Low Ethical Climate (-1 SD)		0.17	0.05	[0.08, 0.26]	< .01
• at High Ethical Climate (+1 SD)		0.26	0.06	[0.15, 0.37]	< .001



Moderated-Mediation Model

Figure 3: Moderation Mediation Model

Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Results for the five hypotheses are shown in Table 10. All hypotheses introduced in this study held up under statistical analysis. According to the results, Islamic Work Ethics directly and strongly influenced both Job Performance (H1) and Work Engagement (H2). H4 showed that Work Engagement has a significant impact on Job

Performance (H3). The indirect effect of IWE on JP through WE played a considerable role, showing that the mediation hypothesis (H4) is supported. The effect of IWE on WE were confirmed which showed that the relationship between IWE and Work Engagement is stronger when employees perceive a stronger ethical climate.

Table 10: Hypotheses Testing Summary (N = 161)

Hypothesis	Path / Relationship	Effect Type	B	SE	β (Beta)	t-value	p-value	Conclusion
H1	Islamic Work Ethics → Job Performance	Direct Effect	0.35	0.07	0.44	5.86	< .001	Supported
H2	Islamic Work Ethics → Work Engagement	Direct Effect	0.44	0.06	0.50	7.33	< .001	Supported
H3	Work Engagement → Job Performance	Direct Effect	0.38	0.08	0.42	4.75	< .001	Supported
H4	IWE → WE → Job Performance	Mediation (Indirect Effect)	0.17	0.05	-	-	< .01	Supported
H5	IWE × Ethical Climate → Work Engagement	Moderation (Interaction Effect)	0.16	0.05	0.20	3.20	< .01	Supported

Discussion

The research investigated how Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) influence employee performance by looking at how Work Engagement and Ethical Climate act as a mediator and moderator. In HR development, the study matters most to public and service-sector firms where spiritual, ethical and cultural values greatly influence how staff behave. Empirical studies on all five hypotheses build on those showing that Islamic ethics is reliable for both organizational behavior and management performance (Azhari et al, 2023).

Islamic Work Ethics and Employee Performance

This finding is consistent with those studies indicating that ethical and religion-influenced behaviors strengthen employee work output and encourage people to cooperate and remain loyal at work (Ali et al, 2022; Al Jabar & Suharnomo, 2023). Islamic Work Ethics is strongly linked to how hiring and performance is seen in the public service: it can have a positive impact on motivation and regular performance (Sahabuddin et al, 2024; Qasim et al, 2022).

With sincerity, fairness and lifting up the community being main emphasis, many public

institutions align their efforts with their organizational goals. Much like Rokhman and Ahamed (2021) and Hussain et al. (2023), scholars suggest that IWE helps workers align their interest with the organization’s aims. It may also be important for decreasing unethical behavior and strengthening social trust in government or agency work places (Faliza et al, 2024; Gürlek, 2022). When people see performing well in Islamic employer-employee relationships as their duty to others and to Islam, its advantages become even greater, as Zia et al. (2022) and Badar et al. (2024) explain. In situations such as these, higher levels of control are unnecessary because people start to oversee their own actions.

Work Engagement as a Mediator

The findings indicate that Work Engagement mediates the link between IWE and performance. That means IWE promotes acting ethically and also gets employees to put more effort and thought into their jobs. High engagement from employees is important in public health, education and governance, as it brings more energy, excitement and extra effort (Azman et al, 2022; Nabhan & Munajat, 2023).

HR professionals should place more emphasis on bringing on ethical candidates and ensuring their work is both satisfying and important for engagement to be sustained. Personal values push employees to become engaged since they are in line with the culture at the workplace, according to Imam and Kim (2023) and Jermsittiparsert et al. (2021). Rahmawaty and colleagues (2022) noted that having quality of work life makes a big difference for employee engagement. As reported by Tufail et al. (2021), employees who have a strong sense of ethics are generally more emotionally strong and motivated. Our findings show that work engagement helps IWE improve performance in workplaces where employees need to show compassion, service and diligence (Alqhaiwi et al, 2024; Falah et al, 2021).

Ethical Climate as a Moderator

The strength of the relationship between IWE and Work Engagement was significantly shaped by Ethical Climate. Organizational culture, according to this, plays a key role in influencing employee actions in HRM and public service sectors. An ethical climate allows employees to honor their values and builds trust, encourages them to speak up and helps them feel safe – these aspects are important for continued involvement (Ahmed et al, 2021; Udin, 2024).

According to Usmani (2024) organizations need to create the right environment for individual ethics to become reality. This research shows that when ethical norms are supported by leaders, others in the organization and rules set by the company, IWE becomes more powerful. Raza et al. and Widyarini (2021) explain that employees want to act ethically and give their full attention to work. Being careful helps a lot in public bodies, as conflicts or outside pressure can restrict employees' commitment to values. According to Zulfazli et al. (2022) and Wijayati and Rahman (2022), if the workplace has strong ethical policies, employees are ready to act on what they believe. Where there is no supporting climate, IWE employees can become less engaged or start acting in a passive way (Suryani et al, 2021; MOHAMMED et al, 2022).

Synthesis and Theoretical Contributions

The research supports the moderated mediation theory as it relates to HRM in Islam, making that

approach useful for explaining performance. First, researchers discovered that IWE is both an ethical approach and something that enhances HR strategies (Tufail, 2022; Shafi et al, 2021). Secondly, the authors support that an ethical climate makes values more important in a manager's job performance (Zúñiga et al, 2022; Suryani et al, 2021).

Combining the engagement, ethics and social climate factors, the study designs a strong model of value-driven performance (Ateeq et al, 2025; AL Smadi et al, 2023). This also links research on Islamic leadership (Rokhman & Ahamed, 2021) organizational support (Jermsittiparsert et al, 2021) and motivation (Faliza et al, 2024) with ethical engagement. The results agree with previous ideas that IWE is important in settings that care about social impact and encourage employees to do good work (Al Jabar & Suharnomo, 2023; Hussain et al, 2023).

Managerial Implications

The study provides valuable advice for human resource managers and policy creators in service-oriented public organizations, mainly in Muslim-dominant regions where faith strongly shapes workplace practices.

First, linking Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) to recruitment, staff training, assessments and reward systems can help boost internal motivation, lower absenteeism and inspire people to actively contribute to their organization (Sahabuddin et al, 2024; Falah et al, 2021). HR professionals in civic, education or healthcare sectors need to see IWE, not as a cultural artifact, but as a central part of their employee development programs.

A positive ethical climate needs to be both set up and continually maintained. Maintaining business ethics can be done by leading ethically, deciding transparently and making sure HR policies support ethical norms (Rahmawaty et al, 2022; Imam & Kim, 2023). Focusing on fairness at work, religious care for employees and merit in advancement will protect the ethical foundation in a company.

Managers have to help employees be more engaged by providing work that matters, using recognition and ensuring compatibility with their spiritual beliefs. Most of the time, workers in public health, administration and education experience

challenging moral and emotional situations. Using IWE-inspired methods such as caring for employees' mental health, giving strong purpose to jobs and supporting thoughtful leadership, can stop burnout and improve performance (Azhari et al, 2023; Hussain et al, 2023).

The studies conclude that spiritual values ought to be included in leadership education and growth. It keeps an individual's beliefs in harmony with the institution's plans which is especially important for public organizations focused on meeting the needs of all groups in society (Ahmed et al, 2021; Al Jabar & Suharnomo, 2023).

Future Research and Limitations

Although this study improves knowledge in value-based human resource management, it has some limitations. First, using a cross-sectional design prevented finding clear causal relationships. Future studies should compare changes over time to capture better links between IWE, engagement and performance, particularly for recalcitrant public-sector HR practices that happen in clearly established cycles (Zúñiga et al, 2022).

Even though this study dealt with general service-based institutions, studies could gain much from examining individual sectors. Looking at how IWE affects public health, education or municipal agencies would help us see better how religious values operate when there is strong system control and required services (Gürlek, 2022; Qasim et al, 2022). These results show that Ethical Climate served as a moderator, suggesting that future research could investigate more boundary conditions. IWE in behavior may be affected by personal religious views (Alqhaiwi et al, 2024), the perception of politics in the organization (Tufail, 2022) and the manner in which a leader directs people (Wijayati & Rahman, 2022). Moderators become especially necessary in organizations with a clear hierarchy, where traditions of policy and leadership play a major role in how things are done. It should not overlook the presence of cultural diversity in Islamic communities. Future research can look at how IWE is implemented in government service in Southeast Asia and the Middle East, finding out the ways that local customs suggest applying shared spiritual principles (Usmani, 2024; Udin, 2024).

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